



HARROW INTERFAITH

Minutes of Executive meeting 17 September 2018 at the Harrow Civic Centre

Present were: Varsha Dodhia (Chair), John Albin (Vice-Chair), David Cryer (Acting Secretary), Gopal Bachu (Treasurer), Abraham Mathews (Membership Secretary), Dr Senevi Aturupana, Alison Johnson, Punitha Perinparaja, Jack Lynes, Anthony Kaiser.

1. Welcome

2. Reflection from Humanism (David Cryer)

2 short readings: 1 from a Humanist naming ceremony and 1 from Dr ML King.
([see Appendix](#))

3. Apologies for absence: Patria Aquino, Asad Omar, Sonoo Malkani, Ummi Merali, Yazad Bhadha.

4. Notes from previous meetings

4.1. 'Special meeting on Holocaust Memorial Day event' 20 August 2018, 7pm-9 pm at Harrow Civic Centre ([see Appendix](#))

5. Matters arising not appearing later in the agenda

5.1. Jack Lynes (JL) stated that HMD is not an HIF event and that HIF's only connection is to accommodate the HMD finances in its bank account. He promised that HMD would not exceed its budget. He referred to the prestige that HMD brings to HIF. He also pointed out that absentee members can nominate a stand-in. The Chair replied that holding the HMD budget as Charity made the legal responsibility different this time. She said that no HIF mailing lists must be used due to GDPR; a liability document needed to be written. The Treasurer promised a written financial statement.

ACTION: HMD liability document from HMD committee.

ACTION: Treasurer to write financial statement.

6. Interfaith Week events preparation

- 6.1. The Chair outlined the Inter Faith Network (IFN) guidance on Interfaith Week (IFW) events. She marked two events for the IFW:
 - 6.1.1. A Civic Centre Council Chamber event. Likely a panel of 4-6 speakers on a topic (poverty, atheism v. faith) with Q&A.
 - 6.1.2. A Civic Centre Members Lounge **open showcase of our different faiths**. Punitha Perinparaja's archive can be used for this.

ACTION: David Cryer to digitise the archive.

- 6.2. The Chair talked about the planned Youth Event for Interfaith Week 'Are we digitally connected'. There has been an application for a grant of up to £500 from Inter Faith Youth Trust (http://www.ifyouthtrust.org.uk/?page_id=8). Whitmore High School is the likely venue. A minimum of 6 schools (potentially Hatch End High, Salvatorian College, Nower Hill; independent schools Harrow and John Lyon) will be invited to send representatives for round-table discussions and a question time. Harrow Youth Parliament may also be involved. It will take place from 16:30 to 18:00; there will be refreshments.
- 6.3. JL passed on an invitation from Edgware and Stanmore Rotary Club for a paid lunch event with the title 'Interfaith: A Path to Peace', on 14th November, 12:20pm at Stanmore Golf Club.

ACTION: JL to send poster to the Secretary.

- 6.4. The Chair stated that there would be opportunities to visit different faith places of worship or community during Interfaith Week. Alison Johnson (AJ) said that this year's Open House London, on 22-23 September included a chance to visit St Panteleimon Greek Orthodox Church.

7. Reports from Sub-Committees

7.1. Constitution and Policies Sub-Committee

- 7.1.1. The Chair produced and signed the required policy documents for our Charitable Incorporated organisation application: 1. Equal Opportunities Policy, 2. HIF Health and Safety Policy, 3. HIF Child Protection Policy. It is thought necessary to produce a Complaints Policy & Procedures, **and a Code of Conduct**.

ACTION: Constitution and Policies Sub-Committee to draft Complaints Policy & Procedures document, and a Code of Conduct document.

- 7.1.2. The Chair recommended members get a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, which is available for a fee from Voluntary Action Harrow Co-operative (64 Pinner Rd, Harrow HA1 4HZ).

ACTION: Secretary to notify members.

7.2. Finance and Membership Sub-Committee

7.2.1. Both a Finance Policy and a financial statement will be produced by the Treasurer by the end of September. HIF's bank balance is currently £6532.

7.3. **Publicity and Website Sub-Committee**

7.3.1. A sub-committee meeting was held on 31st May 2018 at Sonoo Malkani's house. present were: David Cryer (Chair), Sonoo Malkani, Ummi Merali, Pat Stevens (Secretariat).

7.3.2. Website. The website (www.harrowinterfaith.org) has been transferred to the direct control of HIF and its small hosting fees approved by the Treasurer. The website now has front page news and events, displaying upcoming meetings and events details; also on the front page is a religious festivals calendar noticeboard that can encompass the full HIF yearly programme. Any newsletters or editorials will also be available to download. The website can hold the HIF archive and be used as a future source for education.

7.3.3. David Cryer (DC) asked that members look over the website and check that they or their community group are correctly represented on the member pages.

7.3.4. An HIF email address is set up (enquiry@harrowinterfaith.org).

7.3.5. HIF now has a Twitter and Facebook page which will hopefully grow our links with local and national organisations of relevance. A social media presence will make us appear 'active' in contrast to the more static website. Members wishing to 'post' event reviews on our social media please contact DC.

7.3.6. It was decided to produce a poster template to incorporate a GDPR message and our new social media links; the same would apply to any publicity mailshots.

