



CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) - 12TH JUNE 2014

SUBJECT: MINUTES OF THE WASACRE MEETING HELD ON THE 27TH MARCH 2014 IN CAERPHILLY

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The discussions and deliberations from the WASACRE meeting held in Caerphilly on the 27th March 2014 are detailed below.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The report links directly to SACRE's duty to monitor and develop the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools and the CCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2012.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The minutes of the WASACRE meeting of the 27th March 2014 are provided below: -

4.2 Minutes

1. **Croeso / Welcome.** Chair, Tania ap Sion welcomed members and apologised for the difficulties with the sound system and its interference with the translation. Tania ap Sion introduced Keri Cole, Manager for Education and Inclusion from Caerphilly Local Authority, who welcomed WASACRE members to Caerphilly and expressed her hope that the meeting would be beneficial to all members and an opportunity for reflection. Ms Cole went on to introduce The Mayor of Caerphilly, Councillor Michael Gray.

Councillor Gray welcomed SACRE representatives from all over Wales to the spring meeting, expressing his delight that WASACRE accepted his invitation to hold the meeting here during his year as Mayor. Councillor Gray acknowledged the hard work of the Wales Association of SACREs and went on to thank local authorities for their support and WASACRE for the important work it does. He highlighted some very important initiatives that WASACRE has recently either initiated or supported, including the Estyn Thematic Review of Religious Education in the Secondary School, the KS3 Training led by Executive member Gavin Craigen, the WASACRE Conference, and WASACRE's work on the REQM for Wales led by Executive member Phil Lord. Councillor Gray emphasised the importance of the Association's work relating to the issues of the 22 SACREs in Wales.

Finally the Mayor extended an invitation to all members to visit Mayor's parlour and to lunch in the glass restaurant.

Tania ap Sion thanked both the Mayor and Ms Cole before continuing with the agenda.

2. **Adfyfyrion tawel / Quiet reflection.** Tania ap Sion asked members to pause for reflection on the meeting ahead and their contributions to it.
3. **Ymddiheuriadau / Apologies.** Gavin Craigen, Jen Malcolm, Cllr Janice Dudley, Ben Wigley, Cllr Huw Jones, Parch Gethin Rhys and Mark Brown.
4. **Cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd yn Rhondda Cynon Taf, 10 Hydref 2013 / Minutes of meeting held in Rhondda Cynon Taf, 10 October 2013.** Proposed by Vicky Thomas as a correct record of the meeting and seconded by Carys Pritchard.
5. **Materion sy'n codi / Matters arising.** Item 5 (under item 7 up-dates). In relation to the KS3 training provided by Gavin Craigen on using levels in RE, Mary Parry suggested asking schools what impact it had on their practice in the classroom. The outcome of the discussion which ensued was that it would be useful to do this follow up exercise in the form of a questionnaire sent out only to those who attended the training and that it could be used as part of the SACRE monitoring process as there is a strong emphasis on evaluating and providing impact. Item 5 (under item 7 up-dates). Tania ap Sion confirmed that the report for the Review of SACRE Reports has now been officially published and has been circulated by WASACRE Secretary Libby Jones to all SACREs. A summary of the recommendations has been produced and is on the WASACRE website. Mary Parry thanked Libby for sending this out but added that Welsh Government should be sending this information directly to SACREs. Members were in agreement that WASACRE should write to WG to ask them to send information of this kind including examination data, straight to SACRE's in future to ensure that each SACRE is equipped to carry out its statutory duties. Letter to be sent to Welsh Government by Libby Jones. Item 6 Welsh Government contacts. This was discussed in the agenda item relating to the Executives minutes.
6. **Adroddiad ar gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Gwaith a gynhaliwyd ar 4 Chwefror 2014 / Report from the Executive Committee meeting held on 4 February 2014**
Issues raised in the minutes included:

Item 4: Welsh Government contacts. This has been an area of concern since Denize Morris changed her role. Last September we made contact with Nia Mair Jones who followed up some of our issues, but who has now moved on. Our new contact is now Louise Thomas with whom we have discussed our current issues. The Executive and NAPfRE has a list of other issues to raise in a meeting with Louise scheduled for 14 May 2014 in Llandrindod wells (to be confirmed). Two of the most pressing areas of concern are: 1. SACREs within the new regional arrangements and consortia working. WASACRE is looking for a firm and clear steer on who is responsible for SACREs. 2. The Foundation Phase document, why it was removed from the Welsh Government website, whether it can still be used and sent out to schools and whether it is going to be changed and/or revised?

Item 11: RE News. Rheinallt Thomas reported on behalf of Vaughan Salisbury that there is no longer any need for RE News to be involved in discussions relating to working more closely with WASACRE and REMW because their financial issues had been addressed. RE News website would now be available free of charge. Treasurer John Mitson said that he does not anticipate that there will be a request for funding from WASACRE, as there has been no REflections included recently in RE News online and the funding issues had been addressed. Libby Jones will write to Vaughan Salisbury and Rachel Bendow to ask what the situation is in this respect. Vicky Thomas enquired whether Trinity St David's will be informing schools that they can access RE News free of charge now, or whether it is the responsibility of each local SACRE to do this, adding that there should be a clear

process for informing teachers and schools.

