

## LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

### Minutes of the Lewisham SACRE and ASC meeting

which was open to the press and public and was held on  
Monday 23 November 2020

On Zoom

**These minutes were approved by the SACRE/ ASC on: 11 February 2021**

GROUP	REPRESENTING	NAME	PRESENT
A	Baha'i	Afonso Veiga	✓
A	Buddhism	David Hutchens	APOLOGIES
A	Free Church A o G	Pastor Nick Hughes (SACRE Chair)	✓
A	Free Church	Leanne Rudder (substitute)	
A	Free Church (Baptist)	(Vacant)	
A	Free Churches (URC)	Rev Raymond Singh	✓
A	Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala	
A	Hinduism	Narmadha Saravanan	
A	Hinduism	Mrs Sriskandarajah / Dr Raj	
A	Humanism	VACANT	
A	Independent Evangelical	Nigel Desborough	
A	Independent Evangelical	Ray Brown (substitute)	
A	Islam	Dr Ahmed Adem	
A	Islam	Aisha Lodhi	
A	Judaism	Gerald Rose	APOLOGIES
A	Judaism	Joan Goldberg	✓
A	Pentecostal	Layo Segun	✓
A	Pentecostal	Cheryl Abbam (substitute)	
A	Roman Catholic	Rt Rev Monsignor Nicholas Rotherham	✓
A	Sikhism	(Vacant)	
B	The CoE - Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	Shaun Burns (SACRE Deputy Chair)	✓
B	The Church of England - Secondary teacher	Samantha Alder	
B	The Church of England - Primary teacher	Karen Hansen	✓
B	The Church of England - Governor	(Vacant)	
B	The Church of England - Minister	Paul Wynter	
C	NEU	Kim Knappett (ASC Chair)	✓
C	NEU	Kim Griffiths	✓
C	Academy/Free school	(Vacant)	
C	NEU	(Vacant)	
C	NAS/UWT	Mandy Keeble	✓
C	Lewisham Headteachers and deputies	VACANT	
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Jacq Paschoud	APOLOGIES
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin	✓
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Hilary Moore	
D	School Governors - Primary	Isaac Sackey	
D	School Governors - Secondary	Adelere Adedeji	
D	Executive Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	✓
Others	Primary Teacher	Judith Nweze	
	Rastafarians	(Vacant)	
	Young Mayor Team	c/o Katy Brown and Malcolm Ball	
	Secondary Teacher	Korkor Burnett	✓
	RE School Improvement Officer	Denise Chaplin	✓
	Minuting clerk	Stephen Sealy	✓

*(Boxed sections in these minutes signify actions, and underlined sections signify decisions)*

The meeting began at 6.45pm.

### **1a Welcomes and introductions**

The SACRE Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

### **1b Apologies for absence**

These are noted on page 1.

There followed a brief discussion about the most suitable day for the meeting as several members had indicated Mondays to be very difficult. It was agreed to take this into consideration for future meetings.

### **1c Confirmation of order of items for the meeting**

The circulated order of items for the meeting was accepted.

## **2 Minutes of the previous SACRE and ASC joint meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020 on Zoom**

Shaun advised that the word 'Diocesan' should replace the word 'churches' in paragraph 3 of page 7.

Otherwise these were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **3 Membership update**

There was nothing to report although the Officers and Advisor are continuing to seek new members for the vacancies.

### **4 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda**

#### **4A PRIMARY RE ASSESSMENT ADVICE AND SECONDARY RE ASSESSMENT ADVICE PLAN**

Denise asked Kim G to advise her of a suitable time to meet, as she was the only one who'd responded and Denise wanted to discuss possible ways to use the response to enhance the advice.

Kim K also wanted to be involved in the meeting, suggesting spring term but acknowledged the difficulty that they will face in getting teachers to prioritise RE given the current climate. She suggested that two small working parties (one to complete the primary advice and then other to start the secondary) may be the best way forward and to establish these in the new year. This was AGREED.

#### **4B WEBSITE**

Denise reported that she wanted to post the Chariot Festival film onto the Lewisham website but needed to have a conversation with the IT managers for this to happen. She commented that it seemed unlikely that the temple will be sufficiently organised to publish this on their site at present as there is much work being undertaken to update it. She added that there will be other materials e.g. for the 'Understanding Faith and Belief' unit, that also needs to be published on the Council website.

#### 4C VIRTUAL TOURS OF LOCAL FAITH VENUES

Nick reported that he was still committed to recording a virtual tour of his church but advised that ongoing renovations at the church had hampered this. He added that he would also encourage Bishop McLeod of the neighbouring church to make a recording.

