

Minutes

HILLINGDON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

17 June 2014

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillor Carol Melvin BSc (Hons), Councillor John Morse, Councillor Susan O'Brien, Daniel Norris (Chairman), Mary Coulthurst, Malanie Dring, Robert Harwood, Jamal Pasha, Elenor Paul and Jasvir Singh Rayat</p> <p>Also Present: Duncan Struthers (HSACRE Adviser)</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Steven Maiden (Democratic Services Officer)</p>
60.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Keith Burrows, Angela Lount, Mike Gettleson, Carol Jones, Amir Ahmed and Naseem Bint Amir.</p>
61.	<p>CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the Local Authority had agreed to provide HSACRE with the requested annual funding of £5,900. This would be managed through the Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School making it easier to administer the budget and make timely payments. It was expected that the funds would be used for the Annual Conference, training, paying the adviser and providing award prizes. The budget had recently been used to fund the Walk Through the Bible training which had been very well received.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the HSACRE Adviser for his work co-ordinating the Walk Through the Bible training event.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That feedback from the Walk Through the Bible training event be circulated to HSACRE via email.</p>
62.	<p>ADVISER'S REPORT (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>The Adviser welcomed the new funding arrangements agreed with the Local Authority and the support provided through Democratic Services.</p> <p>HSACRE's involvement at the Hayes Carnival on 12 July 2014 and the 'Walk of Peace' on 21 September 2014 were noted and members invited to attend.</p>

	<p>The Adviser noted that the Walk Through the Bible training event had been successful and had taken into account the feedback received previously about the significant amount of content included in a one-day event. The slight cutting down of the session had been well received.</p> <p>HSACRE's advice on Ramadan was given to members and it was noted that it was being revised prior to the festival and circulated to schools. Members were asked to provide feedback and amendments on the advice as soon as possible.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That feedback on HSACRE's advice on Ramadan to schools be passed to the Adviser as soon as possible.</p>
63.	<p>MINUTES FROM THE MEETING DATED 06 NOVEMBER 2013 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was noted that at the inquorate meeting held on 11 March 2014 the following action points were agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A questionnaire for Hillingdon Primary School Headteachers was considered and it was agreed that it would be circulated to schools subject to amendments. 2. It was agreed that a draft HSACRE budget would be put to the Local Authority comprising £5,900 for the current and the previous year. <p>RESOLVED: That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record; and 2. The action points from the inquorate meeting held on 11 March 2014 were noted.
64.	<p>REVIEW OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE TO HILLINGDON PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman provided a brief overview of the responses to the questionnaire sent to primary schools and advised that they reflected the recent Ofsted report's findings concerning lack of training provided to RE teachers. He noted that it was the role of HSACRE to provide support in this area and to ensure that RE teaching was of a high quality throughout the Borough. This had become an increasingly important area as the education support previously provided by the Local Authority was significantly depleted.</p> <p>As SACREs had increasingly less influence over the teaching of RE in secondary schools, the decision had been taken to focus the questionnaire on primary schools only.</p> <p>Members discussed the responses to the questionnaire and the following headline points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Members raised concerns that only 24 responses had been received from 78 requests. The Chairman advised that he would be promoting the questionnaire further at the forthcoming meeting of headteachers with a view to increasing the number of responses. § It was concerning that no specialist RE teachers at primary schools had been identified and unqualified staff were being used in some cases. Furthermore, it was noted that the PGCE course taught at Brunel University had a total of only 4 hours training on the teaching of RE which was likely to lead to teachers not feeling confident in the subject. § Teachers seemed to be indicating that they wanted support for subject

knowledge through training events. It was suggested that the expertise of local communities as well as numerous other agencies (such as the British Humanist Association) should be used to provide some of this support. However, the importance of teachers being equipped to teach RE themselves was stressed by members.

- § RE was not prioritised in many non-faith schools as it was not a major aspect of the Ofsted inspection framework. With an increasing focus on the attainment of 5 A-C grades, some schools were also opting not to teach RE and have pupils undertake only 5 subjects. This had implications on the amount of training and support that teachers would be provided in RE.

With regard to offering training and support, it was noted that the key challenge was communication as there was no existing network of primary RE teachers in place. However, work was being progressed to develop this network and bring people together to determine what support was required. Once a clearer idea of the need was identified, the aim would be to provide a full, self-sustaining offer of training to schools. HSACRE would not be able to provide free training meaning that a case would have to be made to schools to provide funding themselves.

It was agreed that engaging subject leaders and newly qualified teachers would be the priority areas in the first instance. Although it would be desirable to provide this training prior to the end of the current term, it was agreed that quality of the offer should be the focus and that plans should be developed for consideration at the meeting on 5 November 2014.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. The Chairman check the percentages relating to responses to question 2 and advise members of the outcome;**
- 2. The Chairman and Adviser develop plans for training to be offered to schools and report back to HSACRE at the meeting held on 5 November 2014; and**
- 3. The questionnaire responses be noted.**

65. RE FILM PRODUCED IN HILLINGDON (Agenda Item 5)

The Adviser gave a presentation on a film about faith that was being produced by sixth formers in the Borough. Excerpts were shown from the film and members noted that it would be a valuable resource when it was completed. The plan was to circulate it to schools as a DVD with support materials.

66. RE QUIZ FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS PROPOSAL (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman noted the proposal of having an RE quiz for Year 6 children in the Borough. This would be similar to the current Maths Challenge with children showcasing their knowledge about RE in a quiz and then having a celebration.

Members welcomed this proposal and it was agreed that the Chairman and the Adviser would develop ideas further and report back at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Chairman and the Adviser develop proposals for the RE Quiz for consideration at the meeting on 5 November 2014.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

GCSE Exam Papers and Exam Results

It was suggested that HSACRE should make representations to exam boards that GCSE papers did not promote a broad understanding of the syllabus as pupils could focus exclusively on a single faith perspective. The Chairman advised that, where appropriate, HSACRE would respond to such matters through consultations. However, there were issues with identifying when consultations were being carried out.

It was agreed that the Chairman would look into the consultations currently being undertaken by the RE Council for England and Wales and relay this to HSACRE in due course.

Agreed Syllabus

It was agreed that the Chairman would look into when the next review of the agreed syllabus would be taking place and report back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Chairman investigate the current consultations on GCSE RE exams and the timeline for the review of the agreed syllabus and report this back at the meeting on 5 November 2014.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.01 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact on Democratic Services Officer 01895 250692. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.