



Cyfarfod Pwyllgor Gwaith Cymdeithas CYSAGau Cymru/
Wales Association of SACREs Executive Committee meeting

Dydd Mercher, 14 Mai 2014, MRC, Llandrindod Wells/
Wednesday, 14 May 2014, MRC, Llandrindod Wells

Minutes

Present: Tania ap Sion (Chair), Libby Jones (Secretary), Michael Gray, Bethan James, Phil Lord, John Mitson, Mary Parry, Vicky Thomas.

1. Croeso / Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to Llandrindod for the meeting.

2. Ymddiheuriadau / Apologies

Gavin Craigen, Rheinallt Thomas, Edward Evans.

3. Cofnodion cyfarfod y Pwyllgor Gwaith diwethaf (4/02/2014) / Minutes of the last Executive meeting (4/02/2014). The minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting, proposed by Bethan James and seconded by Vicky Thomas.

4. Materion yn codi / Matters arising.

Point 4. The Welsh Government contact is an agenda item.

Point 6. Training and support for teachers and schools. Members agreed that this issue needs to be discussed further in NAPfRE as an agenda item, and that we may need to wait until the outcome of the curriculum review. It was noted that agreed syllabi need to be reviewed across Wales. Discussion ensued about how WASACRE could facilitate training on this and how it could be organised and funded.

Members felt that the summer meeting would be a good time to discuss this and agreed to the discussion taking place at NAPfRE on 1 July 2014. Other ideas for training included: working in collaboration with the Church in Wales (Phil Lord), more specific training on literacy and numeracy in RE (Bethan James) and that any training would need to reflect the national priorities, issues picked up in the Estyn Thematic Review e.g. self-evaluation and boys achievement (Vicky Thomas). Members agreed that the more WASACRE shows itself as value for money with good quality trainers the more likely schools will be willing to pay for the training from the SEG, but it would have to focus on literacy, numeracy and/or poverty (the three national priorities). WASACRE also needs to look at who is out there to do the training and is able to do it within a Welsh context and to make sure that any communication is shared with all executive members, members, advisors, LAs and schools to ensure fair opportunity across Wales. Treasurer, John Mitson will look into the financial position more closely for the July meeting. Chair of NAPfRE, Bethan James is happy to put it on the agenda for 1 July 2014. NAPfRE members could prepare for this meeting by asking their LAs if they would be willing to contribute funding to training and ideas for areas for training. John Mitson urged members that we will have to move very quickly after 2 July to get this underway and suggested that we advertise the training to one school from the 'Family' to take back to the other schools in that family.

Point 3. Curriculum Review. WASACRE needs to respond to this urgently by the Friday, 13 June. The response should be sent from NAPfRE, WASACRE and individual SACREs. Secretary, Libby Jones will invite executive members to a meeting in Dolgellau on 12 June 2014 to draw up the response with NAPfRE.

Point 11. RE News. Libby Jones will write to Vaughan Salisbury regarding WASACRE contributions and informing schools.

5. Cofnodion cyfarfod CCYSA GauC, 27 Mawrth 2014 / Minutes of the WASACRE meeting, 27 March 2014

Members are happy for the draft minutes to be circulated to SACREs. With regard to REQM Libby Jones will write a letter to SACREs with the link to share with schools.

6. Adroddiad am gyfarfod y Cyngor AG (7 Mai 2014) / Report about the RE Council meeting (AGM) (7 May 2014).

Five representatives from WASACRE/NAPfRE attended the meeting including Chair of WASACRE, Tania ap Sion who reported the following items to the executive: First, Huw Lewis, Minister for Education and Skills gave the key note speech, which was his first speech relating to Religious Education. The RE Council were very impressed with his positive attitude to RE which we may want to discuss further. The speech is on the RE Council website and there is a link from the WASACRE website to this page. Tania ap Sion asked members for their comments, and noted Gavin Craigen recommendations with which she was in agreement: (a) WASACRE should write to the Minister to thank him for hosting the day and for his speech; (b) WASACRE should seek to reinstate the meeting between the Minister and WASACRE; (c) WASACRE should ensure that it gets the opportunity to meet with Graham Donaldson who is leading the review in Wales.

Mary Parry commented that the Minister's speech could be used in LAs to promote and justify Religious Education. Members agreed that we need to ensure RE is kept on the agenda for this review and that we need to talk to Professor Donaldson to ensure that there is proper understanding of RE in the Welsh context. Members agreed for a meeting to be requested and arranged with Professor Donaldson. Tania ap Sion will write a letter to Professor Donaldson and to the Minister to make this request (and also in terms of the Minister, to thank him and to ask for reinstatement of WASACRE's annual meeting).

Secondly, the issue of funds which the RE Council needs to raise was discussed. Members were asked consider how much more they think WASACRE could and should pay. Discussion ensued regarding what we receive in return from paying a yearly fee and ended with the proposal of £250 per year. Treasurer John Mitson confirmed that WASACRE can afford this amount and members agreed that it would be fair to write to the RE Council asking for a clearer indication of the value of membership on the promotional leaflet and the proposal from the WASACRE Executive to offer £250. In addition to this, members were given details about the APPG document currently available on the RE Council website, 'Religious Education and Good Community Relations'. Tania ap Sion drew the attention of members to the section relating to SACREs in this context. Libby Jones will circulate the report to members. Michael Gray raised the issue of ensuring that we have Welsh representation on the RE Council board for which there are six meetings per year. Tania ap Sion assured members that representation for Wales is being discussed in the RE Council but we need to keep a check on this and ensure that we are properly involved.

7. Yr Adolygiad Donaldson / The Donaldson Review. It was agreed that representatives from the Executive Committee would respond to the questionnaire of behalf of WASACRE and it was confirmed that the RE Council for England and Wales would not respond without consultation from WASACRE.

8. Cyfarfodydd Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government meetings. Following a period of absence, Louise Thomas has suggested that regular meetings take place between representatives from the WASACRE Executive and herself. Members now need to check their diaries for dates on which they can be available for future meetings and confirm with Libby Jones who will contact Louise Thomas. A number of questions have already been established which members feel should be put to Louise Thomas. It was agreed that Libby Jones would write to Welsh Government to reiterate the point regarding whom the responsibility for SACRE lies with and where SACREs stand within the new consortia arrangements.

9. Adroddiad EFTRE / EFTRE Report. The 2014 board meeting took place on 15 March in Vienna, Austria and was attended by WASACRE's new EFTRE representative Phil Lord. Tania ap Sion thanked Phil Lord for attending and GwE for releasing him. Fourteen countries were represented and Phil Lord reported to members the outcomes of the meeting and matters of interest such as differences in RE across Europe and the importance of the Welsh voice. Details about the 2016 EFTRE conference were shared. The conference will be held in Vienna on 17 – 21 or 24 – 27 August 2016 and the conference will be made up of keynote speeches, workshops and visits. Phil Lord will attend on behalf of WASACRE. EFTRE recommendations to member organisations were also shared. Recommendation 1: WASACRE financially support the work of EFTRE with a monetary gift (many of the other European countries give

between £100-200). WASACRE do currently pay an annual subscription to EFTRE since Welsh Government stopped doing so. John Mitson will confirm this and members agreed that they are happy with the current financial commitment to EFTRE and that it should not be extended further at this time. Recommendation 2: A 1-2 page commentary on Religious Education in Wales is to be created for the EFTRE website, current information on the website relates to England and Wales. Recommendation 3: Already completed. New Board Member profile and number of short responses to the question - What does Religious Education in Wales mean to me? Created by year 9 pupils from Ysgol John Bright, Llandudno (Gold award – REQM school) and year 13 pupils from Dinas Bran, Llangollen (involved in the Comenius Project). The date of the next EFTRE Executive meeting is in Belgium, 17 October 2014. The date of the next EFTRE Board meeting is in Dublin, 21 March 2015

10. AG yng Nghymru: adroddiadau ymchwil: *RE in Wales: research reports.* Due to many requests from students for information and research papers on Religious Education in Wales, Tania ap Sion proposed that a section would be included on the WASACRE website for interested parties to download/access relevant research publications. Members supported this proposal and Bethan suggested that this also might be the appropriate place to share information about the Farmington Fellowship and the Holocaust organisation.

11. Enwbiadau / *Nominations.* It was agreed that there are now two places available on the WASACRE Executive committee and Libby Jones will circulate the appropriate information regarding the nominees to all SACREs once it has been translated.

12. Gohebiaeth / *Correspondence.* There have been two enquiries concerning rights of withdrawal from Religious Education recently. This raises the question as to whether WASACRE should produce a basic agreed response to this area that Headteachers can refer to. Also, it raises the question as to whether this is something that WASACRE should be working with NAPfRE on. No decision was made, but caution was urged by Mary Parry about the need to ensure that the law should be stated and not interpreted.

13. Agenda ar gyfer cyfarfod y Gymdeithas (Powys), 2 Gorffennaf 2014 / *Agenda for the Association meeting (Powys), 2 July 2014.* This would be circulated.

14. U.F.A. / *A.O.B.* None

15. Dyddiad cyfarfod nesaf y Pwyllgor Gwaith / *Date of the next Executive meeting.* Friday, 25 September 2014. Location to be confirmed.