He added that he had visited the website of the Seventh Day Adventist, which was an excellent historical resource. He committed to speak to his colleague there also.

Kim K suggested that a link to these websites on the SACRE site would be beneficial.

Denise mentioned that been in touch with Deborah Elwine at Culham St Gabriels to find out the process for bidding for funding to edit/assemble the video clips from faith community venues for a more professional look. She asked whether the person who edited the Peace Walk video could be used for this.

Kim committed to find out.

Denise suggested that the team should speak to Liz in her attempt to move this forward with the website team. Shaun supported the video project as an exciting, good resource for the future. With regard to editing the video, Alfonso volunteered to do the editing if needed.

#### 4D HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY IN LEWISHAM

Joan reported that the working group for the HMD in Lewisham would be meeting next week. She explained that some of the annual event in Lewisham would be pre-recorded while other parts would be recorded live.

She explained that 27 January had been suggested, in the hope that more people would view the event.

She added that Mark Curtis had been working with schools and is proceeding with the preparation for the event, with pupils having produced work throughout the year.

She explained that it would be a rich and diverse experience.

Denise asked if publicity of the event would be available for the SACRE to circulate and Joan replied that she would mention this in the upcoming meeting.

Denise commented that the committee needed to help to facilitate SACRE's involvement in by sharing relevant information now that Derek Johnson, who had been supportive of the SACRE, had left the local authority.

Nick asked how the Holocaust Memorial event would be broadcast to which Joan explained that Mark was approaching someone to carry out the recording.

#### 4C UPDATING THE DIRECTORY OF PLACES OF WORSHIP

Kim commented that Denise had sent two versions out.

Denise added that Nick Hughes and Monsignor Rotheron had both already worked on this.

Kim said she would liaise with Denise with a view to getting her husband to resolve any issues brought about by work being submitted in different formats. She advised that he would also be able to advise on which bits have been amended, in response to Denise identifying this as a further issue.

More submissions were needed, the Church of England text needed freshening up and also Bala had agreed to ensure that the temple's submission was complete.

It was agreed that, if at a given point, places of worship hadn't confirmed that their text was accurate or not, this should still be circulated.

Kim encouraged all members to confirm the accuracy of submitted text to both herself and Denise.

Layo reported that she had contacted all affiliated churches and would respond to Kim further.

Shaun added that he had started working with several Church of England venues.

He questioned if there was a replacement for Derek Johnson.

Cllr Liz committed to follow this up and let the committee know.

Shaun reinforced the view that the strong history of SACRE being involved in events in Lewisham was partly due to Derek's involvement.

#### 5 KS4 – exams and non-exam RE

Denise reported that in some Local Authorities, schools had approached their SACRE with concerns, adding that it would appear that there would be no exams in Summer of 2021.

It would be useful to know what schools are doing. Given that SACRE didn't produce a KS4 syllabus, she wondered if schools are devising something of their own. She suggested that the ASC may need to write an alternative outline course.

Kim and Denise said they would talk with Angela to decide a way forward in supporting schools, underlining SACRE's desire to help them.

It was suggested that the ASC could possibly produce something embryonic for schools to modify to their own needs; the meeting agreed they couldn't allow the subject to falter.

Denise questioned whether a questionnaire to gauge school's activity should be sent out.

Angela expressed her willingness to meet, commenting that schools needed to know if SATs and GCSEs would be suspended and that OFSTED wouldn't be visiting schools at least until after Christmas. However, she conceded that the late minute decision making that had characterised previous decisions may change this.

Kim K voiced her concern that no more pressure should be put on schools, noting that any form of RE assessment would be considered additional if a school isn't holding exams. She mentioned colleagues for whom having to rank the whole year group when this wasn't counting towards GCSE was perceived as being superfluous.

She suggested that the Secondary meeting would give the committee a change to find out what was going on.

## **6 Freedom of Information request**

Denise reported that the tabled FOI request had been completed and sent to Angela.

She explained that in discussion with the DfE a decision had been made for NASACRE to send the FOI for all local authorities, and ultimately producing an anonymised report to show how local authorities are supporting SACREs.

Lewisham has sent its response. She advised that the CSSB is how SACREs should be funded, although this hadn't been the case in Lewisham.

Denise added how interesting the final summary report would be, explaining that funding was based on the quantity of, and sizes of, schools. She reported that conversations were still ongoing with DoE pertaining to ensuring appropriate support for SACREs.

