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Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: Thursday, 19 October 2023

Time: 4.30 pm

Place: Committee Members are to meet at the Nottingham Liberal Synagogue, Lloyd Street, Nottingham, NG5 4BP

Citizens and interested parties can observe the meeting by following the Zoom Meeting link below (Meeting ID: 828 7485 1421 Passcode: 176221)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82874851421?pwd=NllaNHN0a0V5RHdSUzVNZHpmU2VaZz09>
(Please note that there is no in-person public access available)

Local Authority Officer for SACRE: Heidi Shewell-Cooper

Email: Heidi.Shewell-Cooper@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Governance Officer: Catherine Ziane-Pryor **Direct Dial:** 0115 876 4298

- 1 **Welcome**
- 2 **Apologies For Absence**
- 3 **Declarations Of Interests**
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Of The Meeting Held On 20 July 2023 (for confirmation)
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9 Summary of Actions

SACRE is the 'Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education'. Since 1944 every Local Authority is required by law to have a SACRE. Its role was further strengthened in the Education Reform Act of 1988 and most recently in 1996.

The responsibilities of SACRE are:

- to provide advice to the Local Authority (LA) on all aspects of its provision for RE in its schools (this does not include Voluntary Aided Schools);
- to decide whether the LA's Agreed Syllabus for RE needs to be reviewed and if so, to ensure that this is completed;
- to provide advice to the LA on Collective Worship in its schools (this does not include Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled Schools);
- to consider any requests from Headteachers to hold Collective Worship that is not of a broadly Christian character;
- to advise on matters relating to training for teachers in RE and Collective Worship;
- to publish an Annual Report of its work.

Attending Committee members are requested to note the following:

- Access to the Synagogue is via the bottom door accessed by the car park, there are stairs up to the meeting space (unless mobility issues prevent this, in which place, please inform Heidi Shewell-Cooper in advance, if possible).
- The gates to the car park will be locked but staffed by the Synagogue care-taker.
- Can attendees, either on foot or by car, please be ready to give their name and preferably ID to the care taker on arrival.

Nottingham City Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the meeting held at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCt4VuYp8JJvXCLRmSRJ1mw/featured> - To be held remotely and streamed on 20 July 2023 from 4.36 pm - 5.24 pm

ATTENDANCE (✓ indicates present)

GROUP A - Representatives of Christian denominations and other religions/faith

	Martin Bennett	Salvation Army
	Mark Bennett	Methodist Church
	Moira Dales	Roman Catholic
	Krishna Dasi	Director of Hinduism Education Services
✓	Chris Richards	Humanist
	Deb Martin	Quaker
	Hafiz M Muntazir	Islam
	Bishop James Stapleton	African Caribbean Churches
	Pvail Singh	Sikhism
✓	Norman Randall	Jewish
	Ioakeim Oureilidis	Greek Orthodox
	Dr Ifran Malik	Ahmadiyya Muslim Association

GROUP B - Church of England representatives (6)

✓	Andrea Burrows	Lowdham Primary
	Allison Milbank	University of Nottingham - Theology & Religious Studies
	Anne Lumb	Southwell and Nottingham Diocese
		Vacancy
		Vacancy

GROUP C - Teacher representatives (6)

✓	Sarah Peek	St Stephen's Primary
✓	Louise Regan	National Education Union
	Jonathan Rodriguez	Bluecoat Aspley
✓	David Wand	UNISON
		Vacancy
		Vacancy

GROUP D - Elected City Council representatives

✓	Councillor Cheryl Barnard	Bulwell Forest Ward
✓	Councillor David Mellen	Dales Ward
✓	Councillor Angela Kandola	Berridge Ward
	Councillor Neghat Khan	Dales Ward
✓	<i>Cllr Farzanna Mahmood</i>	<i>to be formally confirmed</i>
✓	<i>Cllr Sajid Mohammed</i>	<i>to be formally confirmed</i>

Others in Attendance

Heidi Shewell-Cooper	- SACRE Lead Officer
Nick Lee	- Director of Education
Catherine Ziane-Pryor	- Governance Officer

1 Apologies for absence

Martyn Bennett,
Anne Lumb,
Alison Milbank,
Father Ioakeim Oureilidis,
Pvail Singh.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2021 and 16 June 2021 (as an informal meeting), were agreed as a true record.

