



Cyfarfod Cymdeithas CYSAG au Cymru, yn Sir Fynwy Swyddfeydd y
Cyngor, Neuadd y Sir, Rhadyr, Brynbuga. 3 Mawrth 2017 (10.30am – 3pm)
Wales Association of SACREs meeting, at the Monmouthshire County
Council Offices, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA. 3 March 2017
(10.30am – 3pm)

Attendance

<p>Ynys Môn / Anglesey Bethan James Rheinallt Thomas</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent Gill Vaisey Soam Sharma Chris Abbas Mal Jilani</p> <p>Pen-y-bontar Ogwr / Bridgend Edward Evans Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Caerffili/ Caerphilly Enfys Hawthorn Janet Jones Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Caerdydd / Cardiff Gill Vaisey</p> <p>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire Mary Parry</p> <p>Ceredigion</p> <p>Conwy Phil Lord Nicholas Richter</p>	<p>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire Phil Lord</p> <p>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire Phil Lord</p> <p>Gwynedd Bethan James</p> <p>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil Vicky Thomas Ernie Galsworthy</p> <p>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire Gill Vaisey Val Howells Peter Jarvis Kath Fitter N Baicher Tudor Thomas Bob Cotterell Sue Cave Liz Hackett-Pain</p> <p>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot</p> <p>Casnewydd / Newport Huw Stephens N Baicher Sally Northcott Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire Mary Parry Huw George</p>	<p>Powys John Mitson Margaret Evitts</p> <p>Rhondda Cynon Taf Paula Webber Mathew Maidment</p> <p>Abertawe / Swansea Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Torfaen /Torfaen Marilyn Frazer Kenneth Jacob Vicky Thomas</p> <p>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan Paula Webber Dafyd Trehearne R. Delpak</p> <p>Wrecsam / Wrexham Libby Jones Tania ap Sion</p> <p>Sylwedyddion / Observers Simon Oram Clare Cooper Sharon-Perry Phillips Tudor Thomas (REMW) Andrew Jones (Caldicot School) Fr Bernard Sixtus (Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff) Pauline Smith (Welsh Government) Manon Jones (Welsh Government)</p>
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Minutes

1. Cyflwyniad a chroeso / *Introduction and welcome*

The Chair of WASACRE, Phil Lord (PL), thanked Cantref and Shirenewton school choirs for the excellent entertainment provided. He welcomed members to the Council Chamber at Usk, Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire SACRE representatives were available to talk to members during the day.

Thanking WASACRE for choosing the venue, Cllr. Jim Higginson welcomed members to the Chamber saying that at Monmouthshire County Council Religious Education is never underestimated or undervalued. Members were also welcomed by Chair of Monmouthshire SACRE, Liz Hackett-Payne, who expressed thanks to all who had organised the day. She told members it is a privilege to act as Chair to Monmouthshire SACRE, which works on the premise of complete inclusivity. She recognized that the SACRE thrives as a result of the dedication of faith representatives, who bring a valid and respected perspective to SACRE. She acknowledged teacher reps, fully supportive councillors and other members who bring academic expertise. Liz spoke of the positive nature of the SACRE in carrying out their duty to monitor RE in schools. The SACRE organises an RE event, including workshops, to help the transition between primary and secondary schools. This enhances the ability of children to understand many faiths. Additionally, the SACRE has received presentations from teachers and pupils who made school visits to Auschwitz and to Jerusalem. Liz believes SACRE is a force of positivity and inclusivity and stated that, with twenty-two SACREs working together, WASACRE has a very important role in RE. She encouraged WASACRE to ensure that the roles of SACREs are not eroded and that SACRE's statutory duties remain foremost in the eyes of the local authority and Welsh Government.

2. Adfyfyriotawel / *Quiet reflection*

PL showed a YouTube film (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQbeWFxsRp0>) about the importance of St David's Day from Little Milly aged 4. He also spoke about Shrovetide and Lent, reflecting on how community celebrations are connected to the past, which is an important aspect of Religious Education.

3. Ymddiheuriadau / *Apologies*

Apologies received from Andrew Pearce, Cllr Lyndon Lloyd, Alwen Roberts, Mark Campion, Cllr Mary Barnett, Helen Gibbon, Rachel Bendell, Alison Lewis, Shè-zèr Kandro, Meinir Wynne Loader.

4. Cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwydyng Nghaerfyrddin, 18 Tachwedd 2016 / *Minutes of meeting held in Carmarthen, 18 November 2016*

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by Rheinallt Thomas (RT) and seconded by Gill Vaisey (GV).

5. Materionyncodi / *Matters arising*

P3. The work collating REMW RE Ideas continues to be a work in progress.

P3. Humanist attendance – The guidance document Welsh Office Circular 10/94 is restrictive; however the guidance stands until it is changed. GV told WASACRE members that Kathy Riddick has sent a new book *What is Humanism?* written by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young for KS2 and KS3 3 pupils. Kathy said she would like to have been present at the meeting but was unaware about it until recently.

P3. WASACRE has received a response from Welsh Government regarding the status of the agreed syllabus.

P.4. Executive members have met with the Minister, Kirsty Williams. The status of the Agreed Syllabus was discussed and the Minister asked for evidence that schools are not complying. Members discussed whether SACREs can produce evidence that statutory requirements are not being met. Members acknowledged that

there is a procedure to follow if schools are found not to be meeting their statutory requirement for RE and that SACREs should try to resolve the problem in the first instance. GV was heartened by the Minister's response, as she stated that schools should be meeting higher standards and was adamant, therefore, that all schools must follow the Agreed Syllabus. If they did not they could not meet those required standards. GV reported that the Minister was very strong in backing WASACRE on this issue.

P. 5. The presentation from lead practitioners will go ahead in Wrexham

P. 7. PL attended the EFTRE Executive meeting. He visited a variety of schools and had the opportunity to stay with a family in Finland. There will be a presentation/summary in Wrexham.

P.8. Item 9. Edward wrote to the Minister. Statutory requirements are devolved. MP said Westminster can pass legislation and Welsh Government decides whether Wales accepts or rejects legislation. There are no powers retained by Westminster that apply to just education. This concurs with the fact that the REC Commission only applies in England. Wales is a legislative power, but Human Rights and other areas of law are not devolved. So when making decisions Welsh government have to ask whether this is solely education or does it include things that are not devolved matters.

Action: Thanks will be written to Kirsty Williams for a swift reply – EE.

P.10. Date of the summer meeting in Wrexham is Friday 7th July in the Council Chamber.

6. **Cyflwyniad NAPfRE / NAPfRE presentation:**

Cyfoethogi'r cwricwlwm modern - o safbwynt ysgol arloesi / Enriching the modern curriculum – from a pioneer school perspective – Owain ap Dafydd Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni

Owain ap Dafydd Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni gave a presentation on the Donaldson Report/*Successful Futures*. Cwm Rhymni, the only Welsh medium school in Caerphilly, will have over 2000 pupils within 5 years. They see themselves along with the feeder primaries as part of a 'family of schools'. When children start primary school they belong to Cwm Rhymni. Pupil progress is at the heart of the school. The school has responded to *Successful Futures*/the Donaldson Report. The school has taken on board *Successful Futures* and the 4 Purposes are already being adopted by the school. The main focus at the school is on pedagogy, leadership and collaboration. Literacy is at the heart of everything. When lesson observations take place they look at whether the 4 Purposes are met. Specialists in secondary school are working with primary schools to develop the curriculum. The school has introduced Leaders of Pedagogy (LOP). Subject leaders are also responsible for developing staff. The school employs a Senior Leader of Pedagogy on TLR1. LOPs will be leading the six areas of the new curriculum. Cluster work is essential. They support primary schools and advise on subject specialisation. They also worked with Ysgol Llanharria Foundation unit KS2 and KS3 looking at pedagogy. The school takes time to reflect 4 and improve and are developing consistency in a 3-16 curriculum. Transition is a key in *Successful Futures*. Teachers visit primary schools on a regular basis to get to know the children individually. Curriculum development was seen as a way forward in developing the confidence and wellbeing of pupils. Cross curricular events are fundamental in Ysgol Cwm Rhymni. The Head talked about being in the Aberfan area and marking this history in cross curricular activities in a similar way they have marked the history of the Holocaust. The RE department is very important in this cross curricular approach. Welsh Bacc is also seen as fundamental to the development of the curriculum. Ysgol Cwm Rhymni now teaches RE through the Welsh Language Curriculum. Owain said that rather than the usual one hour per week, as a result of this change RE now gets four hours per week. He reported that Estyn were happy with the provision. The co-ordinator of RE works very closely with the Welsh department. In Owain's opinion, resources for RE are better with this approach as the Welsh department have helped to develop the resources. This, he maintains, brings out a better understanding from the language. The consistency and quality of the Welsh has improved and the quality of RE has improved as a result of the improved status of the teachers teaching RE. RE is compulsory subject in Donaldson in the Humanities AoLE. The headteacher believes that the 4 Purposes fit in ideally with RE. RE is more than just another subject it contributes to wellbeing. He said that in an area where deprivation is high and people have

