

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION****2 JUNE 2009**Representatives of the Local Authority

Councillors: Ms Nana Asante Mrs Anjana Patel
 † Mrs Lurline Champagnie

Representatives of Christian and Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

* Mrs M Besser	Miss F Rahemani
* Mr Z Baig	Mr N Ransley
* Mr M Bishop	* Mrs G Ross
* Dr J Crow	† Mr S Saddik
* Mrs N Desai	* Mrs B Samuels
† Mrs P Gan-Kotwal	Mr P Singh-Kohli
* Mrs M Hale	* Ms B Willson
Dr V Kapashi	
* Councillor Asad Omar	

Representatives of the Church of England

* Mrs M Abbott	* Reverend G Pinnock
Mrs G Mercer	* Reverend Matthew Stone

Representatives of Teachers

* Ms G Capin	* Mrs A Stowe (Chairman)
† Ms B Pandya-Arepalli	* Ms N Parsons
	* Rev'd Dr S Thompson

Co-opted Members

Mr J Dave	† D Patel
† Mr R Mistry	* Ms P Stevens

Adviser to the Council, Nominated by the Corporate Director, Children's Services

* Ms F Aldridge

* Denotes Member present
 † Denotes apologies received

[Note: Councillor Krishna James also attended this meeting].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**193. **Appointment of Chairman for the 2009-10 Municipal Year:**

RESOLVED: That Mrs Alison Stowe be appointed Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) for the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

194. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the 2009-10 Municipal Year:**

RESOLVED: To appoint Mrs Martha Besser as Vice-Chairman of the SACRE for the 2009/2010 Municipal Year.

195. **Apologies for Absence:**

RESOLVED: To note that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Nana Asante, Councillor Lurline Champagnie, Councillor Anjana Patel, Mrs Mary Abbott, Mrs Phiroza Gan-Khotwal, Mrs Bhavita Pandya-Arepalli, Mr Shaban Siddk, Miss Dheemal Patel and Mr Ravi Mistry.

196. **Opening Reflection:**

Mrs Niru Desai opened the meeting with a spiritual reflection.

197. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Nana Asante
Councillor Anjana Patel

Reserve Member

Councillor Nisam Ismail
Councillor Golam Chowdhury

198. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.

199. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2009 be taken and read as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

In the attendance list:

- (i) Mrs B Samuels should be replaced with Mrs D Samuels;
- (ii) Mrs G Mercer should be deleted.

200. **Matters Arising:**

Pat Stevens reported that further copies of The Handbook for SACRE members, published by the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) had been ordered.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

201. **Finalisation of "Faith Matters in Harrow: Guidance on Sensitivities that Impact on Schools":**

A final draft of the SACRE Guidance document was presented to Members.

RESOLVED: That (1) the following details in the SACRE guidance document be finalised:

- guidance in the main document should be matched by the chart
- final Sikh guidance should be checked.
- Hindu guidance regarding the wearing of threads should be verified
- Jain guidance on threads should be verified;

(2) the final document be distributed to schools after the necessary amendments had been made;

(3) the comments be noted.

202. **Preparation for Guidance on Authorised Absence for Pupils to fulfil Religious Obligations 2009-10:**

The revised introduction to SACRE's 2009/2010 guidance document on authorised absence for pupils to fulfil their religious obligations was reported. Members agreed that the wording reflected Harrow SACRE's views and would go some way to answering schools' queries from parents about extended holidays. Jewish members of SACRE expressed gratitude that their faith's particular circumstances had been addressed. It was suggested that Harrow Council might exercise flexibility in the term and holiday schedules to organise holidays and half terms to cover as many faith festivals as possible. Members agreed that:

RESOLVED: That (1) the draft version of the introduction be adopted for the 2009-2010 guidance and include a list of dates of the most important religious festivals that fall in school time during the year, once the dates are published in August 2009;

(2) SACRE approach Harrow Council with a view to incorporating as many religious festivals during school holidays as possible;

(3) the report be noted.

