

Minutes

HILLINGDON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

7 June 2016



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

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| | <p>Committee Members Present: Anil Bhatt, Carole Jones (Chairman), Councillor Carol Melvin, Councillor Jagjit Singh, Councillor Susan O'Brien, Gail Butler, Robert Harwood, Angela Lount, Amir Ahmed (Syed Amir Ahmed), Jasvir Singh Rayat, Mary Coulthurst Melanie Dring and Alison Rollin.</p> <p>Also Present: Duncan Struthers (Advisor to HSACRE).</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Laurie Baker (Interim Head of School Improvement), Fiona Gibbs (Stronger Communities and Prevention Lead - items 1 and 2 only) and Jon Pitt (Democratic Services Officer).</p> |
| 25. | <p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item</i>)</p> <p>The meeting of the Hillingdon SACRE commenced at 7:30 pm.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Naseem Bint Amir, Richard Cawley, Father Desmond Bannister, Angela Flux, Councillor John Morse and Umesh Sharma.</p> |
| 26. | <p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 MARCH 2016 (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Matters arising from the meeting held on 8 March 2016</p> <p>It had not been possible to identify an organisation that would be able to support local RE teachers and it was suggested that this was because RE was seen as being a low priority in relation to school improvement.</p> <p>Laurie Baker, The Council's Head of School Improvement, suggested that the request for the provision of RE teachers be put to the London Heads of School Improvement.</p> <p>Resolved: That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Head of School Improvement to provide contact details for the London Heads of School Improvement to the Advisor to SACRE. <p>Item 2: The Chairman advised that her school, Yeading Juniors, had been shortlisted for a Department for Education Character Education award. It was proposed that the minutes of the previous Hillingdon SACRE meeting that covered a presentation on Character Education given by pupils from the school be used as evidence in support of the application.</p> |

Item 5.1: Arrangements for the Hayes Carnival were progressing well and it was requested that Interfaith Network leaflets be provided for distribution at the event.

Item 6: It had been agreed at the March 2016 meeting of Hillingdon SACRE that the June 2016 meeting would be held at Hayes Muslim Centre. This had not been possible because of difficulties in accommodating a group the size of SACRE. Apologies were offered for this and it was hoped that consideration would be given to holding another meeting at the venue in the future.

Resolved That:

- 1. The Advisor to SACRE to provide Interfaith Network leaflets for distribution at the Hayes Carnival.**

Resolved: That:

- 1. The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2016 be agreed.**

27. **PREVENT COUNTER TERRORISM STRATEGY UPDATE** (*Agenda Item 2*)

Fiona Gibbs, the London Borough of Hillingdon's Stronger Communities and Prevention Lead gave a presentation on the Prevent Counter Terrorism work undertaken by the Council and its partners.

The key points of the presentation included the following:

- The Council had been working on Prevent since 2006/07 when it had become part of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST).
- Prevent was one of four elements of CONTEST, the others being Pursue, Protect and Prepare.
- Prevent aimed to stop people from being drawn towards supporting terrorism, to address radicalisation and to respond to the ideological challenges presented.
- The work covered the response to all types of terrorism, from Islamic extremist organisations, to terrorism linked to the far right.
- Work was undertaken to safeguard young people and to stop them from becoming involved in violence or criminal activity.
- The Channel Programme was a multi-agency programme, targeting vulnerable individuals. It was Home Office sponsored and co-ordinated by SO15 Counter Terrorism officers. Most referrals to the programme were of persons under 25, with the majority of these being aged 15 to 19. A number of risk factors were used in order to assess the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in terrorism and therefore, what action should be taken.
- The panel of the Channel Programme met every month. It provided support to individuals and worked closely with the Police and other partners.
- Each local authority was required to develop a prevent action plan which was specific to addressing local concerns.
- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 had placed a statutory on local authorities and other organisations, including schools, to work towards the aims of Prevent.
- Progress being made on Prevent activities was regularly reported to the Executive Board of the Local Strategic Partnership.
- The Stronger Communities and Prevention Lead had received Home Office approved training, which enabled her to deliver RAP workshop training in

relation to Prevent. Between 1,500 and 1,600 people had received this training in the last year and it was anticipated that this figure would reach 2,000 by the end of the year.

- Priorities of the Prevent work within Hillingdon included ensuring that opportunities for radical groups to get a foothold were minimised, the support of vulnerable persons and for partners to work together effectively.
- Schools were supported in relation to Prevent, including the teaching of morals and ethics, building respect, the ability to think critically and guidance on how to use the curriculum.
- School staff were provided training. This included awareness of Prevent, warning signs to look for amongst their pupils and how to get help if they had concerns.
- Safety online and awareness of online risks were also an important aspect of Prevent work. This included raising pupil awareness of the issues.
- It was recognised that it was important to deal with concerns raised sensitively and to identify where the line was likely to be crossed for ideas to result in criminal activity. A couple of recent examples were highlighted where action had been taken to support children who had been identified at risk of becoming involved in extremist activity.
- Where appropriate, Social Services and mental health providers were involved in identified cases. Mental health issues were associated with a number of individuals who were identified as being at risk of becoming involved in extremist or terrorist activity.
- It was suggested that SACRE could play a role in Prevent by helping to raise awareness of the associated issues. This could be by ensuring that a co-ordinated approach was taken to managing concerns and delivering support and by supporting schools to deliver against the curriculum.