7.3.7. Ummi Merali has had a further 500 HIF leaflets printed.

7.4. **Secretariat**

7.4.1. DC was thanked for acting as Secretary in Pat Steven's absence.

7.4.2. The long-term secretarial needs of HIF were discussed. JL wished for an employee secretary, perhaps part-time. He stated that in his tenure as Chair he had suggested achieving charity status precisely in order fund such an appointment. The Chair and The Treasurer stated that this was inadvisable as employment law would require tax accounting and a pension scheme for any such employee.

ACTION: plan for Secretariat role.

7.5. **Youth Sub-Committee (no report)**

7.6. **HMD event January 2019**

7.6.1. JL will report when HMD committee has met.

7.7. **Events**

7.7.1. An Events Committee has not yet been formed, so the following people agreed, in this meeting, to be members: John Albin (JA) (Chair of the

Events Sub-Committee), Alison Johnson, Punitha Perinparaja, Jack Lynes, Anthony Kaiser. Yazad Bhadha is away but may join this sub-committee.

ACTION: JA to form and convene the Events Sub-Committee.

8. Reports of visits

- 8.1. JA reported on the enjoyable success of the Civic Invitation - Sunday 16 September - 10.45 for 11am - Battle of Britain Commemoration Service at St John's Church Stanmore and Bentley Priory.
- 8.2. Punitha Perinparaja (PP) attended and appreciated a public, open, interactive talk on Humanism at Harrow Humanists (Harrow Voluntary Services Centre, The Lodge, 64 Pinner Road) on 13th June and chaired by David Cryer (DC). The Chair of HIF, Sonoo Malkani and Anthony Kaiser also attended.
ACTION: DC to upload report to website and Facebook page.
- 8.3. JL attended a highly colourful Harrow Ghanaian Association's (Harga) Inauguration & Fundraising Dinner Dance one August Sunday evening, as a representative of the Mosaic Reform Synagogue.
ACTION: JL to send report to Secretary; Secretary to upload to website and Facebook page.
- 8.4. JL proposed a members' visit to the Migration Museum (26 Lambeth High Street, London, SE1 7AG). As this year's HMD event is titled 'Torn from Home' it was thought that the visit would ideally occur after the HMD event in January.

9. Correspondence / coming events

- 9.1. JL will report further on a Faiths Forum for London 'Tree Planting' event in the near future.
ACTION: JL to send details to Secretary.
- 9.2. The Chair reported that Sewa Day is on 14th October.

10. Dates of next meetings

- 10.1. Executive Meeting, Thursday 25th October 2018

11. AOB

- 11.1. JL was critical of our membership numbers, stating that Harrow ought to be able to attract at least 5000 members. He suggested schools (such as Harrow Public School) should be members.

APPENDIX 1

Humanist reflection

"May you learn to love truth, even when it goes against you. May you cultivate kindness. May you find courage and discover that you are stronger than your fear. May you have resolve in standing up for what's right. May you have the boldness of your convictions, and the honesty to admit when you are wrong."
Humanist naming ceremony

"Man must evolve, for all human conflict, a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."
Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.

APPENDIX 2

Special meeting on Holocaust Memorial Day event 20 August 2018

7:00 – 9:00 pm at Harrow Civic Centre

Present: Varsha Dodhia, Sonoo Malkani, John Albin, Abraham Mathews, Alison Johnson, Jack Lynes, Ummi Merali, Punitha Pereinparajah, David Cryer, Dilip Chaulal, Dr Aturupana, Yazad Bhada, Anthony Kaiser (joined later)

Apologies: Pat Stevens, Patricia Aquino, Lydia Nazerian, Gopal Bachu, Peter Juler

Meeting started with a reflection by Alison Johnson

No agenda, an open meeting to discuss the HIF involvement for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) event in Jan 2019

Opening statement by Chair that a number of email exchanges meant the meeting was called at short notice so that views of HIF members are heard, and a way forward is agreed.

Suggestions were made that HIF members should try and resolve misunderstanding by a phone call and not a long list of emails and that all members should respect differing views. There should be a better attempt at not creating conflict in the organisation.

Consensus around the HMD event 2018 was good for HIF, that all faiths joined to light the candles.

The event was too long, future events need to keep to time.

There was some concern around conflict and confusion, about the overspend which was covered by previous year's underspend. The 2018 Chair of HMD committee confirmed there will not be an overspend, that the £1000 from Harrow Council would be sufficient. The 2018 Chair of HMD also described the HMD event as not the responsibility of HIF; it is done under the auspices of HIF. There was some disquiet that HIF just becomes a conduit and that HIF members would not have a say.

Discussion followed around what this means, would HIF be responsible for Public Liability insurance, financial overrun and also how would the current GDPR rules work around contacting interested parties. If the money is accounted through HIF (even if it was kept as a separate account), then HIF becomes responsible if by the time of the event it is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO),

The 2018 Chair of HMD suggested that maybe another organisation may want to support the HMD event in 2019.

Several people suggested that if there was an alternative way of doing the HMD event, a smaller event or an event involving youth and school children could be organised. The 2018 Chair of HMD did not agree with these suggestions.

The theme for 2019 HMD event is “Torn from Home”. It encourages audiences to reflect on how the enforced loss of a safe place to call ‘home’ is part of the trauma faced by anyone experiencing persecution and genocide. ‘Home’ usually means a place of safety, comfort and security. Suggestions were made around residents in Harrow who have faced this situation including Uganda Asians, communities from Sri Lanka; persecutions where people have fled, and families have lost everything.

The meeting ended with the proposal that the HMD 2019 event would be held in a similar way to 2018, and that members of HIF who wish to get involved should come forward. The way the event is organised should not create divisiveness within HIF.

17th September 2018