203. **Young Interfaith Projects:**

Farzana Aldridge reported on a meeting held on 21 May 2009 attended by Cllr Anjana Patel, Alison Stowe and herself. At this meeting proposals for the Arts and Humanities

Research Council/Economic and Social Research Council (AHRC/ESRC) funded research project to conduct a two-year survey of young people's views on religion and their communities were outlined by Dr Madge of Brunel University. It was felt that the project would complement the Harrow Youth Inter Faith Forum in 2009 in its first objective of supporting young people in making a film, "This is Harrow – the U.K.'s most religiously diverse borough". Members were advised that the project would include an extensive survey of pupils in schools as well as material derived from focus groups in schools and faith communities. It was stated that some pupils might find such a survey intrusive into their private lives. Farzana Aldridge explained that no pupil would be compelled to take part and that schools would approach the project sensitively. Members agreed that SACRE would follow the project and the initiation of the Harrow Inter Faith Youth Forum with interest and receive regular reports on their progress.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

204. **QCA Consultation for Members of Faith/Belief Communities on (1) New Draft Level Descriptions for National Curriculum Subjects and RE (2) New Draft Non-Statutory Guidance, Replacing the RE Parts of Circular 1/94:**

Alison Stowe and Pat Stevens outlined the essence of the consultation papers on;

- proposals to change the primary curriculum;
- proposals for personal, social, health and economic education;
- proposals for up-dated non-statutory guidance on religious education:

Together with responses made to the proposals by members of London SACREs and faith communities at a focus group meeting on 1 June 2009, Members expressed the view that religious education should form part of the National Curriculum. A Member felt that a Humanist Member in the group would represent non-theistic beliefs, as atheists and agnostics promoted formation and education as important aspects of life-long learning. There was unanimous agreement that RE's vital contribution to social cohesion should be recognised in all Government documentation. It was agreed that a working party consisting of Alison Stowe, Pat Stevens, Mike Bishop, Nancy Parsons, Father Giles Pinnock and Rev Matthew Stone should meet on 24 June 2009 to formulate a response from Harrow SACRE, which would be circulated to members for approval before the submission date of 24 July 2009.

RESOLVED: That the QCA consultation papers be noted.

205. **The A-Z of Collective Worship:**

The Chairman reported that "The A-Z of Collective Worship" would be refreshed and updated with current resources.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

206. **Budget Report and Forecast:**

A budget statement and business plan was distributed at the meeting. Mary Hale commented that pupils to visit the Harrow Inter Faith Council anniversary exhibition should be subsidised by SACRE in the same way as the visit to the Jewish Way of Life Exhibition. In response, Pat Stevens advised that an official request for a subsidy had not been received.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

207. **Determinations:**

SACRE considered an application from Stanburn First School to vary the requirement that collective worship is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character". This curriculum had been received along with the school's policy for collective worship. It was felt that the school's stated assembly themes were broad, relevant and balanced. Julie Crow suggested that Darwin might be included amongst the important historical figures that featured in the assembly themes. Mike Bishop suggested that SACRE should be rigorous in the regular renewal of "determinations." Members agreed that the renewal date would be 1 June 2014.

RESOLVED: That the request for determination be approved.

208. **News from Harrow Hate Crime Forum:**

Pat Stevens reported on her attendance at meetings of the Harrow Hate Crime Forum where key items discussed included the promotion of summer road-shows 2009

throughout the borough to hear residents' views on making Harrow a safer borough and gathering information relating to tensions between different communities living within the borough.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

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

Mary Hale reported that a conference of the Inter Faith Network, to be held on 10 July 2009, would discuss relations between inter faith groups. Members agreed that she would represent Harrow SACRE at the conference. She also advised that 15—21 November 2009 had been considered as a possible period for Inter Faith Week, where members of faith communities would be encouraged to participate in local activities. She added that the twenty fourth Westminster Interfaith Pilgrimage to be held in Harrow and Brent, would commence at the Zoroastrian Centre and finish at the Brent Sikh Centre.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

210. **News from the Faith Communities:**

SACRE received a notice that an International Food Fair would be held on Sunday 21 June 2009 in Wealdstone High Street from 2.00 pm – 6.00 pm.

Councillor Asad Omar announced that on 25 October 2009 prayers would be held by a number of faiths for all those involved in conflicts. He reported that three speakers would be attending the meeting, between 2.00 pm – 6.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

211. **Dates of Meetings for 2009-10:**

RESOLVED: To note that the date of the next meetings would be held on:

- Wednesday 16 September 2009
- Tuesday 1 December 2009
- Tuesday 9 March 2009

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.40 pm)

(Signed) MRS A STOWE
Chairman