

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE
LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 21 APRIL 2021 AT 5.30 P.M.
VIA A CONFERENCE CALL**

Present:

Mr Colin Whitehead	(CW)	Member Group C (Chair)
Mr Mike Stygal	(MS)	Member Group A
Ms Tara Khare	(TK)	Member Group A
Mr Ted Cooke	(TC)	Member Group B
Mr Paul Braham	(PB)	Member Group B
Ms Heather Soar	(HS)	Member Group C
Cllr Zia-Ur Rehman	(ZU)	Member Group D
Cllr Anna Mbachu	(AM)	Member Group D
- Cllr Mbachu arrived at 6.55 p.m.		
Cllr Catherine Saumarez	(CS)	Member Group D
Ms Ruth Kaufman	(RK)	Member Group D

Clerk: Julie Cornelius

Also present: Ms Darra McFadyen (DMc) Observer
Rev Katherine Ward – Prospective member Group B
Donna Miller, Governor Services Manager, Waltham Forest

To note: All action points recorded in the minutes would state only the person(s) responsible for that action. Full action details are recorded in the summary table below.

Summary of agreements and actions:

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Action status update
4.2 'Matters arising'	To electronically sign a copy of the agreed minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021.	Chair	Immediate
4.2 'Matters arising'	To remind Adewale Akano to invite PREVENT representatives to attend the meeting on 7 July.	Chair	Immediate
4.2 'Matters arising'	To contact the Faith and Belief Forum regarding their restructuring and the support they offer to schools.	Is'Haaq Jasat	Immediate
	To contact Is'Haaq Jasat, via e-mail regarding	Chair	Immediate

Chair's Initials:

	the Faith and Belief Forum.		
4.2 'Matters arising'	To follow up with a Council Officer who had agreed to assist in recruiting someone with an interest in joining the SACRE.	Cllr Sweden	As soon as possible.
4.2 'Matters arising'	To discuss with Donna Miller, recruitment of representatives from the Romanian and Greek Churches.	Ted Cooke	As soon as possible.
4.2 'Matters arising'	To clarify the eligibility criteria with regard to SACRE membership.	Donna Miller	As soon as possible.
4.2 'Matters arising'	To follow up regarding attendance at the NASACRE Conference.	Darra McFadyen	Immediate
6.1	To read the Safeguarding checklist and send any comments to Darra McFadyen.	Members	Immediate
6.1	To run a report to identify who had not yet confirmed they had read the KCSIE document.	Donna Miller	Immediate
7.	To circulate the School Survey.	Donna Miller/Darra McFadyen	Within one week
8.	DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021 To collate statutory attainment data and e-mail to the Chair.	Darra McFadyen	Immediate
8.	To collate information regarding the faith and belief work in schools.	Is'Haaq Jasat/Darra McFadyen	Immediate
8.	To provide a summary of the World Faiths document.	Ruth Kaufman	Immediate
9.2	To discuss the implementation of teacher support groups.	Darra McFadyen/ Chair	Immediate
9.3	To look into inviting a guest speaker to the AGM taking place in September, 2021.	Chair	Immediate
10.1	Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 7 July at 5.30 p.m. This will be a virtual meeting.	All	
10.2	Agenda items: 1. Safeguarding Annual Plan 2. Results from the school survey 3. Planning meeting on 5 May 4. To discuss support network for teachers.	All	

Chair's Initials:

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	5. The Hub <u>Agenda Items carried over</u> 1. To review a later start time for forthcoming meetings and next year, to consider different days on which to meet.		
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1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Colin Whitehead, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. All present introduced themselves.

1.2 Apologies for absence received and accepted

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Keith Pilling who is unable to attend virtual meetings, Cllr Richard Sweden, Mr Adewale Akano and Mr Is'Haaq Jasat.

Mr Keith Pilling had given his apologies some time ago stating that he would not be able to attend meetings on Zoom due to his visual disability.

1.3 Apologies for absence not received

Apologies were not received from Mr Tarsem Bhogal, Mr Lashanna Hamilton, Mr Said Looch, Ms Katharine O'Brien, Mr Dermott O'Neil and Fr Alex Summers.

1.4 Quorum

The meeting was quorate, with a representative from each member group in attendance.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Clerk to confirm receipt of declarations as listed on Governor Hub

Members, who had not yet completed a Declaration of Interest, were reminded to do this (via Governor Hub) within the next few days.

2.2 Members to declare any personal or pecuniary interests in this meeting's agenda items

There were no declarations made.

3. THE HUB PRESENTATION

It was agreed this would be deferred but in the interim, the following was noted.

