

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

Minutes of the Lewisham SACRE Conference

which was open to the press and public and was held on
19 May 2019

At Olive Tree Nursery, 363-365 Lewisham High Street, London SE13 6NZ

These minutes were approved by the SACRE on: ???

GROUP	REPRESENTING	NAME	PRESENT
A	Baha'i	Afonso Veiga	
A	Buddhism	David Hutchens	✓
A	Free Church A o G	Pastor Nick Hughes (Chair)	✓
A	Free Church	Leanne Rudder (substitute)	APOLOGIES
A	Free Church (Baptist)	(Vacant)	
A	Free Churches (URC)	Rev Raymond Singh	
A	Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala	
A	Hinduism	Narmadha Saravanan	
A	Hinduism	Mrs Sri	
A	Humanism	Hester Brown	RESIGNED
A	Independent Evangelical	Nigel Desborough	APOLOGIES
A	Independent Evangelical	Ray Brown (substitute)	
A	Islam	Nadia Ali	
A	Islam	(Vacant)	
A	Judaism	Gerald Rose	✓
A	Judaism	Joan Goldberg	
A	Judaism	Rev David Rome (substitute)	
A	Pentecostal	Layo Afuape	APOLOGIES
A	Pentecostal	Cheryl Abbam (substitute)	APOLOGIES
A	Roman Catholic	Rt Rev Monsignor Nicholas Rothon	APOLOGIES
A	Sikhism	(Vacant)	
B	The CoE - Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	Shaun Burns (Deputy Chair)	✓
B	The Church of England - Secondary teacher	(Vacant)	
B	The Church of England - Primary teacher	Karen Hansen	APOLOGIES
B	The Church of England - Governor	(Vacant)	
B	The Church of England - Minister	Paul Wynter	
C	NEU	Kim Knappett	APOLOGIES
C	NEU	Kim Griffiths	✓
C	Academy/Free school	(Vacant)	
C	NEU - NUT	(Vacant)	
C	NAS/UWT	Mandy Keeble	✓
C	Lewisham Headteachers and deputies	Judith Purkiss	
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Jacq Paschoud	APOLOGIES
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin	✓
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Hilary Moore	APOLOGIES
D	School Governors - Primary 1/2	Isaac Sackey (shared place)	
D	School Governors - Primary 2/2	VACANT	
D	School Governors - Secondary	Adelere Adedeji	
D	Representative of the Executive Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	✓
Others	Primary Teacher	Judith Nweze	
	Rastafarians	(Vacant)	
	Young Mayor Team	c/o Katy Brown and Malcolm Ball	
	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 6.50pm and was quorate.

1a Welcomes and introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

1b Apologies for absence

Denise read out the apologies as indicated on the attendance list on Page 1, reporting that Hester had stepped down citing increased domestic caring responsibilities for her mother. Members were sad to hear she had resigned.

1c Confirmation of order of items for the meeting.

The order of items for the meeting was confirmed.

2 Membership update

Denise reported that she hadn't heard from the mosque with regard to filling their vacancy; The Chair mentioned that he had emailed Imam Shakeel and was awaiting a response from him.

Denise added that she had yet to hear from the Sikh community about their replacement also.

Shaun reported that two associates were considering membership of SACRE.

Denise added that vacancies for a Baptist and a teacher still remained.

The Chair encouraged the committee to exploit any networks that they had. He commended the quality of the discussions that the committee engaged in, expressing the view that it would be a shame for others to miss out on this.

3a Election of a Chair for the municipal year

Shaun nominated Nick for the post of Chair for 2019-20.
Gerald and Kim seconded this nomination.
There were no other nominations.
The Chair confirmed his acceptance of the election result.

3b Election of a Vice Chair for the municipal year

The Chair nominated Shaun for the post of Vice Chair for 2019-20.
Denise seconded this nomination.
Shaun responded that he was happy to stand unless anyone else expressed an interest.
There were no other nominations.
Shaun confirmed his acceptance of the Vice Chair position.

4a Minutes of the previous quorate meeting held on 5 December 2018

The committee confirmed that there were no objections or amendments to be made to this these minutes.

The Chair proposed and the meeting agreed that these were accepted as an accurate representation of the meeting.

