

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

At a meeting of the **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)** held at County Hall, Morpeth on Wednesday, 11 January 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

**PRESENT**

Councillor G. R. Arckless  
Chairman in the Chair

**COUNCILLORS**

Murray, A. H.

Smith, J. E.

**CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVES**

Bainbridge, Mrs. E.

Hudson, C..

**TEACHER REPRESENTATIVES**

Duffield, A.

Nicholls, T.

**REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES & FAITHS**

Marley, Rev. E. H.  
Singh, C.

.Cousin, Mrs. J.

**CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES (Observers)**

Butterworth, Mrs. C.  
Davison, Mr. M.

Gibson, Mr. S.

North East Humanists  
Teacher Representative, Ponteland  
High School  
Principal - Secondary years,  
Northumberland Church of England  
Academy

## OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

P. André	Part-time RE Consultant
D. Cookson	Commissioner for Secondary Education
Mrs. L. Papaioannou	Democratic Services Officer

### 25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Pidcock, Ms. F. Gannon and Mrs. D. Van Der Velde.

### 26. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), held on Wednesday, 21 September 2016, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

Arising from discussion of the minutes, and with reference to Minute No.19, it was reported that Mr Dave Cookson and Mr Phil Andre had compiled a bid for submission to the 2017 Accord 'Inclusive Schools' Award. Despite Northumberland being a relatively monofaith environment, all the key documents were prepared and sent forward. Judgement would take place in January and the announcement was expected in February 2017. Phil Andre commented that he was not aware of any other North-East Authority submissions. On behalf of the SACRE, the Chairman thanked Dave Cookson and Phil Andre for their work on this submission and hoped for a favourable outcome.

### 27. AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION

The SACRE members received an update from Mr Phil André, RE Consultant, about his provision of RE in-service training and contacts with schools since the last related meeting (a copy of which is filed with the signed minutes).

Phil André drew the attention of members to the particularly worthwhile CPD training events that had taken place in some schools.

Members were advised that a teachers' briefing session on the New Agreed Syllabus was to take place on 24 January 2017 at Alnwick Lindisfarne Middle

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School. Owing to the level of interest expressed by teachers, it was hoped to run similar briefing sessions in the West and South-East of the County in due course.

With reference to the item at 23.11.16, Mr Chris Hudson asked about the information required for the Freedom of Information request in relation to religious groups and speakers engaging in “inappropriate proselytising” when visiting Northumberland schools. The Chairman provided assurance that an appropriate response had been made, which confirmed the view that there was no known issues of proselytising in Northumberland’s schools.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

## **28. NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER**

(a) Members were due to receive a copy of the 34th issue of the Northumberland SACRE newsletter, dated January 2017, which had been held up at the printers. It was proposed that the newsletter would be circulated to all schools and published to the schools’ website in due course. The Clerk also agreed to circulate a copy of the SACRE newsletter to all members and a copy would also be filed with the signed minutes.

Members welcomed the newsletter and thanked all those involved in providing it with informative and timely articles.

**RESOLVED** that the newsletter be received, with thanks extended to those involved in its production.

(b) Consideration was given to the arrangements for the articles to be included in the next edition of the SACRE Newsletter, Issue No.35, for April 2017.

Owing to the proposed early retirement of the Clerk, it was thought likely that alternative arrangements may be necessary for the production of the next and future newsletters and it was suggested that from now on it will probably be possible to publish only an online version. Mr. Dave Cookson agreed to liaise with Phil Andre on this. Teacher representatives stressed the importance of an online newsletter being in a printable format for use in schools and staff rooms.

The Chairman outlined his intention to prepare an article for inclusion in the next newsletter.

**RESOLVED** that the position be noted.

## **29. NASACRE ISSUES**

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**(a) The NASACRE Newsletter – SACRE News**

Members received the NASACRE Briefing No. 13 dated January 2017, for information (a copy of which is filed with the signed minutes).

It was particularly noted that the next NASACRE Conference and AGM was to be held at the Hilton Hotel in York on 16 May 2017.

Mrs Josephine Cousin, Cloud Singh and Mr Phil Andre expressed their interest in being Northumberland attendees at the 2017 NASACRE Conference and AGM, subject to the funding of travel expenses being paid for by the Children's Services Directorate.

With reference to the article on page 7, it was noted that A New Framework for Assessment in RE would be welcomed by schools.

Reminder of web site link: [www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk) for other interesting articles.

Members discussed their responses and collectively compiled a return for the Big NASACRE Survey 2017. The Clerk agreed to send off the completed return.

