

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

Minutes of the Lewisham SACRE meeting

which was open to the press and public and was held on
Tuesday 28 June 2022

On Zoom

These minutes were approved by the SACRE/ ASC on: 28 September 2022

GROUP	REPRESENTING	NAME	PRESENT
A	Baha'i	Afonso Veiga	y
A	Buddhism	David Hutchens	y
A	Free Church (Assemblies of God) Chair	Pastor Nick Hughes	Ap
A	Free Church (Assemblies of God) Sustainute	Vacant	
A	Free Church (Baptist)	Vacant	
A	Hinduism	Mugunthan Sathasiva Sharma	
A	Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala	
A	Humanism	Jennifer Sutherland	y

A	Independent Evangelical	vacant	
A	Islam	Ms Aisha Lodhi	
A	Islam	Imam Ashraf	
A	Islam	Imam Sabir	
A	Judaism	Gerald Rose	y
A	Judaism	Joan Goldberg	y
A	Pentecostal Layo's Substitute	Cheryl Abbam	
A	Pentecostal	Layo Afuape	
A	Roman Catholic	Rt. Rev. Monsignor Nicholas Rotheron	

A	Sikhism	Vacant	
A	Free Churches (URC)	Vacant	
A	Free Church (Assemblies of God) Substitute		
B	CofE Diocesan Board (Deputy Chair)	Shaun Burns	y
B	The Church of England Primary teacher	Karen Hansen	
B	The Church of England Minister	Paul Wynter	
B	The Church of England Secondary teacher	Samantha Alder	Ap
B	The Church of England Governor	Vacant	

C	Academy/Free School	Vacant	
C	Lewisham Headteachers & Deputies	Vacant	
C	Lewisham headteachers and deputies	Judith Purkiss	
C	NAS/UWT	Korkor Burnett	y
C	NAS/UWT	Mandy Keeble	
C	NEU	Andrea Kelly	y
C	NEU	Kim Griffiths	y
C	NEU Chair ASC	Kim Knappett	y
D	Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	Ap
D	LA members	Cllr Jacq Paschoud	
D	LA members	Cllr Liz Johnston-Franklin	y
D	School Governors (Primary)	Caroline O Kalu	
D	School Governors (Secondary)	Vacant	
D	Substitute for Angela Scattergood	Ruth Griffith	
D	LA members	Cllr Aliya Sheikh	y
OTHER	Primary teacher	Judith Nweze	
OTHER	Rastafarian (co-optee)	Vacant	
OTHER	RE School Improvement Officer	Denise Chaplin	y
OTHER	Young Mayor Team	c/o Katy Brown	
OTHER	SACRE Clerk	Stephen Sealy	y

The meeting begun at 6.30pm.

1A WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS

Shaun welcomed all to the meeting and announced that he would be chairing in the absence of Nick. He welcomed Cllr Aliya to her first meeting after which all attendees introduced themselves.

He reported that Cllr Jacq Paschoud had been re-appointed but that Cllr Aliya, who was new to the Council, would be replacing Cllr Hilary Moore.

1B APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

These are indicated in the register above. Gerald added that Joan would be joining a little later while he would be leaving the meeting early for another appointment.

1C CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF ITEMS FOR THE MEETING

It was agreed that the Other Business item tabled by Gerald would be moved to the start of the meeting but that, other than this, the circulated order would stand.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS SACRE MEETING HELD IN APRIL 2022 ON ZOOM

The Chair advised that where 'Roman Catholic and Church' was mentioned in the minutes of the previous meeting, this should be replaced by 'Roman Catholic and Church of England'.

Otherwise, these minutes were agreed by the committee as accurate.

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA

4A PLACES OF WORSHIP

Denise advised that this document had been uploaded to the Services for Schools site.

The Chair thanks Denise and Kim for their work on this.

