

Attendance

<p>Ynys Môn / Anglesey Rheinallt Thomas (RT) Gwyneth Mai Hughes (GH)</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent Paula Webber (PW)</p> <p>Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr / Bridgend Edward J. Evans (EE) Angela Hill (AH)</p> <p>Caerffili/ Caerphilly Paula Webber (PW)</p> <p>Caerdydd / Cardiff Angela Hill (AH)</p> <p>Sir Gaerfyrddin / Carmarthenshire Aled Jones (AJ)</p> <p>Ceredigion Lyndon Lloyd (LL) Mary Parry (MP) Aled Jones (AJ) Lynford Thomas (LT) John Tudor Williams (JW) C. Joyce Howells (JH) Mary Davies (MD) Angharad John (AJ)</p> <p>Conwy Phil Lord (PL)</p>	<p>Sir Ddinbych / Denbighshire Phil Lord (PL)</p> <p>Sir y Fflint / Flintshire</p> <p>Gwynedd</p> <p>Merthyr Tudful / Merthyr Tydfil Angela Hill (AH)</p> <p>Sir Fynwy / Monmouthshire Paula Webber (PW)</p> <p>Castell-nedd Port Talbot / Neath and Port Talbot Rachel Samuel (RS)</p> <p>Casnewydd / Newport Paula Webber (PW)</p> <p>Sir Benfro / Pembrokeshire</p> <p>Powys</p> <p>Rhondda Cynon Taf Angela Hill (AH)</p>	<p>Abertawe / Swansea Jennifer Harding-Richards (JHR) Alison Lewis (AL)</p> <p>Torfaen Paula Webber (PW)</p> <p>Bro Morgannwg / Vale of Glamorgan Angela Hill (AH) Marged Williams (MW)</p> <p>Wrecsam / Wrexham Libby Jones (LJ) Tania ap Siôn (TaS)</p> <p>Sylwedyddion / Observers</p> <p>Cyflwynwyr/Presenters</p> <p>REMW Paul Morgan (PM)</p> <p>Minutes Gill Vaisey (GV)</p> <p>Incoming Secretary Alice Parry (AP)</p>
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Prior to the meeting, musical items were enjoyed from pupils and staff of Aberaeron Primary School Choir.

Minutes of the meeting

1. Introduction and welcome

County Councillor Catrin Miles, Cabinet Member, Learning Services, Lifelong Learning and Leisure, welcomed everyone to Penmorfa Council Offices, Ceredigion. She informed members that she has responsibility for the Lifelong Learning and Leisure Service and has a great interest in the subject of religious education and how it sits within Ceredigion schools and within the new curriculum. She was pleased to be able to attend the meeting and that she was able to stay for the duration.

EE welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Alice Parry who has offered to become the new WASACRE Secretary. Alice is a teacher representative on Bridgend SACRE. Members agreed unanimously to support the appointment.

Alice spoke of her enthusiasm for RE, for SACREs, and the opportunity to serve WASACRE as secretary.

EE also thanked Paula Webber, current secretary, for the enormous amount of work that she has done for WASACRE as secretary over her time in the role. He acknowledged that Paula had worked tirelessly on behalf of WASACRE and recognised how demanding this has been on her time, whilst also working on developing the new curriculum for Welsh Government and alongside her full time employment with EAS.

Members supported EE's comments and thanked Paula for her dedication and excellent work. Members were pleased to hear that Paula would still be part of WASACRE, in the role of immediate past secretary.

2. Quiet reflection

EE shared thoughts about times of turmoil. He spoke of the unease, unhappiness and disagreement within the country at present. He read some reflective prose by Satish Kumar, a member of the Jain community:

“Lead me from death to Life, from falsehood to Truth
Lead me from despair to Hope, from fear to Trust Lead
me from hate to Love, from war to Peace
Let Peace fill our heart, our world, our universe”.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Kathy Riddick (Blaenau Gwent), Rudi Lockhart (REC), Vicky Barlow (Flintshire), Michele Gosney (Estyn), Janet Jones (Caerphilly), John Mitson (Powys).