In response to questions from Member of Hillingdon SACRE, it was confirmed that:

- Work was undertaken sensitively and proportionately and this was seen as being very important. There was a need to recognise that people had varying points of view and that concerning views should be challenged.
- Consideration would be given to providing training to other organisations, besides schools, but it was recognised that resources were limited.
- The Council worked with libraries, leisure centres and the Hayes Carnival, among others, to bring communities together. It was acknowledged that there might be a need to encourage groups with meeting and event facilities to be more inclusive of other communities.
- The Channel process was voluntary, although there were thresholds for the involvement of statutory services. Young people who were being supported by the Channel process were fully aware of their involvement in it. It was necessary to manage the channel process sensitively to minimise any resentment.
- Schools were encouraged to make use of their own resources and safeguarding approach in the first instance. Support was most commonly provided directly by the school, with the Council being available to provide support and to help to determine what action should be taken.
- The existence of fraudulent charities was a cause for concern. Those giving to charities were advised to exercise caution and to check whether they knew what the money was being used for and whether there was any risk that it could be funding terrorism. Members were informed that there had been some fraudulent charity collecting by people purporting to be collecting on behalf of Hayes Mosque. This had been reported to the relevant authorities.

Resolved: That:

- 1. Fiona Gibbs to explore how the link between the Hillingdon SACRE and local schools could be strengthened.**
- 2. The update provided be noted.**

28. FEEDBACK FROM NASACRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD ON 17 MAY 2016
(Agenda Item 3)

Duncan Struthers, Advisor to Hillingdon SACRE, provided an overview of the NASACRE Annual Conference, which he had attended with SACRE Member, Naseem Bint Amir on 17 May 2016.

The keynote speakers at this year's event had been the Rt Hon Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss and Professor Adam Dinham. The topics covered, which built upon the themes of last year's conference, included the possible move by the Government towards the creation of nationally agreed syllabus for RE. It was anticipated that SACREs would have a consultation role to play in any creation of a national syllabus and in assisting with its implementation. Baroness Butler-Sloss had said that the teaching of religion, philosophy and ethics should be a statutory legal duty in schools and that a time for reflection should replace the requirement for a daily religious assembly.

There was seen to be an urgent need for a review of the role of SACREs, but this was dependent upon the Government making a decision about creation of a national RE syllabus.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The update provided be noted.**

29. HSACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2015 *(Agenda Item 4)*

A draft of the 2015 Hillingdon Sacre Annual Report was presented to Members. It was noted that the production of the report was a statutory requirement.

HSACRE Members were invited to comment on the report and approve it prior to its submission to Councillor David Simmonds, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services. The report would subsequently be submitted to NASACRE and to the Department for Education.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The 2015 HSACRE Annual Report be approved and submitted to Cllr David Simmonds ahead of submission to NASACRE and the Department for Education.**

30. DATE OF NEXT MEETING *(Agenda Item 5)*

The next meeting of Hillingdon SACRE was due to take place on Wednesday 2 November 2016. However, this clashed with All Souls day, an important date in the Christian calendar.

It was agreed that the next meeting of HSACRE would be rearranged to take place at 7:30pm on Thursday 10 November.

Hayes Muslim Centre was put forward as a possible venue for the meeting and it was agreed that this would be confirmed outside the meeting.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The date of the next meeting changed. It would now take place on Thursday 10 November.**

31. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** (*Agenda Item 6*)

Ramadan Guidance

Ramadan guidance had been produced by Hillingdon SACRE and this had been sent to schools in the Borough.

The Muslim representative on HSACRE expressed concern that pupils may try to fast when they would be undertaking strenuous exercise or taking exams.

It was agreed that a meeting should take place between Muslim groups to discuss next year's guidance and that the guidance should be sent out earlier than it had been this year.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The 2016 Ramadan guidance be circulated to the HSACRE Members.**
- 2. Guidance for schools for Ramadan in 2017 be agreed by HSACRE and sent out well in advance of Ramadan commencing. A supporting letter for schools to send to parents would also be provided and it was agreed that local imams would write this letter.**

Budget Update

Members were advised that the existing HSACRE budget was currently in the process of being transferred from Holy Trinity CE School to Yeading Juniors. This was to reflect the change in chairmanship of HSACRE.

The local authority had requested that the SACRE provide an indicative budget for 2016/17. This would be submitted to the Council in order for it to consider what funding could be provided. The draft budget presented would request £5700 of 2016/17 and £950 to cover items that had been brought forward from 2015/16.

Members were concerned that there may be a need for additional resources in the event that HSACRE decided to undertake a review of the Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus. The Advisor confirmed that a contingency for this had been made within the proposed budget.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The budget proposals presented be approved and submitted to the Council for consideration.**

The Martyrdom of the 5th Guru Arjan Sahib ji

Members were informed that the Hillingdon Sikh Welfare Association would be serving

cold drinks to the public in remembrance of the martyrdom of the 5th Guru Arjan Sahib ji. This would take place at Pink City, Coldharbour Lane, Hayes on Sunday 12 June at 11am. All Members of HSACRE were welcome to attend.

Resolved: That:

- 1. Details of the event being organised by the Sikh Welfare Association be provided to the clerk for circulation to HSACRE Members.**

The meeting of the Hillingdon SACRE closed at 9pm.

The meeting, which commenced at 7:30 pm, closed at 9:20 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Jon Pitt on 01895 277655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.