4B WEBSITE TRAWL (AGENDA POINT 5)

Denise reported that she had received a significant number of the completed forms back, with some members not having completed any of the website trawl exercises while others had exceed their allocation.

She advised that completing the Self Evaluation tool would be suspended until responses from the website trawl had been analysed.

4C TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

She added that the training hadn't been delivered yet as she (alongside Pupa??? and Suhaib) had spent much time setting up the Services for Schools website which would be the means by which delegates would book training. September was the target date for the completion of the site's construction.

4D ABSENCE RECORDS

The clerk reported that he hadn't yet corrected Judith's absence but would complete this within the next few days.

4E RE AGENDA POINT 9

Denise reported that she had followed this point up with the Teaching Hub lead, discussing particularly how SACRE could best support the Hub. There is a quite dated RE Council document whose currency she has asked NATRE to advise her about. She acknowledged that this may represent an opportunity to work with Teaching Hubs across the Primary and Secondary phases.

The Chair remarked that it would be beneficial to link teachers to.

4F NICK'S LINK

Denise reported that the link to this project hadn't yet been circulated.

Denise/Stephen to contact Nick to circulate this link.

At this point Joan joined the meeting.

3 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

(TO WELCOME NEW MEMBER CLLR ALIYAH SHEIKH)

This was completed under point 1A.

10 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AOB (BROUGHT FORWARD TO ACCOMMODATE GERALD)

Gerald reported that he had attended a recent Zoom meeting of the Jewish Board of Deputies in which the question of how can one know that Judaism is taught in schools was asked. Gerald had responded with information about the committee's website trawl, which the committee had commended.

Gerald questioned the protocol for asking SACRE for permission to visit a school.

Denise advised that the committee has historically waited for schools to invite them to visit but that, on the back of the website trawl, the committee may invite teachers to talk to the committee.

The Chair added that in-person meetings would facilitate this (???), adding that having open door arrangements at the synagogue would further enable this.

Gerald added that the section on Judaism in the Agreed Syllabus was positive in this respect also.

Gerald also promoted the 'Jewish Way of Life' exhibition under the auspices of the Jewish Board of Deputies which, in previous years, had been held at the PDC, and at Thornton and Heath in Greenwich in previous years.

Gerald reported that hosting this exhibition was now free of charge although a deposit of £100 was required and interested parties would need to be appropriately insured to host this.

He also commended the CBBC resource 'What's on your head?' which he considered teachers would find useful.

He also promoted an interfaith event run by the Woolwich Garrick Church Trust on 3 July at St George's Garrison Church, opposite the main barracks, to which Lewisham, Greenwich and Bexley SACREs had all been invited. He added that the church had been bombed during the war and subsequently has been roofless although the altar is covered. There is a mosaic of the star of David on the back wall.

Denise referred to a CD-ROM on the 'Jewish way of life' theme that had previously been circulated to all schools. She requested that Gerald ascertain if this activity would be repeated.

Gerald commented that the resource wasn't intended to be unmanned. Schools would be able to collect the exhibition but would need to be mindful that it included large artefacts.

The Chair requested that Gerald ascertain that the exhibition consist, what commitment is required and also who the exhibition was targeted at.

Gerald advised that he had posted an invitation flyer of the interfaith service in the meeting chat, which members could download.

5 SACRE MONITORING USING THE WEBSITE TRAWL PROCESS – PROGRESS UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF PROCESS

Denise remarked on how impressed she was with the number of completed forms that had been returned. She added that there were still several primary schools yet to be looked at and encouraged members to communicate their willingness to do this to her. After all primary schools had been completed she would then complete a simple analysis of the findings.

Her intention was to start on a positive tone in the feedback but acknowledged that schools whose initial trawls had proved confusing may need to have a second.

For those whose data is not apparent, the committee would need to communicate their concerns to Angela, and think about how best to approach headteachers in terms of helping them to market, or better make available, their provision.

Denise commended Joan, whose school (Stillness had two websites).