4. Presentation: EFTRE Conference 2019 – Gill Vaisey

Gill Vaisey gave a presentation, as way of feedback, from the European Forum for RE Teachers' Conference which was held in Dublin and Belfast in August 2019. She had

attended as a representative of WASACRE.

Gill spoke of the value and quality of the conference which took place over six days. Details can be found on the EFTRE website, including the keynote speakers' papers which are available to download from <http://www.eftre.net/>

In her presentation, Gill focussed on sharing some of the many teaching resources that had been highlighted during the conference. She stressed that she felt her attendance at the conference could have maximum impact by sharing these resources, via SACREs, with teachers in Wales, which would ultimately benefit pupils.

Gill highlighted one particular video resource and teaching strategy that she felt perfectly exemplified how the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience could be approached in schools. Using the 'Little Things are Big' video clips, Gill illustrated how this could be the basis of work to explore the Humanities What Matters statements and could be further developed within history, social studies and religious education subject areas.

Action: The PowerPoint presentation with links to the resources referenced will be made available to all SACREs. SACREs are encouraged to share this with teachers in their Local Authority.

5. Updates on the Curriculum for Wales 2022

PW gave an update on the developments following the consultation and feedback period which ended in July 2019. PW informed members that there will not be major changes from the draft to the final document. The Humanities Area of Learning and Experience is changing the least out of all the areas. The main changes will be around the 'achievement outcomes' which will become 'descriptions of learning'. The 'planning your curriculum' guidance will be slimmed down and will become a guide to 'designing your curriculum'.

The refined final version of the curriculum will be available in January 2020 and this will be implemented in schools and settings throughout Wales by September 2022.

LL stated that many people are not supportive of the new curriculum and that WG should be emphasising the moral role of RE. He suggested there will be a legal challenge to the new curriculum.

He referred to Gill's presentation in which she had referenced the Puerto Rican values placed on courtesy and he suggested that we live in an age of discourtesy and that the emphasis in the new curriculum should be on promoting values and morals in RE. He feels that the RE curriculum is too academic and not promoting values and moral education. He expressed concern that he felt there is no mention of the Christian traditions that exist in Wales.

PW expressed her wish to alleviate these concerns and stated that within the new curriculum, the Four Purposes, the What Matters statements, the Humanities AoLE and the Health and Well-being AoLE all address morals, values and ethics. She referred to the inclusion of the Welsh language concept of 'cynefin', meaning sense of place and that this is also being used in the English language version of the curriculum as a way of promoting the importance of pupils' sense of place in the world.

RT referred to the What Matters statements and that in particular statements 5 and 6 specifically explore ethics and beliefs.

6. Update on RE Framework

PW advised members that the Framework will no longer be referred to as the Supporting Framework but rather simply the RE Framework. It is intended that it will be published in draft form by the end of

January 2020 for consultation. The draft RE Framework will be published at the same time as the final new Curriculum for Wales is published.

A question was raised about whether the current consultation on changing the name of RE will affect the writing of the RE Framework.

PW confirmed that the outcome of the consultation relating to both the name change of RE and the right of withdrawal clause will have an impact on the RE Framework. Therefore, some sections of the Framework cannot currently be completed.

It is envisaged that the consultation period will commence as soon as the draft RE Framework is published. It was stressed by several members that there needs to be adequate time allowed by WG to receive feedback and make amendments as necessary before a final RE Framework is published. PL emphasised the need for WG to realise that SACREs need to meet within the consultation period as it is essential to obtain their feedback. PW reported that WG plan to send a letter to SACREs to this effect.

Action: It was agreed that WASACRE write to all SACREs to stress the importance of responding to the consultation on the draft RE Framework once published in January 2020. It is imperative that SACREs take this opportunity to fully consider the draft RE Framework and provide a detailed response to ensure that their views are communicated via the consultation and can thus be considered in producing a final version. Sharing your SACREs views at this stage is vital in the process of producing a document that SACREs will be willing to adopt or adapt to form their Agreed Syllabus. WASACRE recommends that an extraordinary SACRE meeting is convened by each LA in order to consider and respond to the RE Framework. This meeting would presumably take place in February 2020, depending on the time frame for the consultation.