**RESOLVED** that the NASACRE Briefing No.13 be received and that the NASACRE Big Survey 2017 be completed and returned.

**(b) NASACRE/Westhill Awards 2017**

It was noted that grant funding of £4,000 was awarded by Westhill for successful applications. Applications had to be submitted by the SACRE as a sponsored project. It was also noted that Northumberland SACRE had submitted applications in the past but had been unsuccessful. Members were made aware that Newcastle SACRE was considering the submission of a bid for CPD for teachers, but needed to demonstrate the involvement of students in order to be sustainable. It was thought unlikely that Northumberland SACRE would submit a bid in 2017, although options could be explored with neighbouring authorities.

Mr Tony Nicholls reminded members of SACRE that the ATL teaching union had funding to support RE CPD training events and that the contact representative for liaison was Helen Fentum of The Duke's Middle School in Alwrick.

**RESOLVED** that the position be noted.

**30. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE NASACRE CONSTITUTION**

Members considered proposed changes to the NASACRE constitution (a copy of the report enclosed as Appendix B was filed with the signed minutes).

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Members discussed the occasion at a NASACRE meeting which caused the business being discussed to come to a standstill owing to a problem with the Constitution. It was clear that the NASACRE Constitution needed to be changed in order to function effectively. The Chairman and Mr Phil Andre had prepared a briefing about a proposed change to the NASACRE Constitution which, if approved by the Northumberland SACRE, was to be sent for consideration by the NASACRE.

There was a general agreement that the proposed change seemed a sensible solution and should be submitted to NASACRE.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed change to the NASACRE Constitution be submitted to NASACRE for their consideration.

### **31. STATUTORY ANNUAL NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE REPORT FOR 2015/16 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Members received a copy of the (draft) statutory annual report of Northumberland SACRE, for consideration and approval (a copy of which is filed with the signed minutes and marked as Appendix C).

The revised format for the Annual Report was noted, along with some minor amendments.

The members of SACRE formally endorsed the draft statutory annual report of Northumberland SACRE for the 2015-16 academic year

On behalf of the SACRE, the Chairman extended his thanks to the Clerk and Phil Andre for their work in this regard.

**RESOLVED** that the statutory annual report of the Northumberland SACRE for the 2015-16 academic year be approved and circulated for distribution including, as usual, one copy being submitted to the NASACRE in pdf format.

### **32. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2017**

Members received a verbal update from the Chairman on progress towards the arrangement of a Holocaust Memorial Day event being held at County Hall, Morpeth on Thursday 26 January 2017.

A teacher representative asked if it was possible to bring a small group of Post-16 students to the HMD event at County Hall. The Chairman said he encouraged inclusivity and agreed to enquire whether there was sufficient capacity for the students to attend,

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**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

### **33. THE CASEY REVIEW - A Review into Opportunity and Integration**

Members of SACRE received and considered the Executive Summary of the Casey Review dated December 2016 undertaken by Dame Louise Casey. (A copy of which is filed with the signed minutes and marked as Appendix D).

Members welcomed the opportunity to view the full report online. The report was considered to be very interesting and thought provoking, and it was hoped the Government would make use of it as a good cause. It was fully recognised that Northumberland was in a very different situation to some of the larger urban communities; nevertheless, it was important to highlight an awareness of the issues, despite Northumberland's demography. There was an appreciation of the promotion of British values in public office and post-truth issues.

Cloud Singh expressed his concern about a particular reference in the Review in relation to Sikhism and extremism, with reference to a mixed faith marriage issue. This had caused him concern as Sikhism was known to be a peaceful religion.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received and the information be noted.

### **34. SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION IN NORTHUMBERLAND SCHOOLS**

Members had hoped to receive a verbal update from Mr Dave Cookson, Commissioner for Secondary Education, with regard to sex and relationship education in Northumberland schools.

As Mr Cookson had left the meeting earlier to attend an urgent appointment, it was agreed to seek a response at the next meeting.

It was also noted that the Brook organisation had realised that schools were challenged by these issues and had produced some useful e-learning materials on;

- how to deliver SRE
- Relationships and enduring love?
- Sex and sexual health.

Mr. S. Gibson of NCEA commented that in the Academy the title was reversed so that an important distinction was understood; *Relationships and sex education*.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

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**35. OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported his decision to not stand for re-election at the local Council elections in May 2017 and that this would therefore likely be his last meeting of SACRE. He commented that over the last 9 years, SACRE had been an important part in his life and he thanked all members, past and present, for their support. It was noted that Councillor J. E. Smith would also not be standing for re-election at the local Council elections.

Furthermore, this was the last meeting to be attended by the Clerk to SACRE who would be leaving the Council at the end of February.

Members expressed their appreciation of Councillor Arckless's exemplary chairmanship of the SACRE and invited him to consider returning as a Co-opted member.

Heartfelt and very warm thanks were also extended to the Clerk to the SACRE for her work over the last 20 years, although disappointment was expressed about the loss of key members of staff, the Clerk to the SACRE included.

**36. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting of the Northumberland SACRE be held on Wednesday, 7 June 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

**CHAIRMAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

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