She reported that some teachers had already contacted her about using the syllabus, in view of the fact that schools were now moving on from the recovery syllabus.

The Chair invited any members who'd found the exercise difficult to contact Denise, and invited a member who'd completed the exercise to share their findings..

Kim remarked on the variances of quality of the website; a school she has looked at had detailed information but focussed only on the current half term. This highlighted the need for conversations with schools. She'd found some school's sites to be fully updated while others were notably outdated, with some still showing Covid/lockdown-dated information.

She found that the use of the search function considerably more efficient than manually looking for information through the site.

The Chair commented that websites serves as schools shop windows adding that any difficulties that members experience in locating information would likely also be experienced by inspectors, making this exercise a beneficial one for schools.

Denise reported that Cllr Hilary had completed a form for her designated school before leaving the committee.

Denise expressed the intention to invite Cllr Hilary and Raymond to the next, in-person, meeting where members would have a chance to both socialise and thank these ex-members.

The Chair suggested that a card or letter be organised for them.

Gerald questioned if the questions had been correctly interpreted to which Denise responded that most had.

This item will be on the September agenda.

6 EDUCATION WHITE PAPER

The associated tabled documents were referred to.

Denise advised that the summary represented the best starting point for engaging with this information as it was written specifically for SACRES. This data will be scrutinised in the next NASACRE executive meeting. She opined that academisation would remove the need for SACRES as the RE mandate doesn't apply to academies. She commented that SACRE had concerns about the quality of RE provision in academies.

She expressed the desire for SACRES or a body like SACRES to continue but questioned how that would look.

She expressed a further concern that Local Authorities may conclude from the White Paper that they will, in the fullness of the plans, no longer have to fund SACRE and so may start cutting budgets.

She opined that SACRE need to be able to 'pass on the torch' in the best possible way if SACRES will no longer have the responsibilities they currently have. SACRES also have to ensure that local authorities continues to ensure SACRES can perform to the best of their abilities in supporting schools and pupils. The alternative would mean a deterioration in support leading to an absence of excellence to celebrate.

She encouraged all members to read the White Paper as this would invariably be the start of a long conversation.

The Chair invited opinions from other members.

Liz fed back that she had read the SWOT appraisal and found the undercurrent view, that SACRES would disappear, worrying. She expressed concern over what the Government's 'new cultural education plan' would mean, particularly in light of the inclusion of RE.

She added that Lewisham was fourth in the table of boroughs with low academisation but how this information was presented to schools and how money is redirected to schools would be key in determining decisions about becoming a MAT>

Denise suggested that the committee invite Cllr Janet Daby to hear its concerns at a future meeting to empower her to represent them at a higher level, as she had previously been a SACRE member herself.

Liz urged members to be active and take a stand on what they considered important. She expressed concern at how easily a reader could be deceived by the way the document was written.

David opined that the instability of the government called into question if any changes would actually be realised.

Kim K reported that, in addition to reading the document herself, she had read summaries from other interested parties, and had a concern that worrying content 'sitting' under the headlines could well 'slip under the radar'. She urged members to be actively involved in responding and the anti-academisation program, referencing the body of academic research which concluded that academisation had not been successful.

The Chair concurred with these views, adding that SACREs shouldn't be willing to 'pack up and hand over'. Rather, a case should be made for SACREs to be statutory in the case of academies.

He added that schools need not have become academies by 2030 but should be in the process of this transition.

He emphasised the importance of the committee keeping abreast of the campaign.

7 THE RE REPORT CARD

Denise commended these digests showing the shape of the nation's RE position as interested.

The Chair invited members to feedback on these.

Liz was struck by the low levels of RE teaching in academies and the allocation of funding. The minimal support for teaching staff was another point of interest in the set of documents that she found very helpful and accessible.

Andrea feedback that she liked the documents and found they presented a positive message, suggested that it would be useful to have displayed in her school. However, there seemed to be a conflict between the falling entries summarised on the purple sheet and the increasing entries summarised on the orange sheet.