Item 13: EFTRE Representation. The Chair thanked Mary Parry for her work in that role and expressed gratitude to Phil Lord who has kindly agreed to be the new WASACRE representative on EFTRE. Phil Lord shared his experience of his first EFTRE meeting by saying that it was an eye opener to see how RE is taught across Europe and Phil drew members' attention to the EFTRE website, adding that we are hoping to connect more with schools in Europe and information about this will be circulated through WASACRE meetings.

Item 17: The RE council for England and Wales are holding their AGM in Cardiff. The Chair thanked Edward Evans for the initial contact in Welsh Government. Arrangements for the event have been made by WASACRE in partnership with the RE Council. The Chair thanked Libby Jones for her work in this area.

Item 10: Welsh Government Curriculum Review. Members of WASACRE and NAPfRE met in January in Newtown to respond to the consultation document of the curriculum review. A summary of responses has been published on the Welsh Government website and we will make this available on the WASACRE website. Carys Pritchard shared some of the latest statistics from the website only made available that morning: there are 324 responses across Wales, which is a strong response from the RE world. There is some acknowledgement of Religious Education, but we do need to keep the pressure on. Tania ap Sion thanked Carys for bringing this to the meeting and members agreed that members from the WASACRE Executive, in partnership with NAPfRE, should continue with this as a priority.

7. Cyflwyniad PYCAG/ NAPfRE presentation. RE:Quest – Michael Strange.

In his introduction Mr Strange offered members free resources (DVDs) to share with teachers in their area and gave a presentation and demonstration of some of the new RE Quest online resources available on the website. The new website went live in August 2014 for KS2, 3 and 4. For Foundation Phase resources the old website is more suitable and can still be accessed. The teacher's section on the new site includes teaching ideas, multimedia resources, seasonal resources and training resources, each offering a selection of five-minute videos featuring 'real' people. The website is colour coded to ease navigation and the main topic areas include: Bible, Festivals, Issues, Jesus, Life, and People. Mr Strange urged members to ask their SACREs to inform schools of this free resource which has been rebuilt and launched as, www.request.org.uk. On the website you can request an information leaflet to distribute to schools. Michael Strange said that a Welsh version of the leaflet would also be produced. There will be some Welsh resources on the new website as well as the old website. Thanks were offered to Michael and REQuest for this valuable resource and Tania ap Sion added thanks for the inclusion of Welsh examples too.

8. Adroddiad cynhadledd CCYSAGauC / WASACRE conference report

Libby Jones and Gill Vaisey gave a presentation offering an overview of the conference, an evaluation of the outcomes and a slideshow of pictures taken during the event. Conclusions drawn were on the whole very positive and members agreed that it was most beneficial to both teachers of Religious Education and SACRE members alike. The overall question that emerged was, can WASACRE continue to develop this training in the future? Tania ap Sion asked members to consider this question. Vicky Thomas pointed out that there is a gap for this kind of training/event and asked how it is going to be filled, adding that the only forum that SACREs and teachers of RE have in Wales is WASACRE. Teachers on the chalk face who were present at the meeting were asked about their feelings regarding the lack of training available and the impact of the WASACRE conference. Comments received included: "It was a really worthwhile day", "It was a brilliant balance for teachers on SACRE", "It was fantastic, and the fact that the training was free was a good draw", "The training being free was important because it meant that teachers could be released". WASACRE Treasurer, John Mitson confirmed that the event was an excellent use of resources, costing in the region of £3000.00. Gill Vaisey urged

members to consider that all the workshop providers were free on this occasion as many of the providers were also members of NAPfRE, and in future we should include some payment for this kind of work. In addition, there is a need for more administrative support, which would incur a cost if it could not be covered through member institutions. With these points in mind, all members supported the principle of WASACRE providing training in order to support local SACREs and teachers. Tania ap Sion confirmed that the WASACRE Executive are looking at future areas for training.

9. Diweddariadau / Up-dates

(a) REQM – Phil Lord. Tania ap Sion thanked Phil for all his hard work on the Welsh REQM to make it relevant and useful in a Welsh context. Phil demonstrated the website to members and shared tips on how to navigate it. He explained that there is a particular way of getting to the Welsh part of the website for schools in Wales. Teachers must click on 'Wales' which is along the top bar to ensure that they do not download the schools in England version. The materials could be used to enable schools to assess themselves for free if they decided not to apply for the Quality Mark, and it also models what a good department should look like. There is a flyer available in the Welsh part of the REQM website to share in SACRE meetings and for SACREs to circulate to schools. Phil reminded members that the materials are free and urged members to draw schools' attention to the fact the qualification is for both primary and secondary schools. It is not just for state schools, but church schools as well and schools can use it to help with the self-evaluation process regardless of whether they will apply or not. Tania ap Sion reminded members that the Welsh version of the REQM is supported and recommended by WASACRE.

