



Council for
Christian Muslim
Relations

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Council for Christian Muslim Relations (HW)

Monday 17th June 2013

Minutes

Present: Chauhdry M Shafique (Chair), Hugh Ellis (Vice-Chair), David Snoxell, Laurence Smy Safina Shafique, David Williams, John Bajina, Anne Bowker, Jackie Lock, Tony King, Hassan Hamade, Hon Burgess A D K Raja, Chaudry Akhtar Mahmood, Mohammad Latif Raja, John Parry, Tony Dickinson, Rana Sarfraz, Sebert Graham, Jeffrey Singleton, Ghalib Hussain, Helen Byrne, Paul Bowen, Shahaid Akhtar, John Richey, Sajid Ali, Angie Allport, Hamid Shah, Imam Sultan, Riaz Ahmed.

Shafique opened the meeting with a welcome to all, and especially to the guest speaker Dr John Parry.

1. Apologies

Greg Livingstone, Karen Johnstone, Simon Cronk, Ghayas Siddiqui, Mark Macaulay, Zafar Iqbal, Dr Katy Simmons, Naheem Bashir, Ghalib Hussain.

2. Minutes of the last meeting 31st January 2013

The meeting agreed they were a true record of events. There were no matters arising.

3. Current Issues

Shafique spoke to the meeting about the suitable response by the CCMR to the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich. An emergency meeting was called comprising of 8 people from the CCMR. As a result a draft press release which was prepared by Laurence at the Chairman's request, was discussed and finalised before being sent to the Bucks Free Press. The purpose of this prompt response was to show complete unity and solidarity in condemning this appalling murder and offering sympathy and condolences to the friends and family of the victim. Although there has been a large number of anti-muslim incidents around the country as a backlash to the murder, fortunately there have been none in the High Wycombe area. The Chairman was pleased to inform members that he had a number of important people from all sections of the community say to him that the absence of any incidents in High Wycombe were a credit to the good work of the CCMR.

Two discussion meetings have taken place in High Wycombe of the Group formed by leaders of Christian, Muslim and Jewish Faith. The group shall be working through the book 'The Dysfunctional Family': Jews Christians and Muslims in dialogue with each other and with Britain'. Dr Margaret Greenfield of Bucks New University has expressed an interest in being involved as well. Tony

Dickinson spoke of his experiences of a three faith Service by a church assembly in Hamburg following his recent visit, and offered to circulate further information.

The Chairman was delighted to brief members that during Archbishop Malkhaz Songulashvili's visit to High Wycombe, he joined the prayers at the Totteridge Road Mosque and thus created a legacy of historical significance in inter-faith relations and harmony. The Chairman, along with Laurence Smy and Rana Sarfraz travelled to Georgia in a return visit and received an extremely hospitable welcome. The Chairman went on to say that this visit proved to be a major milestone in forming a special relationship between the CCMR in High Wycombe and the Archbishop and his community in Tbilisi, Georgia. We shall be continuing to build on this relationship with further co-operation and collaboration in due course.

The Chairman reported on a communication he had received from Archbishop Malkhaz about an Islamophobic incident in Georgia. Following this terrible incident, the Archbishop issued a strongly worded statement in Georgia in condemning the act of molestation whilst emphasising the need to show courtesy and respect to everyone regardless of race or religion. He particularly highlighted the powerfully symbolic gesture made by the Archbishop, who sat at the feet of the Muslim Sheikh of Georgia and washed his feet as if to expiate the collective offence of one community on another.

The Chairman thanked Tony Dickinson for circulating a link to a document on how The Netherlands are approaching Christian/Muslim Relations.

The Chairman gave out two noticeboard items:

Fasting and diabetes – There will be a session at Arts4every1, Desborough Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2PU on Thursday, June 20 - 11am to 1pm. In addition, there will be two one-to-one drop-in clinics being held by the diabetes specialist nurses to provide on-going support and review medication or insulin being taken. The clinics will be held in High Wycombe on: June 25, 9.30am to 2.30pm, Castlefield Community Centre. July 4, 9.30am to 2.30pm, The Oasis Centre (Baker Street).

Ecolslam – Friday 21st June, 7-9pm at Wycombe Environmental Centre.

4. Committee Matters

i) Think Tank Update – next meeting 30th July in Room N1.01 at Bucks New University, 10am. The Think Tank's general focus is to provide tools for young people to avoid radicalisation.

ii) Treasurer's Report – The treasurer reported the balance of the bank account. The bank account is in the process of being changed over to a cheque book account. The signatories on the a/c need to change – Revd David Picken needs to be removed and Revd Hugh Ellis needs to go on.

5. The guest Speaker Dr John Parry spoke on "A Christian perspective on Jesus (Isa) in Islam. John's notes accompanying his talk are attached.

6. AOB

Cllr Sebert Graham informed members that the local Race Equality Council had been closed down following the withdrawal of funding by Wycombe District Council. However, the sort of work that was being done by the REC still continues to need some attention and support.

A vote of thanks was given by Revd Hugh Ellis to Dr John Parry.