significant concerns about perceived migration in the valleys of Wales, RE is developing respect and understanding.

PL thanked Owain for providing an understanding of what is happening across the school. During questions a member said that the Head had talked about KS3 having to meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. But what happens at KS4? Owain said that a Cross curricular approach is taken. RE has been taught by people who are not subject specialists in the school. Sometimes through cross curricular days but that the school has covered Agreed Syllabus and that this has been recognised by Estyn. Welsh Bacc is also being used to teach RE. He said that the school did not go down the short course route, but GCSE and A Level Religious Studies are popular options. Huw Stevens (HS) asked how much time was being given to History and Geog. Owain said that they continue to have one hour per week. He reiterated that he believed that RE has improved through teaching in first language Welsh lessons. A question was asked about the quality of teachers applying at the school. Owain said that to produce good students we need good teachers and that they don't have a shortage of people applying at Cwm Rhymni. Once appointed, they are given the opportunity to develop. In answer to another question Owain confirmed that RE is the only subject to be taught through first language Welsh lessons, but that some RE was also taught during registration period and through the Welsh Baccalaureate. Discussions followed with a clear message that WASACRE members didn't think that teaching RE through registration periods could be considered as good practice.

7. **Cyflwyniad WASACRE/WASACRE presentation:**

Gwaith y rhwydwaith ysgolion arloesi a'r MDAPh Dyniaethau/*Work of the pioneer school network and the Humanities AOLE* - Manon Jones

PL introduced Manon Jones to WASACRE. He informed members that WASACRE are now meeting with Welsh Government on a regular basis.

Manon Jones brought WASACRE up to date on the current progress of the new curriculum with particular reference to the Humanities AOLE. Successful Futures was published two years ago and 5 Manon considered that the heart of the new curriculum is to encourage young people to develop as full members of society and that this is reflected in the 4 Purposes. Manon reported that the recommendation is that RE continues to be a statutory requirement. Welsh Government have published a document *A curriculum for Wales, a Curriculum for Life* (<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculuminwales/curriculum-for-wales-curriculum-for-life/?lang=en>). Manon's presentation summarised some of the main points within this document which will bring fundamental changes to the Education system in Wales. The curriculum will be fully implemented in 2021. There will be a robust accountability system throughout the development of the curriculum. The pioneer network was set up in 2015. Digital Competence is one area of the curriculum that has already been developed. In 2017 there will be practical support for the professional teaching pioneers who are developing the new curriculum. Welsh Government is looking at ways to prepare the practitioners for the new curriculum and have developed a network of schools across Wales so that there is proper representation. There will be a collaborative approach to the development of the AoLE. Pioneers will identify what is working at the moment, share and provide feedback. This will be an inclusive approach with practitioners leading the work. They will be working with experts from Wales and the world. Welsh Government, Estyn, Qualifications Wales and other stakeholders are partners in the development of the new curriculum. Welsh Government is also seeking to develop a partnership with WASACRE which they see as vital now that the focus of the work is to develop the humanities part of the curriculum. Manon voiced her appreciation of the advice and support she has received from WASACRE. Manon informed WASACRE that enriching experiences will be a focus across the whole curriculum and that work has already started on the AoLE. Questions will be asked such as, what do we mean by Humanities? What are the links to other AoLE? The next step will be to develop the detail working groups looking at cross curricular approaches, enrichment and experiences, the Welsh dimension, wider skills and assessment and progression. These groups have published reports which are available online. The new curriculum is meant to be holistic. The group developing humanities has met once. Welsh Government recognises the importance of working together. Welsh Government wants to build strong foundations. They recognise that WASACRE has a body of expertise and they have asked WASACRE to share in this process. Members from WASACRE and NAPfRE

will meet with Welsh Government at the end of the month (add the date). Welsh Government are looking at how they can engage with various SACREs to look specifically at RE. Their aim is to have a good working relationship from the start. Manon stated that Welsh Government needs to know the RE issues from the very beginning.

