

Minutes: Faith Forum 2nd March 2009

Robert Saunders opened the meeting and explained the purpose of the Faith Forum as being a partnership, described as critical friends, who would represent the borough's faith communities and support Waverley's commitment to improving equality and eliminating any discrimination in either service delivery or employment. Robert then opened discussion on the Draft Terms of Reference.

The value of the Inter Faith Group for the South East as a separate entity was acknowledged and it was clarified that this was not the purpose of Waverley's Faith Forum. Members who wish to know more about the Inter Faith Group for the South East may wish to liaise with Canon David Tonkinson, Partnership Development Officer, Guildford Diocese, who is also a member of Waverley's Faith Forum. Canon Tonkinson's e mail address is:
david.tonkinson@cofeguildford.org.uk

The value of Waverley's Strategic Partnership as a separate entity was also raised and clarified as being the forum which brings together representatives from different organisations across Waverley, working in partnership to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in Waverley. Nasir Virji was welcomed as a useful link between the Faith Forum and Waverley's Strategic Partnership as he is a member of both groups. Future meetings will include opportunities to convey information/ comments to and from Waverley Strategic Partnership.

The Terms of Reference were accepted, subject to the following amendments:

- we should refer to faith representatives at the Faith Forum as Faith links rather than representatives.
- the Faith Forum was open to anyone who wanted to be included and membership needs to be more fluid than simply by invitation only. The onus would be on the person to be a bona fide link and to commit to giving some time to participate.
- Waverley would continue to act as organiser and will chair the next meeting. A co-chair arrangement would be determined for subsequent meetings.
- The Faith Forum would be an excellent opportunity for networking and an opportunity to break down some barriers.
- The forum agreed to discuss at the next meeting potentially organising an annual peace forum.
- Waverley's Corporate Equality Scheme was made available for comment (a copy is also available on Waverley's website www.waverley.gov.uk/equalities)

- All were invited to an Equalities Forum to be held on 5th March 2009 at 9.30 a.m. at the Baptist Church, Queen St, Godalming, GU7 1BA . At this Forum, Waverley will benefit from having participants look critically at some of Waverley's Equality Impact Assessments for various service areas.
- A future meeting could be held in the evening, in order to accommodate those participants who are not available during the working day.
- Members will consider who else should be invited to participate in this Faith Forum.
- E mail addresses for all participants of the Faith Forum would be circulated to the group.
- The meetings would be minuted.
- Meetings will be held quarterly.
- The dates for the next meeting will be circulated

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