Denise requested that Andrea email her the question for her to forward to Deborah Weston for an answer.

At this point, Gerald left the meeting.

The Chair considered the document a good conversation starter.

Denise thought it may be useful to ask what students would say; she referred to a survey completed several years ago that generated insightful answers.

She expressed concern at the 500 secondary schools reporting 0 hours of RE provisions.

Shaun voiced his uncertainty at the RE provision year 11 students would be accessing, if RE isn't being taught.

Andrea commented that as long as RE is not being part of the Ebac, this will remain an issue with inherent conflicts in balancing the curriculum. She added that when English subject time was increased in her school in view of the number of ESOL pupils and to increase grades from 4.5 to 5, this had an inevitable negative effect on the time allocated to other subjects.

She felt increased RE provision would not be achievable when the White Paper placed emphasis on English and Maths.

Kim concurred with this point, referring the changes schools make to satisfy OfSted but expressing concern with the consequent penury of subjects like the arts and RE. She mentioned that a penalty for narrowing the curriculum had been mentioned also.

Cllr Aliya commented that RE would be strengthened by schools taking a practical approach and arranging more visits to local places of worship, and also enforcing this approach earlier in a child's schooling.

The Chair suggested that the committee speak with RE leads to equip them to better sell the benefits of RE.

Kim replied that many secondary schools do not have an RE specialist, often with half of the teachers teaching parts of the subject.

The Chair commended the conversation continuing in the hope that that this positively influence government decisions.

8 FEEDBACK ON NASACRE AGM AND WORKSHOPS

Denise reported that Kim, Nick, Joan and herself had attended the NASACRE AGM/workshops. She had invited Jennifer and Korkor to facilitate workshops but neither could, although Jennifer had attended one.

She advised that the committee could access video clips of the event on the NASACRE website.

She found the workshops interesting and the event successful, making particular mention of the SACRE projects and the Westhill awards. She advised that more information on these would be in the next NASACRE briefing.

She expressed her disappointment that the face-to-face conference was cancelled due to low take-up.

She advised that the new NASACRE website had been launched at the conference also.

Kim Knappett encouraged members to look at the website, but reported with some interest that attendees had been prohibited from recording the OfSted presentation.

Joan feedback that she found the event very interesting but, like the others, considered that its being presented online made it seem sterile.

Denise advised that next year's conference was planned to be in-person and located in London. She expressed concerns with the time of year, and reported that she was encouraging the committee to move the date to early September.

Kim Knappett suggested late June or early July may be preferable.

9 SACRE AND RE ON THE SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS WEBSITE

Denise shared the Services for School SACRE page (<https://schoolsservices.lewisham.gov.uk/Services/6435>) and provided a progress update, informing that the Advice and Guidance section hadn't yet been formed.

The Chair asked that members let Denise know of any content to be added.

Denise requested that Gerald and Joan update her in the Autumn on the Holocaust Memorial Day.

The Chair requested that the link to the Services for Schools site be included in the minutes (see above).

10 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AOB

Denise reported that she had circulated the existing programme of NASACRE training events and will send details of the upcoming programme in due course also.

She confirmed the intention to pay the NASACRE subscription charge to enable all committee members to attend any NASACRE training event without additional cost.

Kim K reported that Lewisham Interfaith Forum had been quiet over the last couple of years, having been significantly involved with Public Health at the start of Covid. She advised the body would be meeting in early July with the prospect of an interfaith walk in early September.

She encouraged members in schools to publicise this to pupils as places of worship would be open for them to visit, while the walk provides a good opportunity for participants to socialise and visit a diversity of sites in Lewisham.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TO BE DECIDED

The Chair advised that the next meeting will be in September at Nick's church.

He thanked the committee for their contributions and loyalty and wished all a good summer.

At 8pm the meeting ended.