

# Agenda Item 10

## **NASACRE annual conference: Cohesive Communities and Effective Partnerships: RE near & far.**

**Hilton Doubletree, Manchester**

**Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2019**



The theme and city for this conference were specifically chosen to coincide with the anniversary of the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017. About 100 people attended.

Unfortunately, we missed the first Keynote talk by Peter Bull, but arrived in time to hear Prof Julian Stern (York St John University) speaking about the importance of RE confronting directly issues of mortality and uncertainty. Julian argued that truly cohesive communities are only possible when we allow for difference and challenge rather than insisting on uniformity.

After a lovely lunch we joined one of the nine table-workshops for consideration of the benefits of research for schools and SACREs. The workshop leader, Dr Kevin O'Grady (from the Culham St Gabriel's Research for RE project), explained the project (including work done with Mark's PGCE students this year), and then invited us to consider how the website might be used by SACREs to support local schools and teachers. We came up with lots of ideas, including some given below.

Winners of the Westhill SACRE awards were announced and then a panel of speakers responded to pre-submitted questions, including: *Where is personal search and youth voice in CORE? (the*

*recent Commission Report on RE); How much influence does NASACRE have with the DfE and central government?; How can NASACRE help SACREs?; and Where should a SACRE begin when developing a new syllabus?* Responses were engaging and generated considerable additional comment and discussion from the floor.

The conference is also the AGM for NASACRE, so reports from executive members were received confirming that the organisation is in good health as it continues fighting for RE and SACREs on many fronts.

Ideas emerging from both formal and informal discussions for us to consider:

- When our website is available, link-buttons could be available for Research as well as practical resources, support networks, etc.
- How can we include youth voices in our SACRE?
- Create a Youth SACRE? -via our two Universities, contacting Subash Chellaiah, Multi-Faith Chaplaincy, University of Lincoln, + Revd Canon Prof Peter Neil, Vice Chancellor, & Rev Dr Peter Green, Chaplain at BGU)
- Build hubs so schools can work together.
- SACRE visits to local places? (e.g. Holocaust Centre).
- Apply for a Westhill SACRE award for 2020-21? (to develop a new project).
- Build links with Kevin O'Grady, Lead at Culham St Gabriel's on research.
- Highlight good practice and good leaders.

We feel that this was a very worthwhile event for our SACRE and that we were able to make an input to the discussions, contributing thoughts on rurality and the need for equality and justice principles to be present also in areas like ours which can have less of a cultural breadth.



Paul Smalley (left), Chair of NASACRE, & other panel members.

Report by Cllr Chris Burke and Mark Plater.