4 The Role of SACRE

Councillor Cheryl Barnard, Chair of the Advisory Council and Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People and Education, was accompanied by SACRE Lead Officer Heidi Shewell-Cooper, and delivered a brief training presentation by the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE) about SACRE and outlining the role of members.

A copy of the presentation is issued with the initial publication of the minutes.

Points highlighted and questions from those in attendance were responded to as follows:

- a) SACRE is part of local government and advises the Local Authority (LA) on matters related to Religious Education (RE) and collective worship (CW) in schools;
- b) Every LA must have a SACRE which meets sufficiently often to fulfil its statutory duties. There has been a gap in meetings which are now fully reinstated to ensure that the Council does meet these statutory duties;
- c) Most SACREs meet three times year, which fits well with the academic terms;
- d) The statutory duties of SACRE include:
 - i. Advising the LA on matters related to the agreed syllabus, RE and CW;
 - ii. Publishing an annual report of the work of the SACRE, which is also submitted to the Secretary of State;
 - iii. With the exception of confidential material, the SACRE meets in public and the minutes of those meetings are made publicly available. It is proposed that this SACRE revert to meeting in person, rather than virtually, and at religious and educational sites across the City;

- iv. To consider determinations (appeals) by schools which wish to modify the legal requirement for the majority of acts of CW to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. Nottingham City is yet to receive an appeal for determination;
- e) An effective SACRE should:
- i. Monitor the delivery and quality of the agreed syllabus and CW, and provide advice to schools where necessary;
 - ii. Advise the LA on the provision of training of religious education teachers;
 - iii. Consider complaints referred by the LA regarding RE and CW;
 - iv. Consider if changes need to be made to the agreed syllabus and provide advice to the LA with regard to the agreed syllabus and its implementation;
- f) A SACRE may:
- i. Require the LA to review its agreed syllabus. It is noted that the City and County SACRE has jointly reviewed and established the agreed syllabus, which is not now due for scheduled review until 2026;
 - ii. Co-opt individuals to provide educational expertise, gather the views of young people and children, or religious and non-religious views that reflect a diverse multi-cultural society;
- g) SACREs consist of four groupings of representatives:
- i. GROUP A - Christian (but not Church of England) and other faiths as reflect the principal religious traditions in Nottingham;
 - ii. GROUP B - Church of England;
 - iii. GROUP C - Teachers, including two teachers of religious education, at least one being a primary school teacher;
 - iv. GROUP D - Elected members of Nottingham City Council.

5 Training Video

Nottingham City Council has previously been a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE) which is a fabulous source of information and advice and provides some interesting training opportunities. The LA will rejoin to support the work of SACRE. Members of SACRE are encouraged to take advantage of the resources available. The training film, with further detail, and membership access details to the NASACRE website will be circulated to SACRE members separately.

Confirmation will be sought as to whether LA schools are eligible for access to the site and training.

6 Future meeting dates and Work Plan

Comments from members included:

