

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST  
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)  
HELD ON 21 MARCH 2018 AT 5.30 PM  
AT WALTHAM FOREST TOWN HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBER**

## Present:

Ted Cooke (TC)	Chair	Member Group B
PC Steven MacDonald (SMcD)	Co-opted Member	
Wendy Smith (WS)	Co-opted Member	
Tarsem Bhogal	Member Group A	
Keith Pilling (KP)	Member Group A	
Mike Stygal (MS)	Member Group A	
Jeannette Waller (JW)	Member Group B	
Fr Neil Walsh	Member Group B	
Heather Soar (HS)	Member Group C	
Ruth Kaufman (RK)	Member Group D	
David Kilgallon (DK)	LBWF Head of School Improvement	Group D
Darra McMadyen (DMcF)	LBWF School Effectiveness Advisor	Group
Colin Whitehead	Member	
David Rees (DR)	Clerk to the SACRE	

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

<b>Minute reference</b>	<b>Formal agreements and/or actions identified</b>	<b>Named person(s) for action(s) identified</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
3.2	Contact RC Diocese of Brentwood	Chair	immediate
3.3	Contact Francis Road gurdwara about nomination to SACRE	Chair	immediate
5	The collective worship draft guidance document should be finalised	DMcF	ongoing
5	Finalised powerpoint presentation to be circulated to all within the next week, or before the end of term	DMcF	immediate
5	All members to comment on collective worship draft guidance	All members	By end of Easter holiday
5	Final guidance document to be made available to schools in summer term.	DMcF	In summer term
6	Further efforts to contact teachers about Agreed Syllabus	DMcF, Gov. Services	immediate
6	Complete Agreed Syllabus Progress report	DMcF	ongoing
7	Ramadan Guidance to be completed; to issue not later than 2 weeks before Ramadan	DMcF	2 weeks prior to Ramadan
8	Include Evaluation of WF SACRE as item on post-May meeting	Governor Services, Chair	Post-May SACRE

	agenda.		meeting
9.2	Consider an appropriate multi-faith event for 2019 Borough of Culture	All Members	ongoing
9.3	Link to CORE document to be sent to all.	Chair	immediate

**1. WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Introductions were made.
- 1.3 Particular welcome was extended to Heather Soar, who is a school teacher at Downsell Primary School, and to Colin Whitehead, school governor.
- 1.4 It was noted that after May elections there would be new representation of Waltham Forest Council. Cllr Paul Braham could be offered an observers place on SACRE.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Rev. 'Femi Cole-Njie, Fr Alex Summers, Emma Lloyd, Peter Dawe, Cllr Rukhsana Yaqoob, Cllr Richard Sweden, Cllr Paul Braham, Cllr Paul Douglas, Cllr Shameem Highfield; and David Kilgallon for lateness.
- 1.3 The Chair welcomed Wendy Smith, chair of the Faith Committee Forum, onto the SACRE as a co-opted non-voting member.
- 1.4 The meeting was quorate there being a member from each of the four representative groups present.

**2. MINUTES**

- 2.1 Accuracy  
The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair signed a copy of the minutes and these were retained by the Clerk.

**3. SACRE MEMBERSHIP AND VACANCIES**

- 3.1 Darra is in discussion with Donna Miller of Governor Services as how best to get teachers to attend SACRE meetings; the difficulty being that the demands on their time are so high.
- 3.2 There continues to be no response to the Chair's approaches from the R.C Diocese of Brentwood.
- 3.3 The gurdwara at Francis Road has been invited to nominate a successor to Tarsem Bhogal, who will shadow TB until he steps down.
- 3.4 There are up to 4 places for Muslim representatives on SACRE; those interested in education and in community cohesion are being sought.

**ACTION      Contact RC Diocese of Brentwood      Chair**  
**ACTION      Contact Francis Road gurdwara about nomination to SACRE      Chair**

**4 PRESENTATION ON WHAT COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IS**

- 4.1 DMcF gave a presentation, currently in draft form; a powerpoint version exists but in the absence of an audio-visual facility in the Council Chamber, a printed version was available.
- 4.2 The presentation addresses questions such as  
 What is a collective act of worship?  
 What is meant by "broadly Christian"?  
 What is prayer?
- 4.3 Schools are asked to act as a community, to think about and to share values.
- 4.4 A school assembly is not of itself an act of worship, though it may be if a school so decides.
- 4.5 Prayer should be an invitation to join in a prayer or in a reflection.

- 4.6 Schools should know their children, and should know the community in which they work.
- 4.7 Diverse cultures and faiths can be less of an issue for primary schools than for secondary schools.
- 4.8 Headteachers have found this presentation useful.

## **5 CONSIDERATION OF GUIDANCE ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

- 5.1 Members asked a number of questions
  - Must a child attend an act of collective worship? DMcF, No.
  - What is the role of school governors in this?
  - What is a “quality experience” in collective worship?
  - What guidance is there concerning inclusive language around the act of prayer?

- ACTION** **The Guidance document should be finalised** **DMcF**
- ACTION** **Finalised powerpoint presentation to be circulated to all within the next week, or before the end of term** **DMcF**
- ACTION** **All members to comment by the end of Easter holiday** **All**
- ACTION** **Final Guidance document to be made available to schools in summer term.** **DMcF**

## **6 PROGRESS REPORT ON KEY STAGE 3 & 4 AGREED SYLLABUS**

- 6.1 It is proving extremely difficult to get involvement of teachers in discussion of the use of the Agreed Syllabus to improve R.E. teaching.
- 6.2 There is a draft document in existence.
- 6.3 It was resolved to make further efforts to engage teachers, either by arranging another meeting, or contacting them individually at their schools.
- 6.4 A draft version of the document will be brought to the May meeting, if it can be ready by then.

- ACTION** **Further efforts to contact teachers** **DMcF, Governor Services**
- ACTION** **Complete Progress report** **DMcF**

## **7 RAMADAN GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS**

- 7.1 A draft guidance document was tabled.
- 7.2 It was noted that Ramadan this year coincides with primary and secondary school examinations.
- 7.3 Observation of Ramadan varies according to differing muslim traditions
- 7.4 It is important that schools should know their families, and talk to parents.
- 7.5 There was discussion of the impact of fasting on childrens' wellbeing and performance in school; some members expressed the importance of safeguarding individual children from peer pressure, and that child protection should be the priority; other members said that it was important that parents should inform the school if their child will be fasting, so that a place to rest can be provided, rather than play; it was asked if SACRE would support a school which did not encourage fasting, to which DMcF said that would be very difficult.
- 7.6 The status of LA advice to schools was questioned; DK said that maintained schools were obliged to follow LA advice, but that academies were not so obliged, though there were a number of routes for LA to encourage academies to follow LA advice.
- 7.7 One day of absence and no more can be authorised for Eid celebration.

- ACTION** **Complete guidance; issue not later than 2 weeks before Ramadan** **DMcF**

## **8 EVALUATE THE WORK OF WF SACRE**

This item was deferred to after the May SACRE meeting.