Questions following the presentation included:

“I assume the intention that the humanities will work together?” – Manon said that Humanities will be looked at in a holistic way but that it was the intention that but the individual disciplines will remain. They will also be making the links with the AoLE as the new curriculum will be a holistic framework.

A member asked how SACREs can ensure how the Agreed Syllabus is being met. Members expressed concern that they are hearing that already some schools think that they do not have to follow the Agreed Syllabus. VT said that the SACREs she represents have already sent out letters to schools reiterating the statutory nature of the agreed syllabus along with a proforma for schools to fill in to show where they are meeting these legal requirements.

The following points were raised in a lively discussion that took place following lunch: 6

- It is important that the Agreed Syllabus is adhered to during the next few years while the 4 Purposes are being developed within Humanities. The Status of RE remains statutory and schools should be delivering RE according to the Agreed Syllabus.
- Concern that Estyn current reports do not demonstrate good practice in RE. Members were concerned that during the inspections Estyn may perhaps see paperwork, but not the RE itself. Estyn may not, therefore, report when schools are not complying with Agreed Syllabuses.
- Members expressed concern that teaching RE via other subjects could potentially be ‘killing RE’. For any subject to be delivered during registration, for example, is not appropriate. Non-specialist teaching in RE may be seen as a disservice. Specialist RE teachers are needed to teach RE effectively and sometimes schools are using a cross-curricular approach as a money saving exercise. If a school values subject teachers they should be investing in RE. If headteachers begin to see this approach as good practice, it could potentially undermine the principles of Donaldson. Manon Jones said that in designing the new curriculum there is a need for Quality Assurance to ensure that this is not the case. From 2018 there documents will be available stating how RE should and could be delivered.
- The ‘What is good RE?’ document will be considered in designing the new curriculum. We need to make sure that, if RE is to be delivered through the humanities curriculum in the future, this is good RE.
- The issue of non-compliance has raised for the last 18 months as SACREs have been receiving anecdotal evidence of a there being a view in some schools that the Agreed Syllabus doesn’t have to be adhered to. Some members would like to have received a statement from the Minister confirming the status of RE. In some SACREs letters have already gone out to all schools reminding them of the statutory nature of RE.
- It was pointed out that, whilst RE can be delivered in a number of ways as long as the Agreed Syllabus is adhered to, there is concern about the workload of Heads of Department for RE in approaches where they would be required to provide resources for non specialist teachers.
- Manon Jones was asked who would determine the best model in the new curriculum. Manon said that they need to have consistency with the other AoLE and to develop the curriculum, trial and change mindsets by focusing in the 4 Purposes. Welsh Government would be developing, trialling and sharing ideas. There are a variety of people who will challenge pioneer schools. A member asked Manon who would retrain teachers. Manon informed WASACRE that colleagues in Welsh

Government were going to work with teacher trainers and teachers who are in the profession already. This raised the issue of who would fund teacher training, hiring venues and promote events.

- WASACRE should gather evidence that Agreed Syllabuses are not being adhered to:-
 - There was a concern expressed by a member that headteachers may just say they were complying.
 - It was suggested that perhaps heads of department and challenge advisors could be an avenue to collect evidence.
 - There would be an opportunity to ask them when lead practitioners meet.
 - Collecting of evidence would be too time consuming and may not change anything.
 - WASACRE members were cautious about going down this route as most schools have a good relationship with SACRE. If WASACRE is required to collect evidence then WASACRE may be seen to be policing the curriculum and could affect the positive relationship we currently have with schools.
 - A suggestion mooted by a member was SACREs host a meeting of HODs to show SACRE support.
 - It was pointed out that non-compliance could be an issue for primary schools too.
- We must ensure in the new curriculum that RE has parity with History and Geography and that it is delivered by specialists.
- WASACRE were informed that a member was aware of a school that is 'trying out Donaldson'. They have already started with Year 7 and other schools have visited as an example of good practice and are now using it in their schools. Manon Jones was asked whether she was aware of the schools that are pioneering and whether there is good model. Manon said that she appreciates the feedback she is getting at the WASACRE meeting and that she will bear it in mind and pass it on.
- There was a discussion about whether there might be an opportunity to visit a Caerphilly school as a case study to see how RE is being re-visioned. A discussion on the protocol for doing this took place. Some members pointed out that it was local SACREs and not WASACRE who should visit schools.