Darra McFadyen said the Hub is used to communicate with schools and it was planned for Fearne Edwards to show members how they could use the Hub for this purpose. An example of this would be the schools' survey, which it was anticipated, should be available to upload to the Hub in the summer term. The intention is for the SACRE to use the Hub more effectively. Darra McFadyen referred to some schools asking what the SACRE does and how does it help schools to teach R.E more effectively. Ted Cooke, as an advocate of the Hub, agreed that it enables easier access to information. Donna Miller said the purpose of the Hub was to ensure that

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everything schools needed to access, in terms of policies, etc., was in one place. Members can also access resources via hyperlinks.

In response to the Chair asking if schools had responded to the request for information regarding collective worship and assemblies, Darra McFadyen said no responses to date were received. T

To conclude, the Chair said the Hub was a powerful resource through which to communicate information to schools and additionally, was a resource to inform schools that the SACRE exists and is looking to support effective R.E., both for teachers and pupils.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2021

4.1 The minutes were **agreed** as a true and accurate record.
The Chair would electronically sign a copy of the minutes, via Governor Hub.
Action: Chair

4.2 Matters arising

An action update status was provided in the table below, together with any additional information.

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Action status update
2.1	To send a reminder to those members who had not yet completed their annual declaration of personal and pecuniary interest.	Donna Miller	Completed
3.1	To electronically sign (via Governor Hub) a copy of the agreed minutes of 27 January 2021.	Chair	Completed
3.2 'Matters arising'	To convene a Working Party to discuss the Annual Plan.	Darra McFadyen	Completed – to take place on 05/05/2021 at 5.30 p.m.
3.2 'Matters arising'	To invite PREVENT representatives to attend the meeting on 7 July.	Adewale Akano	C/forward
3.2 'Matters arising'	To make contact with Beth at Chingford Foundation school.	Darra McFadyen	Completed
3.2 'Matters arising'	To circulate and upload to Governor Hub, the syllabus presentation by RE Today.	Darra McFadyen	Completed
3.2 'Matters arising'	To contact the Faith and Belief Forum regarding their restructuring and the support	Is'Haaq Jasat	C/forward.

arising'	they offer to schools.		
3.2 'Matters arising'	To follow up with a Council Officer who had agreed to assist in recruiting someone with an interest in joining the SACRE.	Cllr Sweden	C/forward
3.2 'Matters arising'	To provide an update regarding anyone from the Muslim faith who would be interested in joining the SACRE and to then update the Chair.	Is'Haaq Jasat	Completed
3.2 'Matters arising'	To make contact with representatives from the Romanian and Greek Churches.	Ted Cooke	C/forward. See additional notes below.
3.2 'Matters arising'	To forward to Governor Services, details of the person from the Bah'hai community, interested in joining the SACRE.	Tara Khare	Completed
4.2	To clarify the eligibility criteria with regard to SACRE membership.	Donna Miller	C/forward. See additional notes below.
4.2	To e-mail (via GOV HUB) to all members, a document relating to recruitment and invite volunteers to a working party.	Chair	Completed
5.1	To contact Fearne Edwards regarding the placement of School Guidance on Hub	Darra MFadyen	Completed
5.2	To comment on the Ramadan collective guidance. To contact Darra McFadyen once comments were received from members.	Members Chair	Completed Completed
5.2	Place update on School newsletter with links to new school guidance.	Darra MFadyen	Completed
6.	To produce a profile document regarding the reporting of safeguarding concerns.	Darra McFadyen	Completed
7.1	To follow up regarding attendance at the NASACRE Conferences.	Darra McFadyen	C/forward

To make contact with representatives from the Romanian and Greek Churches:

Ted Cooke had held a number of conversations with the Romanian Churches, some of which had expressed an interest. However, due to the COVID pandemic, it was not possible to meet with any interested parties. It had been difficult to make contact with the Greek Orthodox Churches.

Action: Ted Cooke

To clarify the eligibility criteria with regard to SACRE membership:

Donna Miller had contacted Legal and Democratic Services who currently, were unable to respond due to the impending elections.

Action: Donna Miller

Chair's Initials:

5 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

5.1 Confirmation of membership

Clerk to confirm existing constitution and membership - list attached

This was confirmed.

It was agreed at the last meeting to invite potential members to meetings prior to them joining the SACRE. A Working Party, of which the Chair and Donna Miller were members, was established to fill current vacancies.

5.2 Draft Recruitment process document for approval

The Chair said it had been difficult to establish a procedure to make appointments to the SACRE. Donna Miller shared on screen, with members, the process by which this would take place.

The document proposed setting up a Working Party to discuss vacancies and potential members and to then work with the Local Authority to make the appointment.

The Chair had shared the document with members prior to the meeting and had asked for volunteers to join the Working party. Tara Khare had kindly agreed to join

The Chair discussed the application form in which prospective members would confirm acknowledgment of the membership criteria. They would also sign the Code of Conduct.