A teacher representative explained that the spring term is the most difficult time for teachers to be out of schools to attend a SACRE meeting. EE agreed that teacher representation is important and sympathised with the difficulties in being released from school.

Members were reminded that the aim of WG is for Agreed Syllabus Conferences to agree to adopt or adapt the RE Framework and then recommend this to their LA for adoption as the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

In answer to questions, members were informed that the RE Framework will include a section on Post 16 RE even though this may not be compulsory at that stage if legislation is changed. The RE Framework will not include content but rather guidance for teachers on selecting content for their own curriculum development. The RE Framework will include a section on the Four Purposes and how RE will support these. 'Worldviews' is included in the RE Framework as it is in the Humanities AoLE.

PW and LJ advised members that they spent two days working on 'concepts' last week which will form part of the RE Framework. They are committed to producing a document that is useful to SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences and most importantly that it is an accessible, easy to use document for teachers, should it be adopted as the Agreed Syllabus.

Teachers will need to design their own curriculum based on the Agreed Syllabus.

It was noted that if a SACRE does not wish to adopt the RE Framework they will be at liberty to produce their own Agreed Syllabus. However, having had the opportunity to feedback on the RE Framework and suggest any amendments, it is hoped that all SACREs would be happy to adopt or adapt the final version of the RE Framework as the basis of their Agreed Syllabus.

MP asked whether the RE Framework will be completed by the date envisaged, given the amount of work that still needs to be done.

It was explained that there is a limited number of days left for PW and LJ to work on the document under their current procurement agreement and this is unlikely to be sufficient time to complete the document as they would wish.

EE stated that a vast amount of money has already been spent on the production of the RE Framework and that it is essential that adequate further funds are made available by WG to ensure that the document can be completed and edited as necessary following the consultation. He stressed that work on the document needs to be continued by those RE experts who have already been involved in the writing process, in order to ensure continuity until the document is ready to be published in its final form.

RS proposed that WASACRE writes to WG and the Minister regarding the concerns outlined and supported by WASACRE members.

Action: WASACRE to write to WG and the Minister regarding the need for additional funding to be allocated to allow the further procurement of the RE specialists who have currently been involved in the writing of the RE Framework. The letter to note that this is essential in terms of ensuring continuity in the production of the document. It is also imperative that SACREs have confidence in the RE Framework and if they are to consider adopting or adapting it as their Agreed Syllabus, they will need to be assured that the input from the procured RE experts was consistent throughout the process, including post consultation edits.

A member queried why the RE Framework had not been shared as yet in order to aid discussion. Members were informed that the ownership of the document is with WG and they have not given permission for it to be shared at this time.

7. Welsh Government consultation on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners

It was reported that the Executive had met to formulate a response to the consultation.

The response is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

EE invited responses from members on a few points.

In relation to the right of parents to withdraw their children from religious education, RT reminded members that Sally Holland, Children's Commissioner for Wales, had informed WASACRE that the child has a right to receive a full education.

In a show of hands from members, there was a clear consensus in agreement of the removal of the right to withdraw from religious education.

In relation to the proposed name change for religious education, the Chair asked for a 'straw poll' which resulted in votes as follows:

No name change: 7

Change to Religions and Worldviews: 0

Change to Religion and Worldviews: 6

It was highlighted that teachers are not familiar with the term worldview and this would be same issue in both the English language and the Welsh language.

PM suggested another name option could be 'Religion' as with History and Geography for example.

Other members suggested alternative names such as Religion, Values and Ethics or Religion and Philosophies.

LJ suggested that parents and children need to be assured of the true nature of religious education and the name of the subject is important in communicating this.

PW suggested that to add an 's' to religions as in the proposed 'Religions and Worldviews' significantly changes the nature of the name and does not reflect the current thinking about the nature of religious education. The term religion is a concept and fits in with the thinking behind the new curriculum. Thus, Religion and Worldviews is a more appropriate name.

RT explained that one organisation with which he is involved, feels that there is too much emphasis being given to the CoRE report for England. He is content with the term religious education and would prefer to keep this.

PW and LJ stressed that they feel the CoRE report is relevant to Wales even though the research was based in England only. EE reminded members that Wales had been asked if they wished to be involved from the outset and had declined.

