

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 9th April, 2024 commencing at 4.00 pm.

Group A: Christian Denominations and such other religious denominations as, in the Authority's opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area: Professor John Adams* (Humanism), Sarah Beveridge* (Society of Friends), Hayden Cohen (Judaism), Tom Clayton* (Methodism), Abhijeet Kulkarni* (Hinduism), Mohinder Singh Chana* (Sikhism).

Group B: Church of England: Philippa Smith, Revd Claire Soderman, Lee Talbot.

Group C: Teachers' Associations: Tara Askew, Jo Colledge, Sarah Hodgson.

Group D: North Yorkshire Council: Cllr Alyson Baker (Chair), Cllr Robert Heseltine, Cllr Janet Jefferson*.

Officers present: Edward Maxwell (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Julie Pattison (Principal Education Adviser, Monitoring); Heather Russell, (Senior Education Advisor); and Olivia Seymour, (Professional Religious Education Advisor).

In attendance: Cllr George Jabbour.

Apologies: Cllr Annabel Wilkinson and Nasr Moussa Emam (Islam).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

46 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Annabel Wilkinson and Nasr Moussa Emam.

47 Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 September 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 were agreed as an accurate record, subject to one amendment which members discussed.

Members discussed the inclusion of a paragraph in Minute 23, which summarised a disagreement regarding the accuracy of the minutes for that meeting. It was suggested that the summary in that paragraph was not material to the business discussed at the meeting, and members agreed to remove it. Cllr Heseltine said that he was still dissatisfied after the incident, but agreed to the removal of the paragraph. Professor Adams explained that his response had not been directed at Cllr Heseltine and no offense was intended.

48 Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

49 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

50 Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements.

51 Member presentation - Nasr Moussa Emam

As Nasr Emam had given his apologies, the Chair asked that the presentation be deferred to the next meeting.

52 Agreed Syllabus - Principal Adviser, Monitoring and Professional Religious Education Adviser

The Professional RE Advisor presented a report on the updated Agreed Syllabus, updating members on the resources which would be provided to schools as part of the new syllabus.

Members were also informed about the arrangements for the Agreed Syllabus Launch on Friday 14 June, taking place at Harrogate Pavilions. Suggestions for local, regional, and national organisations to attend were sought.

Those SACRE members who planned to attend the launch were asked to provide details, and quotes for the new Syllabus document on the importance of Religious Education were also requested. The Clerk was to collate these responses.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

53 School Websites Survey - Principal Adviser, Monitoring and Professional Religious Education Adviser

The Professional RE Advisor updated members on the forthcoming School Websites Survey. As part of the SACRE's statutory responsibility to "monitor the provision and quality of the agreed syllabus RE and CW, in order to provide targeted advice and support", a new proforma had been developed which would allow members to review a school's website and information on its RE provision. This information could then be used to highlight successful examples, and identify areas where SACRE required further information so that advice and support could be provided.

Members confirmed that this survey would consist only of a brief survey of information readily available on the website, rather than a detailed investigation of social media or past newsletters.

It was agreed that officers would suggest one school for each member to survey before the end of the summer term in July, so that results could be reported to the next meeting. Officers also asked for any feedback on the content and layout of the survey itself, which would be used to improve future versions.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

54 Update by the Professional Religious Education Adviser

The Professional RE Advisor presented a report updating members on work undertaken by officers since the last update. Members provided positive feedback on the Primary RE Networks and the benefits of the training; and on the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, which had been shared with the network.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

55 Update by the Local Authority - Principal Adviser, Monitoring

The Principal Adviser (Monitoring) presented a report outlining the work of the Local Authority since the last update, in particular reviewing comments from the most recent OFSTED inspections relating to collective worship and the provision of RE, which had been made as part of a broader inspection of personal development.

Members noted their satisfaction with the range of highly positive comments many schools received, and highlighted comments which suggested room for improvement. The benefits of engaging early to ensure those schools were aware of the resources and support which were available were also discussed. It was also highlighted that the advice provided by SACRE was a continuous process, separate to the OFSTED inspection cycle.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

56 SACRE Self-Assessment Toolkit - Clerk

The SACRE Clerk presented a report asking for members who would be willing to serve on a Working Group which would review the SACRE's performance using the NASACRE Self-Assessment Toolkit, and report back to the next meeting. It was agreed that an email update would be sent to all members asking for volunteers, and the Clerk would arrange the Working Group meeting.

Agreed: That the report be noted.

57 Rolling Work Programme - Clerk

The Clerk presented the regular Work Programme Update, which included suggested agenda items for the next meeting. Members were invited to provide suggestions or additions for the programme, and the Chair requested that a schedule of future member presentations be prepared for meetings.

Members agreed that the next scheduled meeting of the SACRE, on 18 June 2024, be cancelled as it fell immediately after the planned Agreed Syllabus Launch. Noting that there were no urgent items which could all be rolled over to the meeting after, on 10 September 2024, members agreed to cancel the June meeting.

Agreed: That the report be noted, and that the 18 June 2024 meeting be cancelled.

58 Any Other Items

The SACRE recorded its thanks to Patrick Duffy, the outgoing Clerk who had recently retired, for his efforts over the past few years.