Donna Miller said that as DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks were not undertaken, a character reference and confirmation of I.D. should be sought from prospective members, prior to making an appointment.

In response to the Chair asking for other volunteers to join the Working Party, Ruth Kaufman said she would be happy to join for the first year. Darra McFadyen would be happy to attend as an observer. Mike Stygal said it was previously discussed that there should be one person from each member group on the Working Party and it was agreed this would be reviewed.

Members **agreed** unanimously to adopt this process and to fill outstanding appointments.

5.3 Creation of welcome pack to new members

The Working Party would work together to compile a welcome pack for new members.

6. SAFEGUARDING IN SETTINGS

6.1 Safeguarding Lead member role profile

The meeting scheduled today for Darra McFadyen and Donna Miller to meet with the Waltham Forest LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), did not proceed; the LADO was unable to attend. Darra McFadyen referred to the 'roles and

responsibilities' document which she wanted to share with the LADO. This is to enable the SACRE to have more of a role in ensuring that safeguarding in schools and settings improves.

Darra McFadyen said SACRE members needed to understand what a serious topic, safeguarding was and that all members should read the KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe In Education) document. There should be a SACRE Safeguarding Lead to ensure there is up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding in schools. Meetings should take place with the LADO on an annual basis but it was emphasised that this was not to take direct responsibility for safeguarding in schools.

Darra has uploaded information to Governor Hub.

The PREVENT strategy was discussed and if members were aware of their role in relation to this. Schools look at this as part of safeguarding. Members should comment via Governor Hub and discuss this, where relevant with the LADO.

Mike Stygal referred to communication regarding safeguarding and that when the Faith and Belief Forum started, it would have been beneficial to flag up safeguarding expectations; there are occasions when safeguarding is mentioned.

Darra McFadyen said we need to recognise that each setting will have very clear safeguarding procedures and that schools have a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Waltham Forest LADO had highlighted that there were some practices in some faith settings that were of concern. In response, Mike Stygal referred to the Waltham Forest Inter Faith Group and Faith communities; Darra McFadyen said she believes these groups do talk to the SACRE. The LADO is not convinced these groups are carrying out their responsibilities. Mike Stygal said in an official capacity, the SACRE should not be involved. Mike Stygal said he believes there is still an element of suspicion regarding PREVENT and that caution should be exercised in this respect.

Darra requested that members read the checklist and to send any comments including if anything should be added.

Action: Members

The Chair said once an appointment to the SACRE Safeguarding Lead was made, this person, as the named individual, could immediately make contact with relevant Officers to share any concerns. This person would also lead on the safeguarding perspective at meetings.

Darra McFadyen referred to the KCSIE document, reiterating that everyone should sign to confirm they have read this. This is set up on Governor Hub as a confirmation document, i.e. it has a declaration tab. Donna Miller will run a report to list those members who have not yet completed this.

Action: Donna Miller

Darra McFadyen will meet with the LADO and report back at the next meeting.

6.2 Safeguarding Lead member appointment
Deferred agenda item: Safeguarding Lead member appointment

7. SCHOOL SURVEY

The date by which to circulate this, is to be agreed. Additionally, to record what was learned from the responses to the survey; Darra McFadyen confirmed she would be happy to prepare a report on this.

It was agreed this should be circulated next week and for schools to return this by half term.

Action: Darra McFadyen and Donna Miller

Responses would be reviewed in term summer 2 and reported back at the next meeting.

The Chair said consideration should be given to strategies that might ensure a greater survey response. Cllr Catherine Saumarez said there were six weeks until half term which should allow sufficient time for completion. Donna Miller confirmed that when launched, the survey would be uploaded to Governor Hub.

Ruth Kaufmann offered to help with the analysis of the survey responses.

8. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

The Chair referred to the following information that should be included in the report.

1. Statutory attainment

Action: Darra McFadyen

2. Information on faith and belief work undertaken in schools.

Action: Is'Haaq Jasat and Darra McFadyen

3. World Faiths document

Ruth Kaufman would provide a summary of this.

Action: Ruth Kaufman

The Chair said the aim was to have a good draft to be presented for review at the next meeting.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Reminder of the NASACRE conference: **Monday 24 May 2021** – to be held virtually through Zoom. The programme for the day is now on the [website](#).

Darra McFadyen has uploaded a document to Governor Hub, which explains to members how to apply to attend the NASACRE Conference; applications need to be made by 14 May and can be made direct via Governor Hub. The Conference would take place virtually and therefore the cost was minimal. This is an all day event, taking place on 25 May.

Mike Stygal, who had attended several of these conferences, said they were very worthwhile. They provided a much clearer picture of what is going on, together with an interesting insight into how R.E. functions in other SACREs, on a national basis. Ted Cooke concurred that they provide a perspective and enable comparisons with other SACREs.