Action: VT to discuss this in Caerphilly SACRE.

Action: Agenda the issue of training at the next Exec meeting.

8. **Cyflwyniad NAPfRE / NAPfRE presentation:**

Addysgu Addysg Grefyddol o fewn cwricwlwm y Dyniaethau/ Teaching Religious Education within a Humanities curriculum –Sharon Perry Phillips

Sharon Perry-Phillips, Head of RE at Monmouth Comprehensive School presented her experiences of teaching RE within a humanities based curriculum for the past 9 years which is in line with Donaldson. She suggested there are lessons to be learnt as we approach Successful Futures. The school produced a skills based integrated curriculum and skills became dominant over range and they became a driving force of learning. Five themes were identified, including research skills. The aim was explicitly develop these skills. It was a cross curricular, skills based and 'Donaldsonesque' curriculum. Welsh Baccalaureate and the Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate were also an integral feature. Humanities became a fully integrated department and each class had a very different experience of Religious Education. There was evidence of this from the parents of twins in the school. There was the realisation that RE fits everywhere and the links were easy to make. Assessments were flexible, but at least three per year had a concrete RE element. The approach was student centred and student driven. A strength of this approach was that you got to know your students very well. Estyn commented that the approach had revitalised teaching strategies. For RE this approach meant that collaboration was fantastic and teachers developed an appreciation of sister subjects. As an RE

specialist teacher, Sharon, who had previously taught multiple classes of RE for one hour a week, it was good to teach them more often. Good relationships were built and the uptake for RE improved. Sharon reported, however, that the negative impact on RE from non-specialism was phenomenal. She witnessed a significant knowledge deficit in RE by Year 8. The ratio of RE teachers was tiny in comparison to History and Geography, so RE took the brunt of the deficit. The school noted teacher bias was inevitable as people play to their strengths. After a number of years using this curriculum model, in Jan 2015 they reverted to teaching the subjects separately. And in Feb 2015 Successful Futures was introduced. Sharon reported that, in her experience, this way of teaching was 'death to Humanities'. Reverting back had had a positive effect and they are much happier having discrete terms to develop discrete skills. Sharon reported that RE had not been taught in the same way by non-specialists. For instance, she was frustrated that in the last two years no one had asked to borrow Sikh artefacts and not once had a visit been arranged. It produced a 'grab and run type of teaching.' She suggested that if they had to think again there would need to be investment time and non-specialist staff training. There should be embedded Inset. Additionally there should be consistency of staffing, ownership and collaborate planning. Sharon argued that schemes of work and resources, etc. would not matter if you didn't invest in staff. She also recommended that there should be a balance between skills and subjects. Subject specialism must be retained at KS3. The integrated curriculum at Monmouthshire Comprehensive was in line with Successful Futures. She warned that unless we are really careful with RE it will be it and not History or Geography that will lose out.

Questions included:

If you had a choice would you prefer not to go down the Donaldson Approach?

Sharon said that subject specialism was lost and she would 'bite your hand off not to go down that road'. You get much better RE via a specialism. GV reported that she has seen amazing and inspiring RE that is in Monmouth Comprehensive School. She felt very strongly that if Sharon and her specialist team could not deliver that it would be a real shame. Sharon said that another problem encountered in the Humanities approach was that there was little time to engage pupils and inspire them to take RS at GCSE. Teachers of humanities would inevitably sell their own subject and it is the love of your subject that inspires people. The school has now replaced an integrated approach with a modular approach though they still attempt to cross link schemes. Sharon said that under the integrated scheme RE was being taught like History's said that subject skills are important as the cross curricular skills and asked where that fits into Donaldson. Manon Jones said that the disciplines will remain and that it had been definitely worthwhile to listen to the talk given by Sharon. VT stated that it was good to end the talk on a positive note and she appreciated Sharon's honesty in her feedback. She expressed concern that KS4 is content laden and that some of that now has to be covered at KS3. At the WJEC training event Sharon said that she felt as overwhelmed as she had ever been. She felt fortunate to have 5 hours a fortnight to cover the GCSE course but she was aware that other staff didn't have that. PL noted that he has taught in schools with no subject specialists and that it was very difficult to inspire non-specialist staff. He recalled that he had had to plan all of the lessons to ensure engagement and progression from KS3 to 4

