

85. **Minutes:**
- RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 September 2007 be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:-
- (i) in the attendance list, Mr Neville Ransley's surname was misspelled.
 - (ii) inclusion of apologies for absence from Councillor Nana Asante and Mary Abbott.
86. **Matters Arising:**
- Following two resignations at the previous meeting, Members noted that they hoped that there would be a new Hindu Community Representative identified in due course. The Chairman welcomed Nancy Parsons as a Teacher Representative.
- RESOLVED:** That the above be noted.
87. **SACRE Advice on the Religious Needs of Pupils, including a Report from the Student Advisory Group:**
- Dheemal Patel and Ravi Mistry reported that the Student Advisory Group had discussed issues around the dress code for religious artifacts. They concluded that most students had agreed that items such as necklaces should be removed for certain lessons, such as Physical Education. Other items, such as bracelets which could not be removed, could be covered. Students felt that items which were not discreet should not be allowed. The students reported that one school allowed pupils to submit a letter from a leader of their faith community to support their case particularly where clarification was required. It was noted that Headteachers had discretion in relation to all such matters.
- Dheemal Patel and Ravi Mistry were thanked for their presentation.
- It was noted that the Working Party, which devised guidance for schools on the religious needs of pupils had met on 20 September 2007. Martha Besser noted that there had been no input from a Sunni representative. It was suggested that Imam Farooqi could be contacted as he was involved with a mosque in the Borough and was also on the Harrow Inter Faith Council. Alison Stowe would report the findings of the Working Party to the next SACRE meeting.
- RESOLVED:** That Imam Farooqi be contacted concerning his possible involvement in the Working Party.
88. **Making Sense of Religion (OFSTED Report):**
- A synopsis of the Ofsted report was tabled.
- It was noted that Harrow already made good use of the non-statutory framework for Religious Education, as recommended by Ofsted. Ofsted also recommended that local authorities, in partnership with SACREs, needed to consider ways in which SACREs could be supported. Members felt that SACRE was already well supported, as there was Councillor Membership of Harrow SACRE. Members learnt that Ofsted had recommended that local authorities should consider the promotion of community cohesion and educating for diversity.
- It was noted that although assessment was often a weak area nationally, Harrow's assessment was good. More students in Harrow were scoring better marks. Mr Bishop referred to SACRE's draft annual report and discussed pupils' attainment and progress.
- Nancy Parsons offered to contact Paddy O'Dwyer with details of 'A' level results of male and female students separately, as she felt this would give a better picture of the results at Sacred Heart and Salvatorian College.
- RESOLVED:** That the report be accepted and teachers be congratulated on the results obtained by students.
89. **Revision of the Handbook for SACRE Members:**
- Members were asked to feedback ideas for the new revised SACRE handbook. A copy of the NASACRE handbook, which was tabled, was favourably received as being user friendly.
- RESOLVED:** That (1) Martha Besser distribute copies of the NASACRE handbook to members to allow them to submit suggestions for inclusion in the Harrow Handbook.

The suggestions to be sent to Paddy O'Dwyer by e-mail before the March 2008 meeting.

(2) the handbook include a paragraph summarising the work of SACRE which should be translated into the main languages used in Harrow.

(3) the handbook include summaries of the main faiths from the Religious Education Syllabus and excerpts from the Harrow vitality profiles to show the demography of the Borough.

90. **SACRE Constitution:**

On receipt of legal advice and following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Constitution be amended to read:

'The representative groups on the Council other than the group consisting of those appointed to represent the authority may at any time require a review of any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the authority. Each representative group concerned shall have a single vote on the question of whether to require such a review.'

91. **SACRE Advice on Authorised Absence for Religious Festivals:**

Advice from the representatives of faith communities was requested regarding the significance for school attendance for the following festivals: Lailat Ramadan, Krishna Jayanti and Ganesh Chaturthi. Mr Singh-Kohli reported that the Sikh festivals of Diwali and the Birthday of Guru Nanak would be on 28 October 2008 and 13 November 2008 respectively.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

92. **GCSE Syllabuses and Results 2007:**

Results were tabled. It was noted that with the introduction of sixth forms in Harrow schools, Religious Education would be taught at Key Stage 5.

