



Council for  
**Christian Muslim**  
Relations

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## **Council for Christian Muslim Relations (HW)**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Chauhdry M Shafique (Chair), Hugh Ellis (Vice-Chair), David Snoxell, Mark Macaulay, Helen Byrne, Tawfiq Abdin, Daniel Sullivan, Tawfiq Abdin, Zafar Iqbal, John Bajina, M L Raja, Azma Ali, Asif Sajid (WISE), Nadine Rose, Hassan Hamade, Stephanie Rybak, John Parry, Richard Cayzer, Dr Shabbir Akhtar, Dr Siddiqui, Ann Bowker, Jenny Ellis.

#### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

Shafique opened the meeting with a welcome to all and especially a warm welcome to those joining the CCMR meeting for the first time.

#### **2. Apologies**

Shahid Akhtar, Greg Livingstone, Laurence Smy, John Richie, Paul Bowen, Imam Sultan.

#### **3. Minutes of the last meeting 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

The meeting agreed they were a true record of events.

Matters arising from these minutes:

Dr Shabbir reconfirmed the proposal from a previous meeting to work with Revd John Parry to look at scriptures from other faiths with a view to identifying common underpinning beliefs and values which would support the work of CCMR.

Shafique quoted a recent Home office report with a worrying 70% rise of islamophobic incidents in the previous 12 month period. The government has decided that the police should record such hate crimes in a separate category. David Snoxell felt that the use of the word demonization of a whole community in respect of Prime Minister's recent speeches was too strong. Although it felt appropriate at the time, the meeting agreed to accept the spirit of David's suggestion that it should be moderated.

Zafar Iqbal gave a short update on the 'Not In Our Name' initiative. The key points were that the Imams were in agreement and would support it in full. Their meeting with Laurence and the working party is still in progress. Shafique mentioned that whilst the original timetable for this project has slipped for reasons beyond our control, the value of this project is such that we shall continue to pursue it to completion.

#### **4. Current Issues**

Shafique referenced a recent well publicised Channel 4 Documentary 'My Son The Jihadi'. This was all about Sally Evan's son from High Wycombe who had joined the Al-shabab terrorist group in Somalia and later killed in Kenya. Shafique also mentioned that Laurence had written to Sally Evans to ask if she would willing to share her story with the CCMR members. A response is still awaited.

Hugh Ellis informed the meeting that Canon Andrew White would be speaking in All Saints on the evening of Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November. Andrew, commonly known as 'The vicar of Baghdad' has published a book called 'My journey so far' which will be available at that evening. Andrew who was based in Baghdad for many years has an amazing story to tell, and his work has involved bringing peace and reconciliation to the Middle East.

Dr Stephanie Rybak gave a short background to the local work regarding refugees and their settlement within the Wycombe area. This work included lodging a petition with Wycombe District Council which had been signed by Revd Hugh Ellis on behalf of All Saints Church and Shafique as former mayor of High Wycombe.

#### **5. Think Tank Update**

Shafique reported on behalf of Laurence that he had written to all local primary schools in order to arrange the assembly interfaith talks with Hugh and Imam Sultan. On behalf of the CCMR, the Chairman wished to put on record our appreciation of Laurence's support for this vital work with young people.

#### **6. Guest Speaker**

Shafique welcomed the guest speaker Fuad Nahdi to the meeting and introduced him as the only Muslim to have addressed the Assembly of The General Synod of the Church of England, in addition to his many other achievements in the field of interfaith dialogue and community relationships. Fuad's topic of conversation was '**Understanding Extremism, Embracing Diversity; and Islam in Modern Britain**'. Fuad gave a wide ranging presentation based on his long experience of working in this field through many organisations including governments and NGOs. This was followed by a lengthy and lively discussion and debate in which everybody participated with interest and passion.

#### **7. Vote of Thanks**

Hugh Ellis thanked Fuad for his interesting and wide-ranging thoughts and views on issues that are central to the work of CCMR.

#### **8. Date of Next Meeting**

28<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Although the date of the next meeting was not mentioned in the meeting but since then we now have a speaker from the Department of Communities and Local Government for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016. She is the Head of Faith Engagement Team at DCLG. The time is 10.30am for 11.00am.