



## **CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT ST HELENS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND VAN  
COMMUNITY CENTRE, CAERPHILLY ON MONDAY, 5TH MARCH 2007 AT 9.30 AM**

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PRESENT:

Councillor D.M. Gray – Chairman  
Councillor J. Taylor – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

D.G. Carter, R.T. Davies, G.G. Hibbert and Mrs D. Price

Together with:

Mrs V. Thomas (ESIS Religious Education Advisor), Mrs R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

Also present:

Miss H. Bartley (ATL), Mrs N.L. Boardman (NUT), Mr D Brooks (Independent), Mrs A. Fitzgerald (St Helens RC Primary), Mrs S. John (UCAC), Mrs J Jones (Church in Wales) and Captain B. Womersley (Salvation Army)

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs E. Hawthorn (VALRETA) and Mr P. Sass (NASUWT).

### **1. OBSERVATION OF AN ACT OF MORNING WORSHIP AT ST. HELEN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Members received a warm welcome from the school and were given a tour of the building and grounds by two school councillors, Becky and Tom.

The Act of Morning Worship was held in the main hall of the school and members were impressed by the children's enthusiasm and eagerness to be actively involved. Similarly members praised the Head teacher, Mr Crosse, and his staff for their ability to engage the children in what was essentially a difficult topic – one of world pollution.

Members thanked Mr Crosse for the invitation to the school and for the welcome the committee had received.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

**3. MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th December 2006 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

**4. PRESENTATION ON THE DRAFT EXEMPLAR FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BY DENIZE MORRIS**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Denize Morris, Subject Officer for Religious Education at the Department of Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS), to the meeting.

Mrs Morris gave a brief history of the Religious Education (RE) subject documents used to give guidance to teachers and schools. She stressed that this was a very important time for RE and that the guidance produced, laid out the principals and gave structure to the syllabus. It was hoped LEAs in Wales would adopt the exemplar framework as it gave clear definitions of the subject and its future workings. In addition it contained real examples of work, developed by teachers. She confirmed the framework had, in recent conferences, received positive feedback on its simple but comprehensive approach.

Mrs Morris highlighted the document was produced in line with the curriculum review and current needs. Examples of different key stage levels were given, including appropriate 'skills' and 'range' at each. It was reiterated that the framework built on current best practices across Wales and it was aimed at engaging and exciting pupils. It was hoped authorities would adopt it and so it would be used as a generic learning tool across Wales.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Morris for her informative presentation.

**5. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT ON WASACRE'S SPECIAL CONFERENCE HELD ON 20TH MAY 2006**

WASACRE's document entitled "Looking Beyond 2008 – Visioning Religious Education, Report on the Special Conference held at Llandrindod High School 20 May 2006" was distributed at the meeting.

Members noted the recommendations to SACREs within the report and acknowledged that in the main, Caerphilly SACRE was already meeting the recommended standards. It was recognised however, that representation on the Committee of different faith groups was limited.

Members were asked to inform Vicky Thomas of any contacts they had, in order to obtain a wider representation of faiths on the Committee.

**6. SACRE RESPONSE TO THE REVISED FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Further to Ms Denize Morris's presentation, Members discussed and completed the Religious Education Questionnaire as part of the consultation process to the Welsh Assembly Government's National Exemplar Framework for Religious Education.

Members welcomed the document, but raised concerns that the range was too broad and that the examples given were repetitive and many overlapped the different key stages. Some areas, such as the introduction, needed definitive statements and the committee agreed the document needed to be consistent with the Foundation Phase Document.

Members were informed Mrs Vicky Thomas, ESIS Religious Education Advisor, would respond to the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills on behalf of the committee. A copy of the response would also be sent to committee members and WASACRE.

## **7. THE VALLEYS FAITH FORUM – PRESENTATION BY REVEREND VAUGHAN REES**

The Chairman welcomed the Rev. Vaughan Rees, University Chaplain of the University of Glamorgan, Pontypridd, to the meeting.

Rev. Rees advised members the Chaplaincy at the University served the University community and had a concern for the communities around the University. As such it was the largest multi-faith community in the Valleys, and it continually aimed to recognise other faiths.

One year ago, as Chaplaincy Services Manager, Rev. Rees was able to obtain community development funding and set about creating a database of these faiths and appropriate services for them (such as a book library, food [access to and about] and counselling facilities). While realising the website, a Valleys Faith Form was suggested and it was agreed if there was enough interest, meetings would be held regularly.

The first meeting of the Valleys Faith Forum was held last year and in November 2006 its Constitution was drafted. The next meeting (to be held on 20th March 2007) would be to agree this. Rev. Rees informed members that the Forum was open to everyone, but initially would have only 9 members. This was in order to protect the aims of the Forum, whilst in its infancy.

Rev. Rees confirmed the aims of the Forum included forming relationships that would work to increase understanding, decrease isolation and build effective and progressive faith community contributions, to the pressing and challenging issues that arise from people living together as neighbours. It hoped to affirm and respect peoples' differences whilst still being committed to live and work together.

Members were informed that representation of different groups was a challenging role for the Forum as many faiths did not 'group' as they did in the Christian faith. And that each faith had to be welcomed for their individuality and what that could bring to the Forum.

In closing, the Rev. Rees asked members to view the website in the near future (its construction was near completion), and asked for any feedback the Committee could offer. The address of the site could be found by searching for 'faithwales' or 'glamfaith', as the formal address had not yet been determined.

The Chairman thanked the Rev. Rees for his informative presentation.

## **8. MEETING OF 17TH NOVEMBER 2006 AT CWMBRAN (TORFAEN)**

Members noted the minutes of the last meeting of WASCARE held on 17th November 2006 at Cwmbran Stadium, Torfaen and the accompanying report.

**9. REPRESENTATION AT WELSH ASSOCIATION OF SACRE (WASACRE)**

It was confirmed the next meeting would be held on 23rd March 2007 in Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire. Caerphilly SACRE representatives would be Councillor D.M. Gray, Councillor G.G. Hibbert and Mrs V. Thomas. The agenda and papers for the WASACRE meeting were distributed accordingly.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE**

- (i) The Valleys Pregnancy Support : a Christian Perspective – It was agreed that this item be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee;
- (ii) WASACRE Nominations – Members noted and endorsed Councillor Gray's nomination;
- (iii) DELLS Conference : 12th March 2007 – Members noted the nominations;
- (iv) SACRE Annual Report 2005-2006 : Neath Port Talbot CBC – Members noted the report and that a copy was available from the secretariat; and
- (v) SACRE Annual Report 2005-2006 : Torfaen CBC – Members noted the report and that a copy was available from the secretariat.

**11. URGENT AGENDA ITEM**

Having regard to the recent receipt of correspondence from WASACRE (received on 22nd February 2007) and this being the first Caerphilly SACRE to which the information could be reported, Councillor D.M. Gray, Chairman of the Committee certified that in his opinion this was an urgent item within the terms of section 100(b) (4) (b) of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and that the details should be presented at the meeting.

Extracts from the letter were tabled at the meeting and members were asked to contact the secretariat if they wished to contribute or ask for further information on any items detailed.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held at Tŷ Dyffryn, Dyffryn Business Park at 2.00 p.m. on 6th June 2007.

The meeting closed at 12.10 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN