



Council for
Christian Muslim
Relations

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Council for Christian Muslim Relations (HW)

Thursday 31st January 2013

Minutes

Present: Chauhdry M Shafique (Chair), Laurence Smy (Acting Vice-Chair), David Snoxell, Safina Shafique, David Williams, John Bajina, Anne Bowker, Michael Bowker, Jackie Lock, Karen Johnstone, Hassan Hamade, Dr Ghayas Siddiqui, Hon Burgess A D K Raja, Chaudry Akhtar Mahmood, Mohammad L Raja, Mark Macaulay, Ruth Gunstone, John Parry, Tony Dickinson, Rana Sarfraz, Sebert Graham, Zafar Iqbal, Hugh Ellis, Margaret Greenfield, Paul Bowen, Jeffrey Singleton, Ghalib Hussain, Nazar Hussain

Shafique opened the meeting with a welcome to all, and especially to the guest speaker Archbishop Malkhaz Songulashvili.

1. Apologies

Helen Byrne, Steve Baker, Jessica Atkinson, Tony King, John Richie, Azher Raja, Naheem Bashir, Greg Livingstone, Paul Willis, Steve Clifford, Imam Sultan, Sajid Ali, Dr Katy Simmons.

2. Committee Matters

Think Tank Update – Laurence gave a brief update on the work of the Think Tank Group over the last few months which was appreciated by all members. The next meeting of the Think Tank Group will take place on Monday 25th February at 10.00am, room to be advised. The meeting will be looking at the issue of 'Resisting radicalisation'. An invitation was extended to any member wishing to join that discussion and Dr Margaret Greenfield of Bucks New University indicated her wish to attend.

Laurence thanked Shafique and all Muslim colleagues for the invitation to join them in the town centre celebrations for the Prophet Mohammad's Birthday. The Chair thanked the All Saints Community for the warm welcome he received for his Civic Service in his role of Mayor of High Wycombe and Hugh Ellis also endorsed the very special relationship that the Mayor said he enjoys with the church and its staff.

Treasurers Report – No report was available in the absence of Imam Sultan (The Treasurer). The meeting unanimously agreed to change the current account for CCMR from Nationwide to a normal bank account with a cheque book.

3. Installation of Revd Hugh Ellis as The Vice-Chair of the CCMR

Revd Hugh Ellis was unanimously installed as the Vice Chair of the CCMR. The Chair thanked Laurence Smy for his role of acting vice-chair for the past year. The Revd Hugh Ellis said it was a privilege to accept.

4. Archbishop Malkhaz Songulashvili gave an inspirational talk on interfaith relations between Muslims and Christians in Georgia and neighbouring countries, with particular reference to refugees from the Chechnya conflict. His contribution was extremely well researched with most appropriate quotations from the Koran and Hadith and their overlap with similar scriptural references from the Bible to underline the commonality and mutuality between these faiths. His very thoughtful and constructive observations were received with great satisfaction from all the members. There followed a lively debate and discussion based on the Archbishop's presentation. Members were truly impressed by the wise and inspiring thoughts he shared with warmth and eloquence. He very kindly extended a special invitation to the Chair, to visit Tbilisi in Georgia particularly during his Mayoral term. For this purpose he indicated that he will liaise with The Mayor of Tbilisi to send an appropriate invitation to Mayor Shafique in order to begin the process of working together as we have so much to learn from each other. The Archbishop kindly said how deeply impressed he was with the good quality interfaith work being done in High Wycombe with such wonderful outcomes.

A vote of thanks was given by Revd Hugh Ellis to Archbishop Malkhaz Songulashvili.