Members noted that 99% of pupils who had taken GCSE Religious Studies had obtained a grade A-G: 66.7% had achieved A*-C grades. SACRE had received no complaints during 2008 regarding Religious Education.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that the Religious Education and Religious Studies syllabi could be found at the following portals:

- The Assessments and Qualifications Alliance (AQA):
<http://www.aqa.org.uk/qual/>
- Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR):
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/index.html>
- Edexcel: <http://www.edexcel.org.uk/quals/>
- WJEC: <http://www.wjec.co.uk/>

93. **Launch of the Baha'i Resource Pack for Schools:**

It was noted that the Baha'i resource pack would be launched on 30 January 2008 at the Civic Centre from 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm. Speakers included Barney Leith and Stephen Vickers. Councillors, School Governors and Teachers would be invited by SACRE. Mr Kohli noted that a resource pack on Sikhism would be launched in due course.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

94. **News from Harrow Inter Faith Council:**

Mary Hale reported that:

- Park High School would be holding a sixth form conference in Summer 2008, which would be open to all of Harrow's High schools.
- Harrow Inter Faith Council (HIFC) was applying for funding for the production of a tapestry to mark the HIFC's 25th anniversary. It was noted that if funding were made available, each faith would produce a tapestry panel. The tapestry

would be presented to the Borough at a performance launch and then shown in the Heritage museum. The Harrow Inter Faith Council would welcome support from SACRE. Members suggested that copies of the tapestry be made for all Harrow's school children.

RESOLVED: That (1) the above be noted;

(2) Park High's holding of a sixth form conference in Summer 2008 be supported by SACRE.

95. **News from Faith Communities:**

It was reported that:

- The Sikh community had celebrated the Birthday of Guru Nanak and Diwali. 2008 would mark the 300th birthday of the present Guru and there would be a celebration in the Borough;
- There would be carols in the Council Chamber on 14 December 2007 at 12.30 pm, with a retiring collection for the Mayor's charity.
- Councillor Asante reported that she had attended the launch of a project called 'Talin' which means 'Education' in Somali. The key aim of this new project was reconciliation, primarily among the three Abrahamic faiths but all faiths would be involved as the project grew. Councillor Asante would send Patrick O'Dwyer details of the project, as SACRE members were eager to be involved. Nancy Parsons felt that sometimes St Dominic's College were not included in the distribution of material available to Community Schools and asked that the college be informed of the project.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

96. **Correspondence:**

It was reported that:

- SACRE had received an email written by Mr Kohli regarding the celebrations for the Birthday of Guru Nanak, including a prayer for peace.
- There was a consultation on school admission arrangements for the academic year 2008/09. Details could be found on the Harrow Council website.
- Patrick O'Dwyer would read an article by the Hon. Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, about Id-ul-Fitr.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

97. **Any Other Urgent Business:**

- (i) Determination for Marlborough First and Middle School
Following discussion, the Chairman signed Marlborough's application for determination. However, Members queried whether the school proposed, as implied in section 8 of the application form, that the determination applied both to whole school worship and groups meeting in faith communities and how this was to be delivered.

RESOLVED: That the Headteacher of Marlborough School be asked to clarify the scope of the determination and its delivery.

- (ii) Monument
Councillor Champagnie explained that she was looking into the Inter Faith monument representing all Faiths in the Borough and suggested it might be erected to celebrate 25 years of Harrow's Inter Faith Council. Councillor Champagnie noted that she hoped that the monument would be positioned in a prominent place in London.

RESOLVED: That a report be presented by Councillor Champagnie and Martha Besser at the next SACRE meeting regarding the Monument.

- (iii) Councillor Janet Cowan
Members noted with sadness that Councillor Janet Cowan, a former member of SACRE, had recently passed away.

RESOLVED: That a letter of sympathy be written by Martha Besser to Councillor Janet Cowan's husband, Councillor John Cowan.

- (iv) Names in faith communities
Members requested that Pat Stevens draw up guidance on the use of names in faith communities.

RESOLVED: That all Faiths be asked by Martha Besser to give guidance regarding the use of names from their respective beliefs.

98. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education would be held on the 12 March 2008.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.45 pm)

(Signed) MRS M BESSER
Chairman