## **7 Feedback from NASACRE EGM**

Denise reported that, as there hadn't been an AGM this year, changes to the AGM administration hadn't been fulfilled. She explained that the person who had taken on the role of Chair had resigned after only a short time in post, meaning that the Vice Chair very quickly became the Acting Chair. She had wanted this arrangement formalised with someone else nominated for Vice Chair.

Denise explained how the Executive of NASACRE works. She advised that the next AGM would be in London in 2021 if possible or virtually if not.

She explained that there had been two presentations on SACRE projects. Shaun elaborated that both projects had been Westhill/NASACRE awards, for which NASACRE had SACREs to apply. Lambeth had successfully bid for its faith trails while Cumbria had been successful in its exploration of RE through its textual 'treasures'.

Nick thanked Denise, Shaun and Joan for attending and Joan reported that she'd found it interesting also and that the project had sounded exciting.

## **8 SACRE self evaluation tool**

SACRE members worked through Section 3 and found the discussions very useful.

## 9 Information Exchange and AOB

Denise reported that she had emailed Angela to request that she shared more about Lewisham being a Borough of Sanctuary. She explained that this initiative was launched in November, highlighting the important work for the refugees and asylum seekers coming to the borough (with a particular focus on child refugees) and those who often have no recourse to public funds using an holistic approach, which makes it particularly interesting.

Angela reported that she had been involved with families stuck in temporary accommodation due to the pandemic. She added that services had been offered to keep families and friendship groups together, providing school uniform and that Schools had worked with charities to provide resources for these groups. She commented on how the numbers of those considered vulnerable had been exacerbated by the pandemic but how it is not appropriate to publicise the work that had been carried out to address this.

Denise reported that Nicola Marven, who had previously presented at the committee, had moved on.

Angela commended the willingness of SACRE to quietly support those who have needed support of faith communities in the past. Angela added how a faith community had been assertively helpful in the cases she mentioned.

She added that there would be an important project about asylum seekers under the auspices of the Borough of Culture.

She expressed the need to shine a positive light on the perception of young males in this context, who she feels are given a bad press.

She committed to access the full story on this and forward the link.
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Denise shared questions raised by Gerald Rose on behalf of the synagogue that Angela had passed to Natasha Orombie, Lewisham's Safeguarding lead.

She reported that Gerald had asked about safeguarding young people on Zoom; she requested that members keep this in mind themselves but also pass it only their colleagues. She acknowledged that when Zoom started to be used at the start of lockdown there were questions about privacy and appropriateness as exemplified by people in one household with few clothes on being visible in the background. She commended Gerald for asking the question.

Nick commented that he will take this as de facto guidance in his community also.

Kim K reported that the NEU and NASUWT had produced good guidance about lessons being carried out online. She acknowledged that it was a big issue.

Ray suggested that churches should ensure that they have up-to-date policies as they're likely to fall foul of the law, in respect of safeguarding, if they haven't.

Nick reiterated the importance of this based on his own experiences. Kim thanked Angela for passing on the question and providing an answer.

Ray commented on how frustrating the inability to provide hot meals and other forms of hospitality was for the faith community. He reported that his church was struggling in terms of what Advent represents.

Nick agreed with this, further expressing his view that there was leeway for pastors to make visits. He reported that his church had experienced three funerals in five weeks, but that there was a need to keep abreast of the shifting sands of government guidance.

Denise requested that all members submit at least a few sentences on how their faith group has dealt with the current crisis.

Shaun commented that Christmas in the current situation presented a challenge to Christians. He proposed that Christmas, in terms of what it's really about, wasn't cancelled, but that the church was exploring the questions of how to carry out the basics of worshipping together this year.

Ray reported that each year his church had held an open air carol service which, by its very nature, couldn't be postponed but rather extended to working together.

Kim G advised that her school was going to record carols and post online as a (warmer) alternative to the usual communal practice of singing outside.

Ray expressed his hope that a Christmas tree would still be positioned on Bellingham Green.

Shaun encouraged the committee to keep holding onto the light and hope which, Christmas was about.

Joan mentioned that her grandson's bar mitzvah, due for the end of January 2021, would be cancelled, despite him studying a whole year for this ceremony. She suggested that the impact of conducting it a year later wouldn't be the same.

Monsignor Roton commented on the variances of number allowed to be in attendance at different rituals/services. Nick added how difficult these restrictions had been for some of his congregants, referring to a Zimbabwean family in whose culture dressing the grave personally is a key ritual but who the new restrictions prevented from doing so, with security guards at the gates to enforce this.

Kim K invited members to advise which days they struggle to attend by using the Chat function. She thanked everyone and wished all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

The meeting finished at 8.10pm.