8. Professional RE support for SACREs

It was noted that Phil Lord is now acting as a professional consultant to Denbighshire and Conwy SACREs, having reduced his number of working days with GWE.

Central South Consortium have secured the services of Angela Hill, as a RE Today Services employee, to provide professional support to the five SACREs within the consortium.

Mary Parry has re-joined Ceredigion SACRE as a member.

LJ again highlighted the issue that some persons being deployed to support SACREs are not being given sufficient time to carry out the role effectively. PL reiterated this issue and that even though time may be allocated to support the SACRE, this does not give additional time as necessary to support schools. PW reported that a paper still needs to be presented to Kevin Palmer to illustrate the need for each LA to have RE expertise to effectively support schools.

9. Up-dates:

REMW

Paul Morgan reported that REMW are proposing to re-create an organisation now to be called REW. They are carrying out discussions with various agencies in Wales who have an interest in the subject of RE and who might value a networking forum.

REC

PW reported on the meeting held on 6th November 2019. Two new member organisations were accepted onto the board: Association of Teachers of Catholic RE and Ismaili Council for the UK. PW gave a presentation on the new curriculum in Wales.

The REC is taking forward the recommendations of the commission that do not require legislative change.

She reported on the proposed research project into what is understood by the term 'Religion and Worldviews'. The REC is currently seeking funding for the project which they hope will culminate in a conference in June 2020.

NAPfRE

LJ reported on a productive meeting and that much time was spent on looking at the current

curriculum consultation in order to formulate a NAPfRE response.

LJ highlighted three items which NAPfRE would like WASACRE to consider –

- The number of students studying RE at ITE level at Trinity is now only 10. NAPfRE would like to propose that WASACRE write to WG to request that they offer bursaries for RE students to encourage recruitment.

Action: WASACRE agreed to write to WG in this respect.

- There is an issue of non-compliance of RE provision at KS4. Some schools have struggled to use the current RE GCSE specification in the limited time allocated for statutory RE. There seems to be a common trend for some schools to offer an alternative Equality and Diversity qualification instead of providing RE. NAPfRE suggests that WASACRE should remind schools of their statutory duty to provide RE and that these alternative qualifications do not meet the requirement to provide RE. A member suggested that the issue of non-compliance at Post 16 should also be included in the letter. Following debate on whether to include reference to Post-16 in the proposed letter, it was agreed that as schools are still obliged to work within the current legislation, they should be reminded that both KS4 and Post 16 provision is statutory.

Action: WASACRE agreed to write to Chairs of SACREs and Directors of Education in this respect as outlined above.

- WASACRE had agreed to fund training for professional advisers to SACREs and SACRE Clerks. NAPfRE would like to accept this offer and begin to plan the training programme. EE confirmed that this would be discussed at the next WASACRE Executive meeting.

AREIAC

GV reported that the AREIAC 2020 conference: 'Deep Dive or Shallow Swim: From Syllabus to Classroom', will take place on 6th and 7th July 2020 at the Windmill Village Hotel, Coventry and WASACRE members are invited to attend.

Focusing on curriculum development at both a national and local school level, the conference is open to all those interested in supporting quality RE. Day 1 will focus on Agreed Syllabus development and aims to support advisers and consultants who might be working with SACREs as well as being valuable to Chairs of SACREs and members themselves. Day 2 will build on this theme, with a focus on moving into school-based curriculum development and planning. Ofsted's expectations in relation to a Deep Dive in RE will also be explored. This day will be valuable for all those who promote excellence in RE and teachers and others working directly with pupils are welcome.

Delegates can choose to attend both days or either one. The programme will flow from Monday to Tuesday but each day will also be valuable as a stand-alone event. Guest speakers so far, include, Paul Smalley, Kathryn Wright, Trevor Cooling, Paula Webber and Rudi Lockhart.

For full details and bookings can be made via the website or with Gill Vaisey conference organiser: areiac.org.uk/public/conf20 or areiacconference@gmail.com

10. Report from the executive Committee held on 30th September 2019

EE gave a verbal report from the Executive meeting to briefly outline areas discussed.