(b) Gwefan CCYSAGauC / WASACRE website – Tania ap Sion. Tania confirmed that the website has been updated and has almost all the annual reports and all the relevant resources for Religious Education from Welsh Government and Estyn on it. There is information on the conference and more resources will be going on the website from the conference including today's presentations.

10. Datblygiadau CBAC / WJEC developments - Tudor Thomas.

GCSE and GCE reform Wales and England. Key messages from WJEC

WJEC's role is to provide:

- qualifications that will give progression routes to the levels of skills and education that Wales will need to compete globally
- qualifications that are able to change with the times and are flexible enough to respond to Wales' changing needs
- engaging and accessible pathways that further develop the skills that are needed for 21st century employment and for life
- qualifications which contribute to a framework for lifelong learning
- valid and reliable assessment of learners' abilities
- support for teachers at these times of change

Awarding body deliverables are:

- regulatory requirements – specifications and specimen assessment materials
- WJEC bundle- guidance material for teachers, resources especially digital, initial support events and exam results analysis with on-line exam review support

DfE and OFCOL want to change A Level and GCSE qualifications in England including introducing a new grading system 1-9 (9 being the top grade), with no internal assessment. Although no date has been announced it is understood that the first teaching will probably start in September 2016. GCSEs will be re-written in England. A Level in England will be linear and AS will be a one (or two) year stand-alone qualification and will no longer link in to an A Level qualification. GCSE, AS and A Level will remain the same in Wales for the time being, but changes are expected. Exams in Wales will take place in June each year only.

One of the main concerns for GCE (AS and A Level) is that development is to be informed by Higher Education - the Russell Group universities in particular. RS is not considered by this group of universities to be an 'enabling' subject. Tudor Thomas reminded members that his contact details are available on the hand out and that WJEC are on twitter should anyone require further information. Tania ap Sion thanked Tudor for his presentation.

- 11. Gohebiaeth /Correspondence.** Libby Jones announced that Wyn Hobson, the WASACRE translator has retired and a letter of thanks from WASACRE has been sent to him, with confirmation of receipt from Wyn himself. Tania ap Sion drew members' attention to the years of excellent service that Wyn had given to the Association and the Association's gratitude to him. It was confirmed that Garmon Davies has taken over from Wyn as the WASACRE translator.
- 12. Enwebiadau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Gwaith / Nominations for the Executive Committee.** Tania ap Sion explained that there have been 6 nominations so far (closing date 28 March 2014). Tania emphasised how heartening it is to see so many SACRE members showing their commitment to the Association by putting their names forward. She made two points in relation to the process:
1. With regard to Cllr Michael Gray's place on the Executive, Tania confirmed that he will be in place until this summer's AGM, to which Cllr Gray agreed.
 2. With regard to the issue about the tie in votes and how it should be resolved, Edward Evans explained that according to the **????** website the Chair needs to randomly and impartially choose (e.g. pin or toss a coin) between the two or more tying parties. Edward proposed that we adopt this procedure/practice, this was seconded by Rheinallt Thomas and to which members agreed. The full list of executive members along with the nominations will go out to all SACREs for the voting process so that they have the bigger picture.
- 13. U.F.A. / A.O.B.** Resources: Gill Vaisey's 'Puddles and the Christening splash'. This resource will be produced in the big book format and the standard book and there will be a special addition for the public to buy as a christening gift at the end of May 2014. The website is currently being redesigned and re-launched, on which electronic resources will be available for free. Gill explained that she has recently shared some of her resources on the TES website and this has been a very useful experience in finding out what teachers want. E.g. the jigsaw shown to members at the meeting. Unfortunately the resources will not be available in Welsh due to lack of sales for the Welsh books Gill trialled last year.
- 14. Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf / Date of next meeting.**

Wednesday 2 July 2014 in Powys Council Chamber in Llandrindod Wells.

Tania ap Sion clarified that the dates for the next six meetings will be available at the summer AGM. Libby Jones will organise this.

Tania ap Sion thanked members for a very productive meeting and gave specific thanks to the following people:

Mayor of Caerphilly, Councillor Michael Gray
Manager for Education and Inclusion Caerphilly County Council, Keri Cole
Translator, Rhian Powell
Caerphilly SACRE Clerk, Emma Sullivan
RE advisor/consultant to Caerphilly Local Authority, Vicky Thomas
Michael Strange from RE Quest
Tudor Thomas from WJEC
All presenters

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process has not been applied, however Religion and Belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and locally is covered by section 6 (xi) of the CCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2012.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications attached to this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications attached to this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 SACRE noted the discussion and deliberations of WASACRE.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 For SACRE to be informed of the discussions and deliberations of WASACRE.

Author: Vicky Thomas (RE Consultant to SACRE)
Consultees: Keri Cole (Manager Learning Education and Inclusion)
Councillor D.M. Gray (SACRE Chair)