4b Notes of the inquorate meeting held on 5 March 2019

Denise commended Nick for the changes he had made to the minutes initially drafted by the clerk, as the section on gangs had been extremely hard to minute..

The Chair made a motion that these minutes were accepted, and the committee duly accepted these as accurate notes of the inquorate meeting.

5 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

A PROGRESS WITH LEWISHAM WEBSITE

Denise reported that she had had a positive meeting with a communication manager at Lewisham about the landing page for SACRE. Currently, SACRE's consultation advice sits at the bottom of the page, but the intention is for this to be located at the top of a column on the right.

She reported that 'Religious Studies' had been changed to 'Religious Education'.

She explained that the page is structured in blocks meaning that one often has to scroll to access information but that this information needed to be more immediate. The plan is for the team to draft further proposals screenshots which she would then circulate to the SACRE.

She acknowledged that a question that needed answering is whether certain information should sit on the school or the council's site. She concluded that it wasn't of great significance which site they went on as long as a link was provided on the other site.

Shaun suggested that the committee checks that it's easy for users to find information that they search for. Denise said that the site was better than it had been but there were still issues to resolve.

She reported that, in her meeting with the web team there had been some discussion about who the site was for, summarising that schools and faith communities were expected to be the main users but that media with FOI requests would likely use it also. She added that the functionality to search by religion was mentioned, which the council officers responded positively to.

Gerald reported that he had attempted to locate the Agreed Syllabus using Google which had informed him that the Lewisham site had changed.

David reported that the last time he had searched there was a downloadable Word document, but not an instantly viewable PDF version; adding that as a user he would want to view information without being compelled to download it. He commented that on the Council used both viewable PDF and downloadable Word documents on its site.

Denise informed the committee that she would be meeting again with the Council team in the week after half term, with the suggestion that feedback was sent to her by that date.

David commented that the new website looked good.

B PROGRESS WITH THE SACRE CONSTITUTION

Denise reported that the constitution had been written and that it was trudging its way through the system en route to be presented at a Council meeting.

(Introductions were made around the table at this point, as this had been overlooked at the start of the meeting.)

Denise asked whether Liz could monitor its progress through the Council.

She advised that after the Constitution had been ratified it would then be published on the website. She summarised for members the developments within the National Education Union and the situation with the Amadhi community that had led to these changes.

Liz sought confirmation that these were the reasons for its being returned to the Council, which Denise gave.

C RAMADAN ADVICE 2019

Denise confirmed that this advice had been updated and sent to schools as well as being published on the website.

Mandy commented that while the guidance says that parental permission to fast may be obtained verbally or in writing, her head had insisted that this be in writing. Denise responded that this was the school's decision to make.

6 Last summer's public exam data and proposed letter to schools

Denise reported that the committee had now been furnished with validated data.

She referred to the three documents, confirming that RE would be in Basket 3 (of the Attainment 8 score, on the 'How does Progress 8 work?' sheet). She also tabled the letter that she had drafted and proposed was sent to schools.

She reminded the committee that all pupils should be taught RE at all Key Stages, and that in some schools this was happening but that in some only a small number are being entered, while the committee was unaware of what was being taught in others.

She commented that there are questions to be asked and that some pupils may be entered for the short course which would count towards their statutory Religious Education; this data isn't obtainable, she continued, so cannot be confirmed. She emphasised the need to remind schools that pupils should be taught an accredited course and that if this isn't happening, Nick, Shaun and herself need to discuss the next step.

She added that OfSTED will be asking heads etc about what is being taught.

She acknowledged that the council were late with this, reporting that copies of this data go to the Head of State and SACRE representatives' bodies, and is also published online.

She reported that her letter was an attempt to serve several positive purposes.

Angela suggested that the letter say that schools are doing well, while identifying the action that schools should take if they consider that the data is inaccurate, commenting that these steps will soften the document.

Shaun added that the schools that enter all students need to be taken into account in the way that the letter is drafted.

Angela added that, in line with peer-led improvement there was a desire for schools to learn from each other.

Denise reported that there were useful comparisons with other subject areas, adding that English and History were two of these, English as it is also compulsory and History as it features a similar approach to RE.

Angela reported that a company, MIME, had been commissioned to provide the data, and invited the committee to meet with MIME to ask if they held any other data that would be useful for SACRE. She reasoned that MIME probably provides this for other boroughs.

Denise suggested that she would do this for the following year, and committed to make the communicated changes and have the letter sent out to Heads and the Head of RE.

The Chair asked what budget the report is paid out of, to which Angela replied that MIME were commissioned for another purpose but that discussions are currently being held about future work.

The Chair acknowledged how key the ability to review that schools are doing is to the work of the SACRE, and the importance that good reports play.

7 Revising SACRE's advice to schools - responding to crises

Denise reported that the history of this document extended to shortly after the 7/7 London tragedy. SACRE had actually met that evening, and an attendee of the meeting had reported that they had been trapped at the scene for most of the afternoon.

She acknowledged that children seeing planes flying overhead in the aftermath of this tragedy had experienced trauma and that, alongside other effects of 9/11 also, some schools had ceased to teach Islam.

She mentioned Grenfell Towers and the killing of Drummer Lee Rigby as more recent tragedies in response to which the document had expanded but, also, sadly needed to be more generic.

In its latest revision, Denise reported that she had checked the websites that were mainly referred to in Appendix C to ensure that these were still live. She had also made additions that Luke had submitted.

The Chair asked how this can be updated after being published to ensure its currency.

Denise responded that in the past the SACRE had, on occasion, held emergency meetings to issue timely communication, and that that was a future option.

Angela requested that the word 'kids' be replaced with 'children and young people'.

Denise replied that the segment in which 'kids' was used, was a quoted excerpt from an American source.

Angela reported that the Council also communicated advice to schools in traumatic instances, which she requested that this document referred to.

She explained that this document was evidence based and was about developing resilience in schools but wasn't yet completed.

She accepted Denise's request for a reference to be made within this document to the SACRE document.

She suggested meeting with Denise about this, suggesting also that Denise reference the Anna Freud website, commending the advice that it offered.

Denise confirmed that an earlier version of the guidance was already available on the website.

Denise commented that, as it is usually faith/RE personnel required to make a response when these types of tragedies occur, the document was about supporting this.

Shaun questioned whether the document should mention Brexit, to which Denise responded that there was a desire to keep the document generic, with Angela supporting this view

Shaun commented that he thought Brexit was a big enough issue to be regarded as generic and not specific.

Denise committed to have an updated version on the website as soon as practicable.

8 mis- numbered item

9 EVALUATING SACRE'S WORK - TOOLKIT DISCUSSION

Denise introduced this document as a self-evaluation document for SACREs to evaluate the areas in which they're good, they're not so good, they need to maintain and improve, and they're disastrous.

She then summarised the document.

She explained that the three areas of successes, barriers to successes and areas for development are at the end of all sections.

She commented that revising the answers from the last submission wouldn't be beneficial and that it was best for the SACRE to review where they are now and then further review in light of this in a year's time.

She added that the committee was currently doing a piece of work in relation to Section 1. Regarding Section 2, she added that as the committee was also working on this, it was too early for it to review this.

Regarding Section 3 (Collective worship) she added that the SACRE had also completed some work on this, adding that the Crisis advice refers to incorporating collective worship.

She suggested that the committee could start by looking at Section 4, possibly in the meeting, and look at Section 5 also.

She noted that the Annex reminded the committee of Council and SACRE responsibilities.

Shaun commended the resource, especially in light of its being national and its usefulness for benchmarking.

Angela suggested that the committee look at the less challenging sections first.

Denise commented that the document included national recommendations on funding of the service. She highlighted the reference to the percentage that Local Authorities should spend on funding, on page 7, but acknowledged that it meant little to her as she didn't know how the RE advisor administration function (which funded her role and the clerk's role) was covered.

She acknowledged that a benefit of using places of worship to host meetings, aside from the economic one, was its encouragement of the investment by the faith communities into the work of the SACRE.

Angela remarked that good practice supported this.

Liz added that the Council was on a tight budget and underlined the importance of ascertaining if this suggested percentage was being met in Lewisham.

Denise remarked on the contrast between the SACRE's frugality compared to a Midland's SACRE with a budget of £30k.

Angela added that the MIME report hasn't cost the SACRE, and that her time isn't costed either.