9. **Diweddariadau/Up-dates:**

- **Canllawiau Reoli Hawl Tynnu'nôl o Addysg Grefyddol/ *Guidance on Managing the Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education***

Gill Vaisey has made progress with the document. The main development has been as a result of a presentation from Shaun Evans- Pask from Untethered Limited who presented to the Executive Committee on 1st Feb 2017 on issues around withdrawal from religious education. He has since provided a section to go into the document. GV has now written a section on each of the major world faiths in order to minimise withdrawal. The document is at the proofreading stage and will soon go to translation. GV has had to go back to WG on an issue with 10/94 that needs clarification.

- **Ymarferwyr Arweiniol/Lead Practitioners**

We now know who the Lead Practitioners are and what schools they belong to. WASACRE could have a presentation from consortia in the south during its Autumn Term meeting in Bridgend. This would be another opportunity to put them in contact with one another.

- Materion Llywodraeth Cymru / *Welsh Government matters* –
 - Cyswllt Newydd/*New Contact* – *David Heath*
 - Cyfarfod Llywodraeth Cymru/ *Welsh Government contact meeting* – 16/1/2017 & 14/12/16

WASACRE have met with Welsh Government five times in the last term and a half. This included a meeting between Phil Lord, Libby Jones, David Heath and Abi Williams in Colwyn Bay. It is encouraging that David Heath was so knowledgeable and enthusiastic about RE. Regular meetings will be held in the future. WASACRE will also be meeting Welsh Government concerning the new curriculum. WASACRE are sharing with Welsh Government the issues we are concerned about such as legislation, withdrawal, Humanist representation on SACREs, the collection of annual reports, Circular 10/94 and that schools should still be following the Agreed Syllabus.

SACRE Annual Reports should be sent to Abi Williams: Abigail.Williams@wales.gsi.gov.uk

WASACRE have a meeting on the 27th March with Welsh Government.

Action: LJ to follow up which reports are missing.

10. **Adroddiadargyfarfod y PwyllgorGwaith a gynhaliwyd ar 1 Chwefror 2017 / Report from the Executive Committee held on 1 February 2017**

Items: -

Members were reminded that faith representatives for the Church in Wales on SACRE were concerned with issues relating to the agreed syllabus rather than SACRE discussing issues relating to the CiW own RE curriculum for VA schools.

Shaun Evans-Pask – Untethered Limited – Identity based incidents. Very interesting and schools will be receiving this training. In light of the work that GV has done on the Withdrawal Document which has been very time consuming a discussion was had on whether WASACRE should pay for this in the future. If so it would be necessary to develop a protocol that fits with our aims.

MM proposed and EE seconded the motion - *Is it the will of WASACRE that we can employ and use the expertise of consultants to pay them for their time?*

11. **Gohebiaeth /Correspondence**

i. Peter Hemming- Invitation to a free seminar on ‘Religious Diversity in the Primary school’, 30th March at Cardiff University. WASACRE have a place reserved and LJ will attend.

ii. Harkirat Singh- Sikh Education Service. Based in Northampton, offering workshops and visits to schools in Wales and hoping to make links with Wales.

iii. Members asked if the workshops are available bilingually and what do we know about the service. Neeta Baicher offered to look into this further and liaise with LJ.

iv. Commission on RE in England- Evidence gathering. Phil Lord’s name has been put forward as a link for this. It is an England matter and members have already agreed not to take part.

v. Welsh Government colleague David Heath. Response regarding agreed syllabus for RE and assessment.

vi. The Baha’i Community in Wales wished WASACRE a joyful greeting for the forthcoming Baha’i New Year on 20th March. This is a special year for the community as it is the bicentenary of the founder Bah aullah which will be celebrated in October.