- a) SACRE and its constitution were determined more than 25 years ago. It is questionable whether the Church of England should have a separate category whilst all other non-Church of England Christians and other faith, non-faith groups have to share a category. Central government revision of these categories would be welcome. It is important that the local constitution aligns with the up-to-date city demographic to properly reflect our communities;
- b) It seems unusual to have a religious education curriculum which all school is must agree when they have a national curriculum for other subjects which they can then interpret. The time of the LA telling schools what to do is long gone, so this committee should be used for the widest possible discussion, not just for religious education, but the broader issues for a city of such diversity, specifically guarding against hate, for which religious education is vitally important;
- c) This SACRE need to focus on community cohesion and how to assist schools;
- d) Members of this forum could decide how active they want to be in the national discussion and dialogue on these issues, particularly if there are members who would be willing to take part in additional work in this area, it would be the best way of effecting change;
- e) The reconvening of the City SACRE after a gap is very much welcomed, and a revitalisation to include representation through the SACRE of the broad diversity of the City's population is supported, including those with no religious views;
- f) It is appreciated that the structure of SACREs is set in legislation and that a revision by Central Government is unlikely, so we must work with what we have;
- g) We need to work with and around the legislative requirements, but as a local SACRE, ensure that there is appropriate representation for the different voices. This could be included in the future work plan;
- h) Meeting 3 times a year is a good approach, but we must ensure that meeting dates don't clash with any religious festivals, as this has previously caused issues;
- i) Due to an increase in anti-Semitic and religiously motivated attacks, there is a need for additional security if the Synagogue is to host a future meeting. This is a broader issue for places of worship and education, particularly when religious organisations are opening up their areas of sanctuary. Further investigation of security mechanisms need to be examined and determined prior to the next in-person meeting;
- j) Many city schools and multi-academy trusts are seeking to further diversify their teaching staff to better represent the diversity of children in their communities, through promotion through community groups. For example, for any opportunities with the Archway Learning Trust (a Trust supporting several academies with the Church of

England ethos) contact Head of HR or CEO) Home - Archway Learning Trust (archwaytrust.co.uk);

- k) The department of Education is supporting some teacher recruitment work in the City facilitated by Nottingham Citizens with the Karima Institute and the Majority Black Led Churches/God's Vineyard Ministries. It is anticipated that some teacher recruitment sessions will run in the autumn term. This is supported by all the Local Initial Teacher Training Providers, working collaboratively on grass-roots led recruitment. Members welcomed these actions.

Actions:

Heidi Shewell-Cooper:

- To contact NASCRE to;
 - i. determine if NASCRE RE training material and access to the website can be shared with member Authority schools;
 - ii. identify what provision may be available to expand the membership groupings to more broadly incorporate the diversity of the City's populations and religions following;
- In advance of the next meeting, to facilitate a meeting of the Chair, David Wand, Chris Richards and any other interested members, to consider the constitution and membership scope, ensuring that there is equity for our communities.
- To identify and liaise with appropriate representatives to contribute to future agenda items as listed for the forward plan.

Norman Randall:

- To liaise with Heidi and Catherine to finalise a date and arrangements to potentially hold the next meeting at the Sherwood Synagogue;

Sarah Peek:

- To liaise with Heidi and Catherine to finalise a date and arrangements to potentially hold the March 2024 meeting at St Stephen's CofE Primary School;

Andrea Burrows:

- To liaise with Trinity Church, Heidi and Catherine to finalise a date to potentially and arrangements for holding the July 2024 meeting at a Trinity Church property;

Catherine Ziane-Pryor:

- Determine the legislative public access requirements of SACRE to facilitate meetings being held in places of worship and sanctuary.

Resolved

- 1) for future meetings to be held in person at varying religious and educational establishments;**
- 2) subject to confirmation, for future meeting to be held at 4.30pm as follows, with introductions invited from the host organisations:**

- **23 November 2023 at the Sherwood Liberal Synagogue (at the invitation of Norman Randall);**
- **14 March 2024 at Sneinton St Stephen's CofE Primary School (at the invitation of Sarah Peek);**
- **4 July 2024 at Trinity Church (at the suggestion of Andrea Burrows);**

1) **Topics for the forward plan include:**

Meeting	Item	
23 November 2023	A review of the constitution and membership	The Chair, David Wand and Chris Richards, with the support of Heidi Shewell-Cooper, to consider the constitution, including membership (if/how there needs to be broader representation). Build in opportunities at meetings to discuss what type of activity members would like to see of/from this committee;
14 March 2024	Young people's wellbeing and emotional development	To support an understanding of children and young people's mental health and well-being post-Covid. This would also include the impact of trauma, such as the recent violent city events on children and young people. This could cover the recovery measures Huntingdon School have implemented following the brutal murder of Ian Coates, the school caretaker, and the broader support available to schools to respond to loss through the critical incident team.
4 July 2024	Welcoming refugees to the City	To focus on the 'welcome' experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in the city and the support and co-ordination offered by schools, Sanctuary organisations, religious groups and refugee organisations. To host at an appropriate venue.