- 9.2 Donna Miller had received a query addressed to the SACRE from an organisation called Insight UK which represents the Hindu community. Details of the agreed syllabus and how much Hindu featured within this, was requested. The agreed syllabus is under copyright and the Chair suggested therefore that a summary of the agreed syllabus could perhaps be issued; following agreement from RE Today. Mike Stygal suggested they should be signposted to RE Today and discussion took place regarding signposting the organisation to the statutory requirements. In response, the Chair said that was why he was suggesting that a summary was posted on Governor Hub. It was noted that on the Local Authority website, you are directed to the RE Today website and if a school, you could only access this using a password.

Heather Soar said the agreed syllabus had to be implemented by September and she asked if feedback from schools was being received. It would be very helpful to be supported by the SACRE but it was important to know what schools were already doing and she referred to the approach taken at the school at which she worked. In response to Darra McFadyen saying the survey incorporated those questions, Heather Soar said but teachers needed help to meet together to discuss this. Darra McFadyen said a letter was sent to those who attended the agreed syllabus conference from both Primary and Secondary schools, to ask what they were doing but to date only two responses were received. The Chair said the survey of parents and others did raise questions and with criticism received from some parents who did not feel that Hinduism was taught well enough in schools. The Chair recommended that Members read the report which applied to all religions and beliefs.

Ruth Kaufman said the important thing was to teach what the different types of Hinduism have in common. The CRE report stated this was not our responsibility. Additionally, there were many pressure groups whose analytical expertise varied and whose ability to conduct surveys without genuine, random samples, was limited.

Darra McFadyen said the whole basis of the new agreed syllabus, was for children to question how, for example, as a Muslim, Christian or Hindu, did this affect your everyday life and to share this with fellow pupils in your class or group; this was about asking questions. Ruth Kaufman said and also for pupils to know that a Hindu or Jew in their class was not necessarily representative of the whole of that specific community and to then question what was different.

The Chair said support for teachers was sparse and teachers probably had a limited view of the religions of which they were unaware. There was a major problem if

teachers made the assumption that what they learn in one place was the same as what they learn in another. Additionally, some books were based on a limited view of religion. This was a significant issue for teachers, i.e. to develop their knowledge and to understand the diversity across religions. In response to Tara Khare referring to the Exam Boards, Darra McFadyen said pupils have to study two faiths, with Christianity being the predominant faith. Mike Stygal said the school would decide the religions studied.

Ruth Kaufman said support to schools needed to be addressed; this was important. To consider also that Darra McFadyen's letter may not have reached the right people in the respective schools. Darra McFadyen said this was included within the Plan and she had approached Faith and Belief and RE Today to ask what packages could be offered as support to schools and how much this would cost.

Q. Heather Soar was asked what she considered would be the most effective way to get colleagues together?

A. Heather Soar suggested a long and medium term plan. To contact staff in both Primary and Secondary schools and to share what the medium term plan looks like. To compare what lessons look like and the outcomes in books. To see that standards and expectations across Waltham Forest are the same. Outcomes were not yet being seen in books. Heather said it would be good to share experiences and good practice.

A question to be considered outside of this meeting is if the statutory agreed syllabus can be published.

Rev Katherine Ward, observing at this meeting, is a Foundation Governor at a C of E school in Waltham Forest and one that would be happy to contribute its views.

The Chair said a significant task for schools was to work on the agreed syllabus and to embed this. When talking to RE Today, an element of the discussion was to include teacher support groups. In response to the Chair asking if this could be built into the Primary and Secondary Group networks, Darra McFadyen said, yes. This could comprise one hour of sharing and planning and then a 30 minute discussion regarding what was going on in schools and then to incorporate some training. This could comprise 2 x 90 minute meetings per year and then for schools to be given a named person to contact during the remainder of the year, should any questions arise. Heather Soar said this would be beneficial.

Action: Darra McFadyen and the Chair

[Cllr Anna Mbachu joined the meeting at 6.55 p.m.]

9.3 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Darra McFadyen said it would be good to invite a speaker to the AGM in September of this year. In response, Mike Stygal suggested inviting an Executive member of NASACRE.

Action: Chair

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND AGENDA ITEMS

10.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 7 July at 5.30 p.m. This will be a virtual meeting.

10.2 Agenda items

1. Safeguarding Annual Plan
2. Results from the school survey
3. Planning meeting on 5 May
4. To discuss support network for teachers.
5. The Hub

Carried forward agenda items

1. To review a later start time for forthcoming meetings and next year, to consider different days on which to meet.

The meeting closed at 7 p.m.

Chair: (print)

..... (Sign)

Date:

Chair's Initials:
