



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

Dydd Mercher, 1 Chwefror 2016, Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig
Caerdydd
/Wednesday, 1 February 2016, Cardiff United Reformed Church

Minutes

Members present:

Officers- Phil Lord (Chair), Edward Evans (Vice Chair) John Mitson (Treasurer), Paula Webber (Secretary) and Libby Jones (Assistant Secretary).

NAPfRE Representative- Bethan James

Elected Members - Cllr Ernie Galsworthy, Mary Parry, Vicky Thomas and Gill Vaisey
Tania ap Sion, Huw Stephens, Ernie Galsworthy, Mathew Maidment.

1. Croeso / *Welcome* - Chair, Phil Lord welcomed members to the meeting in Cardiff. He also welcomed and introduced Shaun Evans-Pask from Untethered Limited who was present.
2. Ymddiheuriadau / *Apologies* – there were no apologies
3. Cofnodion cyfarfod y Pwyllgor Gwaith diwethaf (29/09/2016) / *Minutes of the last Executive meeting (29/09/2016)*

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Thanks were expressed to Libby Jones for writing the minutes.

4. Materion yn codi / *Matters arising*

P1. Item 4. (Matters Arising)

Action 1: It was decided that the letter with regards to the residual powers of Westminster of Education in Wales still needs to be written to Kirsty Williams.

Action 1: Libby Jones will send Edward Evans the official WASACRE letterhead and Edward will write to the Minister.

Action 2: Completed - A meeting has been arranged of WASACRE representatives and the Minister for Education and Skills, Kirsty Williams, to discuss the current situation with regard to RE in Wales. This will take place on 2nd March 2017. Questions for this meeting to be agreed.

Action 3: The Withdrawal from RE document is not yet ready for translation as it is being amended as a result of the consultation process.

P2. Item 7

Action 1: A presentation from Carmarthenshire Lead Practitioner took place at the November WASACRE meeting in Carmarthen.

Action 2: Mefys Jones from GwE will present at the WASACRE meeting in Wrexham.

Action 3: Vicky made enquiries with the consortia as to what is happening with lead practitioners and the new curriculum and she has had some responses. Executive members discussed sharing names and addresses to create a pool and share resources.

P3. Item 9.

Action 1: Completed. Libby Jones sent SACREs the comments from the Welsh Government regarding the process they should follow for schools not meeting statutory requirements for KS4.



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Action 2: Phil and Libby shared the NAPfRE document 'What is Good RE?' with Manon Jones in the last meeting with Welsh Government and received positive feedback. Bethan James co-ordinated input from others and an updated final version of the document is now available.

Libby informed the committee that Manon Jones had specifically asked WASACRE for suggestions of how SACREs can work with pioneer schools. Pioneer schools are not in the position to receive information from stakeholders as yet, but will be ready between March and April. Manon will be presenting at the next WASACRE meeting.

Edward Evans shared correspondence from Karen Keenan (Education Support Officer) regarding the issue of the new curriculum and the concerns of Voluntary Aided schools having to follow it. A discussion ensued about Voluntary Aided Schools and Voluntary Controlled Schools and their position on delivering RE in the new National Curriculum. Gethin Rees has been in touch with Manon Jones as it was felt that Faith Groups were missing from the process. It was pointed out that VC schools have 2 places on SACREs. Therefore, they have an avenue to input into the discussion as well as an opportunity and responsibility to feed back to faith communities. It was noted that VC schools should follow SACREs agreed syllabuses and VA schools have their own syllabus. Executive members were told that the Welsh Government is already communicating with Church in Wales and that Section 50 Inspections look at the unique qualities of a Voluntary Aided school and its Religious Education. Chair Phil Lord highlighted that the Horizon 2020 Project grant that is available for European projects. EFTRE is currently seeking funding from this project to provide cross-European collaboration in RE. Further details will be shared with WASACRE if the bid is successful.

P.4. Item 13.

Action 1. - Paula Webber has taken up the position of Secretary to WASACRE.

Action 2. – Gill Vaisey clarified that the graphic designer is not designing a website but is designing the logo and appearance of the current WASACRE website. It was felt by executive members that a new logo and house style for the website would raise the profile of WASACRE. This house style will be developed alongside the Withdrawal from RE document as it is to be published.

5. Cofnodion cyfarfod CCYSAGauC, 18 Tachwedd 2016 / Minutes of the WASACRE meeting, 18 November 2016

Mary Parry noted that the names of some WASACRE members who had been in attendance had not been included in the attendance sheet. These were added to the minutes.

P6. Item 10. The letter received from Carmarthenshire SACRE was added to the minutes.

With the exception of the above and with a few minor changes with regards to the spelling of names the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

6. Cyflwyniad gan Shaun Evans-Pask ar y materion sy'n ymwneud dynnu'n ôl am resymau o ragfarn posibl / Presentation from Shaun Evans-Pask on the issues around withdrawal for reasons of possible prejudice.

Shaun Evans-Pask from Untethered Limited presented to the Executive Committee on issues around withdrawal from religious education. It was noted that parents do not need to give reasons for withdrawal. However, when this happens this can occasionally cross boundaries into Identity Based Incidents and Hate Crime. Shaun identified explored the issues such as freedom of speech, blasphemy and prejudice. Sometimes schools find themselves in a situation where reasons for withdrawal can slide into racism (e.g. Islamophobia), inciting hatred and Identity Based Incidents. Where this happens information should be passed on to the Local Authority where it is collated and is then held on record. All counties have Identity Based Incident monitoring systems. Shaun informed the committee that there is no real official definition of what an IBI is but it is how that incident is perceived by an individual that is important. For example prejudice could include withdrawal from one religion only such as Christmas or Church visits, and incitement to hatred is a direct threat e.g. 'should be killed'. Members discussed case studies and found this a very useful exercise. Shaun will be contributing to



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the Guidance on Withdrawal from Religious Education document being written by Gill Vaisey. Phil Lord thanked Shaun for the presentation.

7. Protocol ynghylch aelodau gweithredol yn gwneud gwaith ar gyfer neu ar ran CCYSAGauC /
Protocol regarding executive members undertaking work for or on behalf of WASACRE

A discussion took place as to whether WASACRE should pay people for commissioned work that can be time consuming. Currently much work is done by agreement and sometimes people can be at a financial loss as a result. This issue has been highlighted because of the amount of time and effort Gill Vaisey has put to the production of the Withdrawal from Religious Education document. Members discussed how WASACRE could agree to pay for work that is commissioned and the following points were raised: Payment for a significant piece of work should be agreed in advance; Welsh Government may be expecting WASACRE to publish more guidance documentation in the future; therefore a protocol developed by WASACRE for this purpose would be useful and possibly essential; any document produced which includes a WASACRE logo may become official and should be paid for; This would give WASACRE an opportunity to sell publications and recoup funding which has been done before. John Mitson pointed out that if payment is to be made for a significant piece of work it needs to be agreed in advance. He suggested that WASACRE would have to develop a protocol for this as it is rightly under scrutiny from Local Authorities. It was pointed out that, as Welsh Government may be expecting WASACRE to do more in the future, sorting out a protocol is needed.

This led to a discussion on what the aims of WASACRE are as commissioned work would have to fit with the aims. Questions raised were: What might specifications look like? Would there be opportunity for people on the fringes of WASACRE to work on this? Gill Vaisey suggested we should avoid making decisions based exclusively on finance and we should also consider the experience of a candidate. Vicky Thomas suggested that there was a need for an agreed rate per day and members discussed the need for agreeing a time scale for the work in advance. It was pointed out that, as with the work Gill is currently doing on the Withdrawal from Religious Education document, it can grow and can that issues surrounding legislation can mean documents are delayed. It was suggested that if the time is insufficient then you need to return to WASACRE as if documents are to be published in the name of WASACRE they need to be correct.

Action 1: Members agreed to take this to a WASACRE meeting as it is for them agree that the Executive committee has the authority to commission work.

Action 2: Phil Lord agreed to do some work on the aims of WASACRE.

Action 3: Vicky Thomas agreed to look at some examples of will look at examples of how ESIS used to commission work for an example of how to carry this out.

8. i. Materion Llywodraeth Cymru / *Welsh Government matters – New Contact David Heath*
ii. Cyfarfod Llywodraeth Cymru/ *Welsh Government contact meeting – 16/1/2017*

1. David Heath is the new contact for Welsh Government. He has previously worked with Humanities within the current curriculum. He will be liaising with Manon Jones. The handover will be the responsibility of Abi Williams who WASACRE has worked with in the past. Libby Jones reported back to the Executive Committee that WASACRE Executive members last held a meeting with Welsh Government on 14th December, 2016. Libby reported that at the meeting issues surrounding the 10/94 guidance document were raised. Vicky Thomas stated that whilst 10/94 is useful but not law and also outdated. However, she argued that in many of the issues we have been grappling with recently, e.g. Humanists sitting on SACRE and the Withdrawal from RE document, 10/94 is the only guidance available. Libby understood that David Sargent saw weight behind 10/94. At the meeting Pauline Smith from their legal team was



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in attendance and agreed it was out of date and that they were going away to consider this. In light of issues that Gill Vaisey has encountered whilst writing the Withdrawal from RE document, she will write to Pauline Smith and ask Welsh Government legal team to check legislation as it is incorrect. She will suggest that it needs to be updated, corrected and refreshed. Bethan James stated that with devolution legislation will eventually change. John Mitson pointed out that there continues to be a need for guidance as it is too onerous to keep going back to the law.

The next meeting with Manon Jones is expected to be some time mid March in Llandrindod Wells. This will be a planning meeting involving WASACRE, NAPfRE, Estyn, Welsh Government and teachers. Faith reps sit on SACREs so the avenue for their involvement will be via their SACREs. Libby Jones read out an email from Manon Jones who would be attending the afternoon session of the meeting. She wants to address how WASACRE can support the Pioneer Network. Manon suggested we present the 'What is Good RE?' document to the Pioneer Schools, as discussion with the schools is important.

2. The Meeting with Kirsty Williams will go ahead on 2nd March. NAPfRE have started to think about possible questions.
3. Discussion was had on the questions to be raised with Kirsty Williams. Questions were formulated but would be firmed up by the representatives before the meeting. The questions discussed are attached in *Appendix A*.
4. The Executive Committee agreed to send the following delegates to meet with the Minister: Phil Lord Chair, Paula Webber Secretary, Matthew Maidment, Gill Vaisey and Mary Parry. The meeting will be held on Thursday 2nd of March at 4.45pm.
5. Phil Lord welcomed Manon Jones from Welsh Government to the afternoon session of the meeting. Manon reported to the Committee that until December Welsh Government had been working on Strand 1, which involved the structural elements of introducing the new curriculum. They will publish their proposals. Strand 2 is currently underway and involves six working groups. Manon is working with the Humanities AOLE. Initial meetings of representatives from pioneer schools have been held. In future two meetings will be held every month. They will include discussion on the aims. Manon reported that it was anticipated that the principles for Humanities as a whole will be in place by end of academic year. She agreed there is a need to look at legislation in terms of RE. Manon requested a planning meeting with members from NAPfRE and WASACRE in March. Welsh Government representatives and legislation team along with an ESTYN inspector will also sit on the humanities curriculum meeting. The Executive Committee requested the dates of meetings for the rest of the school year. It was suggested that there was a need to be consistent in understanding what the process will be in terms of agreed syllabus conferences. Manon informed members that the planning group would run alongside the humanities group. Manon recognised that there was a need to find a balance between the Pioneer Schools leading and the role of SACREs. Therefore, Welsh Government needed the support of SACREs. Manon suggested that two delegates were needed to represent WASACRE. NAPfRE would also be represented in the group.

There was discussion surrounding the new GCSE Specification. As it will be reviewed in the next five years, Qualification Wales, as regulator, needs to be involved in the discussion. Manon confirmed that there are to be people with an RE background in the group as the Principles for Humanities are being developed. It was also suggested that the 'What is good RE?' document could be presented to the group. Strand 3 will take place after June and when the detail will be added. Mary Parry asked whether a decision had been made on assessment. Manon said that this is a work in progress. Assessment will be developed alongside the curriculum. There will be a focus on formal assessment.

Mary Parry suggested that SACREs would find it heartening to be working together and that they are part of the process. An executive member asked whether this is it a bottom up curriculum and how they will balance the principles of the Donaldson approach. Manon confirmed that Pioneers will have freedom, but there will be regular check points along the journey. There will be another



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group established alongside this working with Schools with a religious character. Manon wanted to know how they could work together with SACRE and asked whether it would be a good idea to attend SACRE meetings. She asked what issues could impact on the design element. Executive members were asked to raise issues that Manon should be considering as soon as possible as there may be a need to raise these concerns with the legal team. These queries would include: Withdrawal from RE, Post 16 RE, Foundation Phase, Nurseries, Agreed Syllabuses, KS4 – progression steps 4 and 5 and how it links to qualifications.

Manon informed the committee that names of schools that have been given the humanities area will be available in the future. There is a Curriculum Assessment Group that has over arching input into the curriculum; this group includes curriculum assessment experts from across the globe. There is now a need for curriculum experts at AOLE level in order to consider the whole picture. These have not yet been appointed. Gill Vaisey asked who will be communicating officially to SACREs that they will remain and that we are going to develop the curriculum together. Manon said that this can be discussed in the planning meeting in March. Gill articulated that we are pleased we are going to be working together in this healthy way.

Action 1: Gill Vaisey to write to Pauline Smith asking to check legislation surrounding 10/94 and suggesting it needs to be updated.

Action 2: Executive members to attend a meeting with the Minister for Education and Skills on 2nd March 2017.