vii. WASACRE received correspondence from Matthew Vince, a doctoral student at Cardiff University's Centre for the Study of Islam – UK. He is exploring Islam in RE in state schools. Matthew is a trained RE teacher. He is interested in coming along to SACRE/WASACRE to build a network between ourselves and the university. It was decided that GV speak with him and discuss him attending Cardiff SACRE in the first instance.

viii. Wendy Dossett sent WASACRE information about three study days of teachers being held at the University of Chester. They are not board specific but would be useful to teachers of WJEC A Level. They are on Philosophy and Ethics, Buddhism and Christianity. The workshops are intended to give a back to university experience. Details are available on the University Website. PW will be attending two of the workshops.

12. **U.F.A. /A.O.B.**

1. Humanism - book has gone to all schools. Sharon Perry-Phillips reported that it is very useful and that the Humanist Association has been very helpful with the content of the GCSE. It is in pupil speak and helpful for the GCSE. She informed WASACRE that for delivering Hinduism at GCSE and for Life and Death Thornhill Crematorium in Cardiff are providing Cultural Tours

2. The AREIAC Annual Conference is taking place in York on 3rd – 4th July. Day 1 focuses on assessment and progression and Day 2 on curriculum development and working with faith communities. The conference is open to bookings from AREIAC members and non- members. For more information please contact the conference organizer Gill Vaisey.

13. **Dyddiad y cyfarfodnesaf / Date for next meeting:** 7 Gorffennaf 2017, Wrecsam/ 7 July 2017, Wrexham.
Dyddiadau cyfarfodyddyn y dyfodol / Future meeting dates: Autumn 2017, Bridgend; Spring 2018, Swansea

MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DATE: JULY 4th 2017

REPORT TO: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PURPOSE: EXECUTIVE VOTING 2017 -2020

NOMINATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (7 July 2017)

There are TWO nominations for TWO positions on the Executive Committee.

1. Alison Lewis Swansea SACRE

I am a Swansea University Philosophy graduate and mother of two boys. I have served as Head of the Religious Education Department at Cefn Hengoed Community School in Swansea since 2001. On arrival my mission was to turn the department around by ensuring that every pupil at Cefn Hengoed had the opportunity to study a subject that could not only provide them with an important GCSE qualification, but one that is so rich in essential life skills. So, despite having only 2 hours per fortnight on the curriculum, I tailored the GCSE course to allow it to be taught under these constraints and became the first non-denominational school in Wales to have full cohort entry for GCSE Religious Studies, including every pupil in our Specialist Teaching Facility.

My department has gone from strength to strength, and in a time when subject hours are being cut across the curriculum, I have been proactive in securing more curriculum time to provide pupils with well-rounded and balanced religious education, abundant in skills and values essential for life as young adults. I am proud that RE is recognised as a valuable subject in my school but I understand that this is not the same everywhere, and feel that part of my work is to ensure that RE is given its rightful place in all schools. A 'token gesture' approach to RE is not enough; it is vital that statutory obligations are adhered to and meaningful RE is being taught across all schools in Wales.

During my teaching career to date, I have been a WJEC examiner of GCSE Religious Studies and was selected to work alongside Gavin Craigen as moderator for levelling standardisation in Religious Education in 2012. I have also served on the Swansea SACRE for many years as Vice Chair and now Chairperson, and have represented my SACRE at WASACRE conferences.

In addition to my full time teaching commitment, I am currently working with ERW as a Lead Practitioner for Religious Education. My role is to equip teachers of RE with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to teach the new 'GCSE Specification in RS 2017', to prepare for the new qualification through setting up network meetings and create collaboration opportunities as well as creating resources on the Welsh Government's digital platform, Hwb, for colleagues in Wales. I have presented the Lead Practitioner's progress at recent network, SACRE and WJEC conferences.

I have been a part of Literacy and Numeracy pilot projects in my school and have shared good practice amongst colleagues in network meetings. I will soon be developing aspects of the Donaldson approach on Digital Competency through RE by collaborating with IT specialists to produce Moodle courses for the new Specification for RS using Hwb.

I believe that my experience will allow me to make a valuable contribution to the WASACRE Executive Committee and I would find it a privilege to serve, for the good of my subject and colleagues in Wales.

