MINUTES OF THE SUMMER TERM MEETING OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) HELD ON 3 JUNE 2014 AT AL MADINA MOSQUE, BARKING

(10.00 am – 11.15 am)

Present: Reverend R Gayler (Chair) Mrs J Hoepelmann
Councillor S Ashraf Alderman F Jones
Mr D Dickson Ms S Khan
Mr P Fing Mr J Sowerby
Reverend L Hillier

Also present: Ms J Dyson (RE Consultant and Adviser to SACRE)
Mrs A Pepper, Principal Adviser
Ms S Pradhan, Head of RE, Eastbury Comprehensive School
Miss J Day, (Minute Clerk)

MINUTES – PART 1

Prior to the meeting, members were shown around the Al Madina Mosque, and they were given an opportunity to ask questions. Members were informed about the religious education classes provided at the mosque, and they were very interested to learn about fundraising for overseas community projects which mosque worshippers have recently been involved in. Councillor Ashraf was thanked for arranging the visit.

537 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted as follows:

Reverend S Myers
Mr M Nicholson
Councillor J White

The following members were absent and apologies had not been received:

Dr B Beheshti
Councillor A S Jamu

The members:

537.1 thanked Anne Pepper for returning for this meeting after recently leaving the Local Authority.

537.2 noted that this was Janet Dyson’s final meeting after 15 years as RE Subject Advisor. Members thanked Janet for her support and presented her with a gift to express their appreciation.

537.3 were informed that this may be Reverend Lyn Hillier’s last meeting because she would be working reduced hours from September. She confirmed that someone would attend in her place if she did not continue.
MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2014 were agreed subject to the following correction:

Minute no. 535.1: the suggestion to set up a Junior SACRE was made by Shareena Pradhan rather than David Dickson as stated.

Arising from the minutes the members:

538.1 were informed that a Sikh representative had still not been found despite approaching a primary school teacher and the Gurdwara in Barking. Shaheena Khan agreed to approach the Deputy Headteacher of Northbury Primary School. (Minute no. 531.1 refers).

538.2 were informed that a list of religious buildings available for school visits had been started and would be circulated to schools in due course. The Chair agreed to ask the Faith Forum for suggested additions to the list (Minute no 531.2 refers).

538.3 noted that letters had not been prepared for Sydney Russell and Dagenham Park Schools as previously requested. It was agreed that letters were no longer necessary because comments on secondary schools’ RE provision and exam results were included in the SACRE Annual Report. A copy of the report would be forwarded to NASACRE. (Minute no. 531.4 refers).

538.4 were informed that few written reports on RE provision had been presented to school governing bodies although it was an agenda item for Spring Term meetings. It was suggested that the Director’s Update could include a reminder of the need to provide annual reports to governors. SACRE would like to receive copies of reports to assist their monitoring role (Minute no. 531.6 refers).

538.5 were informed that a letter had been sent to the body which produced the All Parliamentary Report as agreed at the last meeting. (Minute no. 531.7 refers)

538.6 a) noted that the School Improvement Service was in the process of appointing someone to take responsibility for SACRE following Anne Pepper’s retirement in the Summer Term (Minute no. 532.2 (a) refers).

b) were informed that an RE advisory support service was being set up in discussion with David Dickson, Head of Eastbury Comprehensive School. Schools would be able to buy in to this service, led by Shareena Pradhan, from September 2014 following Janet Dyson’s retirement (Minute no. 532.2 (b) refers).

c) noted that the Diocesan Director of Education was discussing the appointment of a new potential Church of England Representative to succeed Reverend Roger Gayler on his retirement. (Minute no. 532.2 (c) refers).

d) placed on record their thanks to Anne, Janet and Roger for their advice and support over the years. It was suggested that they should be invited to future SACRE events.

538.7 confirmed that the SACRE Annual Report 2013 had been completed, and
noted that the data for Barking and Dagenham compared well to other LAs. A copy of the report will be sent to NASACRE. (Minute no. 533 refers).

538.8 agreed that the recommendations of the Ofsted Triennial Report 2013 should be part of SACRE’s action plan for the new academic year. It was agreed that the next meeting should be a half day session to work on the action plan. Mr Dickson agreed to host the meeting at Eastbury Comprehensive School. (Minute no. 534.1 refers).

538.9 were informed that secondary school heads of department were being emailed as part of the Junior SACRE setting up process. (Minute no. 535.1 refers).

539 UPDATE ON WORK WITH SCHOOLS

There was nothing to add to matters which had already been discussed.

540 NATIONAL RE ISSUES

The members:

540.1 were informed that the Summer 2014 edition of REsource included responses to the National RE Council Review of RE in England. The responses to the review will have an impact on the Agreed Syllabus. It was agreed that copies of the article should be sent to all SACRE members.

Action: J Day

540.2 noted that there was a lack of RE coverage in Ofsted inspections under the new framework because there are few inspectors who are RE specialists. The findings of Diocesan inspections of RE often vary from Ofsted’s findings. Anne Pepper advised that the framework for independent school inspections includes more focus on RE.

541 ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUTURE WORK OF SACRE

Members agreed to discuss SACRE Action Plan at the Autumn Term meeting.

542 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

542.1 Quality Mark for RE
Members noted that Eastbury Comprehensive School was the only school in the borough to have obtained the Quality Mark for RE (Gold standard). SACRE would like more schools to take part. Shareena Pradhan, Head of RE at Eastbury, is a trained assessor and could give schools more information about what is involved.

542.2 Self Assessment Tool
Anne Pepper informed members that a SACRE Self Assessment Tool was available. Janet Dyson advised that this had been used in the past.

542.3 Academies and Free Schools
Members noted that although academies and free schools are not obliged to follow SACRE guidance, they would like communication with the small number currently in the borough.

542.4 Applying for a Determination
Members were informed that a model process is available for schools to follow if
they wish to apply for a determination. This includes useful information, e.g. on consultation with parents and pupils.

542.5 **Correspondence**

Concern was raised about a course flyer which was circulated to members. It was felt that the flyer contained an unfortunate comment about confessional schooling which did not fit with the premise of the course. This concern was noted.

Members thanked Jo Atkinson for her help and support for their work.

543 **DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Members agree to hold future meetings as follows:

- **Autumn Term 2014**
  
  Tuesday 7 October 2014, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm, at Eastbury Comprehensive School (discuss Action Plan)

- **Spring Term 2015**
  
  Tuesday 20 January 2015, 9.30 am, venue to be confirmed

- **Summer Term 2015**
  
  Tuesday 2 June 2015 at 9.30 am, venue to be confirmed