WG Matters: Termly meetings have been resumed between WASACRE representatives and WG with John Pugsley as their representative.

WG has confirmed that following the publication of the new curriculum, they will reconsider the legislation around Collective Worship as a separate area.

All legislation and guidance around CW will be separate to RE.

Professional Learning: PW and LJ met with Kevin Palmer and Pauline Smith. They have agreed funding specifically for RE professional learning.

There is a strong will to provide support from within Wales and not from outside commercial organisations.

Meetings with Qualifications Wales: LJ, PW, EE, and RS met with representatives from QW - Philip Baker and Emer George. They are launching a consultation on all qualifications in Wales.

SACRE Handbook: EE has produced this document based on the current WASACRE Handbook and the NASACRE handbook. Once signed off it will be designed and produced as a PDF document that can be updated as necessary.

WASACRE Website: A sub-group of Executive members are pursuing the development of a new WASACRE website. Under correspondence relating to the website, the Exec agreed that the WASACRE website is not the platform for sharing published resources.

GDPR: EE is consulting with an expert in this area and will report back to the next Exec meeting on the requirements for WASACRE.

Twitter and Social Media: It was agreed that we need to raise the profile of WASACRE and should make better use of social media opportunities. GV has updated the WASACRE logo on the Twitter account.

Managing WASACRE Meetings: In order to ensure all agenda items are sufficiently covered in the time allocated for main meetings it was agreed:

there will only be an invitation to the Chair of SACRE or Director of the LA to give a very short welcome. We will not in future invite any items from schools etc. however, if a host authority wishes a school to have an input this will be before the meeting commences, so that the meeting may commence at the allotted time;

quiet reflection / thought for the day will continue but these will be kept short and succinct in view of the length of the business which needs to be covered;

questions to speakers need to be relevant to RE or CW only;

accuracy of minutes will be taken at the beginning of the agenda and matters arising at the end; and

the Chair of the meeting should be assertive as necessary in managing the relevance and length of discussions and input from members at the meetings.

11. The Effective SACRE

Not covered.

12. Minutes of meeting held in Conwy on 28th June 2019

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

13. Matters arising

None

14. Correspondence

PW reported that she has received a number of letters from teachers enquiring about local loan resources. PW has referred them back to their local SACRE. This again highlights the issue of not having an adviser in each LA.

Anglesey SACRE had written to highlight the lack of Welsh medium teaching resources RS gave an outline of some of the issues around the lack of resources – including a delayed publication in Welsh of some of the WJEC materials. RS advised that there are no resources on Hinduism, for instance, even though she is teaching it in her school. Books are produced by WJEC but more titles are available in English than in Welsh. A member noted that more Welsh language speakers for examination marking are needed.

RS offered to share with others any of her resources that she has available or translated. GH from Anglesey SACRE thanked RS for the offer to share resources. GV informed members that the 'Brexit Through the Lens of Ruth' material that she referred to in her presentation is also available in Welsh and she will add the link to the PowerPoint presentation.

A letter from the Interfaith Network highlighted material available on their website. PW advised that this is not necessarily RE related but may be of interest to members.

15. Show and tell

Gill Vaisey informed members that she is currently working with eight families to produce a series of books and online resources to support RE for 3 – 7 year olds. The 'Belonging and Believing: My Family' series, focusses on a five-year-old child within each family and portrays their everyday life and the ways in which their beliefs are expressed at home and in the community. Families reflecting Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, the Bahá'í Faith, Islam and humanism are featured and, in some cases, reflect some lesser known traditions and expression of beliefs. GV expressed her gratitude to the families involved, most of whom live in Wales, and said she felt privileged to have been so welcomed into the lives of the families. She hopes the books and online resources will be available early in the summer term.

16. Any other business

None

17. Date for next meeting:

17th March 2020 – Merthyr Tydfill

EE gave thanks to all involved in the meeting with special thanks to:
Pupils and staff of Aberaeron Primary School Choir;
Dana Jones, Ceredigion SACRE Clerk;
Ceredigion County Council Translation Services; and
Cllr Catrin Miles, Cabinet Member, Learning Services, Lifelong Learning and Leis