Angela questioned what four committees the report referred to, which Denise explained were the Church of England, Other faiths and beliefs, Teachers and the Local Authority, explaining that these groups can meet as separate committees although there is no requirement for them to do so.

The Chair suggested that the SACRE look at a different section in each meeting.

Denise suggested that this meeting act as an introduction to the resource, She suggested that members prepare for one or more sections before further meetings; covering Sections 4 and 5 in the next meeting, with further sections being a standing item in subsequent meetings.

10 Information Exchange and AOB

Gerald reported that Passover started the evening of Good Friday, He added that he had also attended a March of the Living from Auschwitz to Birkenau (the site of the gas chambers which, though technically a part of Auschwitz, was about three kilometres away).

He added that the largest group in attendance was from the UK, with nine coach-loads of attendees, each with an allocated Educator. Clive Burton, an ex-head and radio presenter was one of these, while Gerald's Educator was a Rabbi. He reports that allocated to each coach was also a representative from the organising body, a Polish guide and a Holocaust survivor.

The trip had been cheap for students but cost £1200 for others.

The trip included a visit to the Warsaw ghetto where, in the forest, numerous Poles and 830 children were shot.

Angela remarked that there was compelling footage on the internet of this event.

Gerald announced that 2020 would mark 75 years of liberation at the end of the Holocaust.

He stated his intention to hold an event commemorating this at the synagogue, noting that there was an event held in Hyde Park last year in commemoration of this.

He suggested that a group from SACRE may want to be involved in this, and committed to raise this with the Holocaust Memorial Day committee.
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He commented on the potency of witnessing a survivor sitting in the Auschwitz barracks recount their experience, expressing incredulity with the fact that there is a group of people denying that this took place.

Denise expressed her surprise at the percentage of people in a recent poll who denied that the Holocaust happened, Gerald suggesting that this percentage was as high as 20, and the high number who thought that what is reported about this tragedy is exaggerated.

David recounted how, tellingly, when Alfred Hitchcock was approached for advice on a film made about this event shortly after it had happened, he had suggested that the film be shot with minimal editing as no one would believe it otherwise.

Gerald reported on a play that Lewisham has admirably commissioned with funding from the Arts Council based on Rachel Levy's story of being selected for the gas chamber but being miraculously spared. He explained that the production features four masked actors neither of whom speak throughout.

Kim enquired about training for the syllabus.

Denise responded that faith communities were still required to volunteer to host these events, but reported that some changes had been made. She suggested a session for Primary schools possibly in September or October.

Kim enquired when schools will start teaching the new syllabus.

Denise explained that there had been delays with getting this published on the website and that it was also important that the day training for Primary Teachers is held at a place of worship.

She committed to speak to Gerald about fixing a date at the beginning of Autumn.

Kim asked if heads are sent notifications about SACRE business, to which Denise replied that they weren't directly, but that SACREs are open meetings.

Kim enquired how heads would know when SACRE meetings are held.

Angela advised that information such as the Ramadan guidance is sent to Heads in the weekly mailing, as is key information on the Agreed Syllabus.

Denise informed Shaun that she had referred to him someone from his school who had contacted her to enquire about meeting.

Shaun remarked that meeting dates were previously publicised on the website's Council calendar.

Denise added that she had given dates of the Governance team as they had asked about meeting venues.

Angela suggested that Heads be emailed the agenda two weeks before future meetings.

Shaun reported that there was a new priest in charge of St Saviours by the name of David Vyvian.

He announced the next interfaith walk on 23 June 2019, and reported that he would be attending the following week's NASACRE conference and AGM, on behalf of a different SACRE.

Denise reported that next year's AGM would be in London.

David reported that he had attended the Sri Lankan vigil which Shakeel had helped organise, in a show of solidarity among the faiths. He attended that there was a considerable amount of speeches and that cake, with the branding 'A peace of cake', had been offered to attendees at the end of the event.

Gerald reported that a future multifaith event would take places on Armed Forces Day on Allerford Road ???

Angela reported that she had accepted an invitation to attend the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide at City Hall in which Eric Maranga Nwugele, a footballer whose life had been saved by the action of his team-mates, was a key speaker.

Denise lamented the fact that, looking back at these events and hoping that lessons had been learnt, crises of this sort are still happening.

The Chair emphasised the need to persevere in the pursuit of peace.

The meeting closed.