Action 3: NAPfRE and WASACRE representatives to attend a planning meeting with Welsh Government in March.

Action 4: Paula to gather dates for availability of people to be involved and liaise with Pauline Smith at Welsh Government.

9. Astudiaethau Crefyddol TAG Uwch lefel - ymarferydd arweiniol / *Religious Studies GCE Advanced level – Lead practitioner*

It was felt that whilst teachers of A Level are in need of support, they are struggling for time due to the vast content of the new specification. They are, therefore, reluctant to leave the classroom so may not want to get involved in a similar approach to that being taken at GCSE level. Therefore it was decided not to go further with the idea of having lead practitioners at the moment. However, we need to continue to consider ways of supporting them.

10. Gwefan CCYSAGauC /WASACRE Website

Annual reports: Libby has been receiving annual reports, but some are still in translation, hence there is a delay.

Action 1: Contact details of Phil Lord, as Chair, and Paula Webber, as Secretary, need to be updated on the WASACRE Website and should be passed to Margaret West.

Action 2: - The News area of the website needs to be included on the next agenda for the next executive meeting.

Action 3: - Communication with Clerks to SACRE to find out where missing reports are and to state that they should also go to Welsh Government. It is also necessary to check who the Welsh Government contact is now for annual reports.

11. Gohebiaeth / *Correspondence*

1. There will be a meeting of Religious Diversity in Primary Schools at Cardiff University on Thursday 30th March where they will be presenting what they have done so far. The Committee discussed whether this might be a good WASACRE presentation in the future.



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2. EFTRE – Friday 30th March Gill to Represent WASACRE
3. Letter from Teach RE – How do we inspire the recruitment of RE Teachers. Funded by the REC.

12. Agenda argyfercyfarfod y Gymdeithas (Sir Fynwy), 3 Mawrth 2017/
Agenda for the Association meeting (Monmouthshire), 3 March 2017.

Presenters at the Usk meeting will include a presentation from Sharon Perry Phillips on Experience of RE in the Humanities. Manon Jones who will present on Donaldson. Bethan James informed the committee that Owain ap Daffydd from Ysgol Cwm Rhymini is willing to come to either or both NAPfRE and WASACRE meetings. Each presentation will be 20 minutes in length and will include time for discussion.

4. U.F.A. /A.O.B

Dyddiad cyfarfod nesaf y Pwyllgor Gwaith / *Date of the next Executive meeting:*
Summer –19/5/2017 Llanerch Inn – Llandrindod Wells.
Autumn –27/09/2017 Cardiff United Reformed Church.



Appendix

Appendix A

Subsequent to this meeting Appendix A contains the questions that will be posed to the minister on the 2nd March.

1. **How can we ensure and maintain quality provision in KS4 RE in light of the new GCSE and Welsh Bacc?**

Areas discussed around this question included:

What is going to be in place of the GCSE short course as there are no longer two KS4 GCSE syllabuses? What can be taught in place of the short course as the new GCSE is not accessible for all? The fact that new GCSE does not appear to be aligned to the Donaldson approach. If there the short course is no longer a qualification is RE now no longer substantial? It was pointed out that the short course revolutionised KS3/4 and 5 and members agreed that this in turn led to the popularity of RE/RS in KS4 and KS5. Executive members asked whether Qualifications Wales understood the impact of having no short course.

Issues surrounding RE and the Welsh Baccalaureate need to be raised. In the Meeting 17th December David Sargent had invited SACRE to come up with a challenge for Welsh Baccalaureate. However, if you only do RE through the WBQ then there will not be sufficient RE to cover the Agreed Syllabus. A current teacher, expressed grave concerns about the impact of the WBQ on RE. How is the statutory nature of Agreed Syllabus going to sit within the humanities section of the new curriculum? Is it too late for RE to come out of the Humanities Curriculum? It was noted that this happened with the Foundation Phase as there were issues around withdrawal and 3 year olds. RE has to be easily identifiable so that pupils can be withdrawn. What is the legal case for trialling the new curriculum? It is important for schools to be participating in trials to see where mistakes are. It is the SACREs job in each LA to monitor RE so they need to know what is happening with trials for RE in the new curriculum.

2. **How is the current situation between RE being in the basic curriculum and the proposal that it becomes part of humanities in the national curriculum going to be reconciled?**

Discussion in this issue covered the right of withdrawal, nurseries and 10/94.

3. Discussion was held upon the nature of the aims of the discussion with the Minister? What actions and outcomes were being sought from the discussion about the national curriculum? It was agreed that it would be important that schools had clarification written down in a guidance document and that training around the new curriculum would be provided.