2. Gill Vaisey Monmouthshire SACRE

Gill Vaisey is a qualified teacher and Religious Education Consultant specialising in primary and early years education. After studying for her B.Ed. Hons Degree, with Religious Studies as her specialist subject, she taught primary age children before taking up a post as Advisory Teacher for Religious Education in Gwent followed by a similar post with Mid Glamorgan. Since 1996, Gill has been a successful freelance consultant providing training and support for LAs, Dioceses and schools across Wales and England and is now a nationally known figure in the UK for her work with RE and Early Years children.

Gill is the professional consultant to Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Cardiff SACREs and until recently also supported the Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taf SACREs.

Relevant experiences include:

- An active member of the Welsh Association of SACREs since its inception and currently an Executive Member;
- Providing professional expertise to Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire SACREs since 1996 and to Cardiff SACRE since 2014;
- Writing Agreed Syllabuses for RE and accompanying comprehensive teachers' support, planning and assessment material for several Local Authorities in Wales;
- Regular training and consultancy for primary teachers and Early Years practitioners across both Wales and England;
- Providing training and advice to Local Authorities and Church Dioceses across Wales and England;
- A member of the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education, of which she was chairperson for three years;
- Producing Key Stage 1 books and teachers' resources commissioned by ACCAC;
- Direct involvement and support with various DfES projects;
- Producing and publishing free and purchasable resources (Books at Press) to support the Foundation Phase Curriculum in Wales, the EYFS and KS1 curriculum in England and the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland;
- Close links with a wide range of faith communities and individual representatives;
- A member of the UK Association of RE Advisers, Inspectors and Consultants (AREIAC) and currently executive committee member representing Wales and regularly providing seminars for its members;
- WASACRE representative on the REC (Religious Education Council for England and Wales);
- Attended 2016 EFTRE (European forum for Teachers of RE) conference in Vienna;
- Represented WASACRE at EFTRE Board Meeting in Athens, April 2017;
- Attended meeting with Kirsty Williams and other Welsh Government Officials, March 2017, as part of the NAPfRE delegation of representatives;
- Actively working with NAPfRE members to support the Pioneer Schools in the development of the RE element of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience; and
- Attending Welsh Government convened meetings with the Pioneer Schools Network.

The ethos behind Gill's consultancy is to promote and support excellence in religious education in schools and educational establishments.

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE WALES
ASSOCIATION OF SACRES (7 JULY 2017)**

1. Councillor Ernie Galsworthy Merthyr Tydfil SACRE

I have been a SACRE member since May 2012 after I was elected to council. I was previously a councillor from 1987 until 2004, and served on Merthyr Tydfil SACRE during this period and also attended WASACRE meetings.

I was brought up in a Welsh Baptist environment and until the age of 5 lived with my grandmother, a Welsh speaker, who unfortunately did not teach Welsh to my mother although, did her best to teach me. Consequently after her death I lost the language and did not pick it back up again until the late 1990's when I attended a WPLAN course at Cardiff University.

I hold pacifist views and my great heroes are Mahatma Gandhi, John Lennon and Jesus Christ, All three were pacifists and met violent deaths. Being a pacifist is a dangerous way of living and sometimes courage is needed to live this life.

I am also the council representative on the Committee of Nuclear Free Local Authorities which I believe reflects how I wish to live in peace.

My three heroes were a Hindu, an atheist and a Christian. While I do not believe totally in the views of my heroes I have great respect for them and it is respect for all religions which I believe is fundamental for world peace.

2. Gill Vaisey Monmouthshire SACRE

Gill Vaisey is a qualified teacher and Religious Education Consultant specialising in primary and early years education. After studying for her B.Ed. Hons Degree, with Religious Studies as her specialist subject, she taught primary age children before taking up a post as Advisory Teacher for Religious Education in Gwent followed by a similar post with Mid Glamorgan. Since 1996, Gill has been a successful freelance consultant providing training and support for LAs, Dioceses and schools across Wales and England and is now a nationally known figure in the UK for her work with RE and Early Years children.

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- Attending Welsh Government convened meetings with the Pioneer Schools Network.

The ethos behind Gill's consultancy is to promote and support excellence in religious education in schools and educational establishments.

Gill would like the opportunity to support WASACRE as Vice Chair during this important period of curriculum development and change.