

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education held on 16 July 2014 at 6.00pm**

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### **Present:**

**Committee A:** Mr A Rashid, Mr P Anderson

**Committee B:** Mr J Graham, Rev. J Guest, Mrs M Taylor and Mr D Bates

**Committee C:** Ms A Jellicoe, Ms H Gillman and Mr R Epps

**Committee D:** Councillors Gupta, Kerin and Ojetola

**Apologies:** Mrs S Lawson, Mrs M Shepherd, Miss A Ahmed, Mr P Griffiths and Ms A Winstone

**In attendance:** Ms D Weston – Associate Adviser for Religious Education  
Ms L Lloyd – School Improvement Adviser  
Miss K-V Martin – Senior Democratic Services Officer

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### **1. Appointment of Chair of SACRE**

Nominations were invited for the appointment of Chair for the Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Ojetola and seconded by Mr Epps, that Rev. Guest be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

### **2. Appointment of Vice Chair for Committee A, B, C and D**

Nominations were invited for the appointment of Vice Chair of Committees A, B, C and D.

The following members were elected as Vice Chairs:

Committee A: Mr Anderson

Committee B: Rev. Guest

Committee C: Mr Epps

Committee D: Councillor Ojetola

The Associate Adviser for Religious Education explained that SACRE was important as it set the syllabus for Thurrock and produced an annual report which Councillors presented to Full Council.

Members of SACRE were also informed that 80% of Academies within the borough had also chosen to follow the SACRE syllabus.

### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education held on 11 December 2012 and the notes of the inquorate meetings held on 6 March and 1 May; 3 July 2013; 3 December 2013 and 19 March 2014 were approved as a correct record.

### **4. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business to declare.

### **5. Declaration of Interests**

There were no such interests declared

### **6. Discussion of Membership**

The Adviser for Religious Education confirmed to the Committee of the current membership and any outstanding vacancies. It was agreed that Mr Anderson would join Committee A as an additional Free Church Representative.

It was further agreed through discussions that the Chair of the Committee, Ms Jellicoe, Mr Epps and Mr Anderson would seek to confirm Jewish, Hindu, Community School and Buddhist representatives.

The Chair of the Committee enquired as to the timing of the meeting, whether it was convenient with all members. Members confirmed that with working and personal commitments the current timing of the meeting worked well.

### **7. Thurrock SACRE – Annual Report 2011-2012**

The Adviser for Religious Education introduced the report which presented a summary of the work of SACRE over the academic year for 2011/2012.

Members were advised that it was a legal requirement that SACRE submit an annual report of its activities to the local authority.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That SACRE accepts this report as an accurate record of its work in the year 2011-2012.**

### **8. The Changing Profile of Religion and Belief in Thurrock**

It was explained to the Committee that this item was for information and related to the following items. The Adviser for Religious Education explained that the changes within the profile of religion and belief were not always

noticed. Examples given from the report were that over the last 10 years the number of Christians within Thurrock had slightly dropped, whereas the number of Muslims had doubled.

Members queried as to the breakdown of the denomination within Christian religion within Thurrock, the Adviser for Religious Education confirmed to Members of SACRE that she could get the figures for the Committee.

The Committee briefly discussed the growth and cultural influence within local schools of black led churches, it was raised that following discussions at a previous Full Council meeting the preferred term used was Pentecostal Churches. The Chair of the Committee informed the Committee that the phrase 'Pentecostal' was inaccurate and suggested that the Committee perhaps discuss the matter at the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That SACRE should consider the membership of committee A and decide whether or not it appropriately reflects the principal religious traditions in the area.**
- 2. That should SACRE wish to amend the membership list, it should advise the local authority in order that the terms of reference be amended.**
- 3. That a further update report be brought the December meeting of the Committee.**

**9. GCSE Results 2012**

It was explained that the report was of the results from GCSEs taken in 2012. Members were informed that ofsted had upgraded the framework to which Religious Education was taught to.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. SACRE should consider making an investigation in relation to academies that appear not to be making provision for RE in accordance with their funding agreement.**
- 2. If there appears to be no appropriate provision, then SACRE should consider informing the Education Funding Agency of its findings.**

**10. Provisional GCSE Results 2013**

The Committee were advised that SACRE had a statutory duty to monitor provision for Religious Education (RE) in accordance with its agreed syllabus.

Members were notified that figures were low for RE within schools, this was due to schools not making the correct provision for RE. It was noted that 90% of entry was 15/16 year olds. It was also discussed and agreed that members would look into visiting local schools.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. SACRE should consider making an investigation in relation to academies that appear not to be making provision for RE in accordance with their funding agreement.**
- 2. If that investigation concludes that there appears to be no appropriate provision, then SACRE should consider informing the Education Funding Agency of its findings.**

**11. Review of Membership and Terms of Reference of SACRE**

It was explained to the Committee that at a previous meeting the changes in demographics across the borough was discussed and it was decided which religious groups should be represented on the Committee.

Members were advised that 2.8.2 of the report outlined the guidelines when determining the composition of Committee A. Part of these guidelines were that the group should meet to worship within the community.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. Approve the amended membership of Committee A of Thurrock SACRE, as listed in paragraph 2.8.7 of the report.**
- 2. Agree the revised Constitution of Thurrock SACRE as set out in Appendix C.**

**12. Annual Report 2012-2013**

Members discussed the report which presented a summary of the work of SACRE over the last academic year.

It was suggested that the first paragraph of the Officers Statement within the appendix to the report be amended to read as follows:

*“A survey of local schools found that 76% of Academies had opted to follow the local Agreed Syllabus. The second decision followed an analysis of local census data and the conclusion that as the religion and belief profile of the council had changed over the ten years since the previous census, that a Buddhist representative should be sought for SACRE.”*

The Committee agreed that Councillor Ojetola would present the report to Full Council subject to the amendments made by Mr Anderson.

**RESOLVED:**

**That SACRE accept this report as an accurate record of its work in the year 2012-2013 subject to the amendment within the appendix.**

The Chair of Committee suggested that the Committee meet again on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2014, to finalise the agenda as many members had to leave early.

Members agreed this date subject to confirmation from the clerk.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the clerk to SACRE checks the proposed date and contact the Chair and the Committee to confirm.**

**The meeting finished at 7.35pm.**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**