

**Reading Faith Forum**  
**Minutes of Meeting Wed 21 October 2009**  
**At Park United Reformed Church Hall**

1. Apologies from Ashok Khare, Owen Jewiss, Tim Clewer, Sarah Griffin, Hugh Boulter, Richard Christopher
2. Minutes of the last meeting on 3 June 2009 were approved and signed
3. No matters arising
4. Finance: Current balance £1113.01  
Balance at 30 April 2009 was £1078.01  
There was a deposit for a CD sale of £35
5. Welcome to Anne Laing Partnership Development Manager and Manager of Stronger Together (ST) from Reading Voluntary Action.  
Bids: Stronger Together pays for Jan Hearn's work as coordinator to RFF.  
Building for Strength RFF Development Worker will be working mainly with 'hard to reach' and small groups. Interviews for part time worker on November 9<sup>th</sup>.
6. Greening Faiths and Hearing Voices conferences both have a short written report (attached below)  
Included in the Report - Media, Safeguarding, Community Development Strategy Steering Group and LSP.  
John Rogers - LINK Annual Report from the previous evening 20/10. John has been voted onto the Interim Board in his own right but will continue to represent faith issues. His passion is for service providers to recognize that spiritual health is part of the whole not just physical or mental. He passed round 'Issue' cards from the LINK team who will investigate ie toe nail cutting and diabetes projects. Looking at dentistry and unwanted pregnancy and researcher is now on board. Reading LINK has statutory powers to statutory organisations to respond within 20 days.  
Alan Magness will be invited to report back at the next meeting.
7. REMatters - we need to readvertise as low numbers.  
Website - can search by faith or type and linked to the Reading Voluntary Action database, the only up to date directory of faith groups in Reading. The RFF e-bulletin with news and information is sent out once a month.
8. Presentation from Rachel Morgan at Reading Credit Union. RCU are keen for more people to become members, where you will have flexible savings accounts and affordable loans where interest is fixed. Credit Unions are local and personal, owned and controlled by the members based on a 'common bond'. The Financial Services Authority regulates all CU's. Website: [www.readingcreditunion.co.uk](http://www.readingcreditunion.co.uk)
9. Agenda for the next 2 Forum meetings and ST events  
Possible themes: Religious music festival, Hustings with elections due & a 'Call to vote', climate, poverty, Summer event, spending & loans from faith communities  
2 main themes possible: Street event in the summer & Q&A time to challenge the politicians and a panel of faith leaders in Feb meeting. Need a working group to organize - Nigel & Mustafa will get together to discuss.

10. RFF Data Protection Policy Rachel has a draft, NH sent out a draft copy, all his RFF email and address lists belong to RFF although on his PC.
11. Next meeting: Wed 10 February 2010 possibly at St Michael's Tilehurst.  
June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting at Council Chamber

## **Bids for Funding October 2009**

After a slight delay due to BIG's legal department the Building For Strength project is now underway. Adverts have gone out. Interviews Nov 9th. We could have a Faith Forum Development worker in post by the New Year. We have also applied for a small grant to help fund the RE Matters course. (Posters available)

## **Reports October 2009**

### **Hearing Voices**

This was an excellent conference. Nearly 100 people were present including lots of people from the mental health services who have been told by government they must take faith into account. There were also plenty of people from Faith Communities and people with mental health problems. The working group is looking at how to follow up including a handbook & perhaps a 2<sup>nd</sup> event

### **Greening Faiths**

Two faith based networks are now at work after our conference Greening Faiths in April. RITE is Reading Islamic Trustees of the Environment & Reading CEL is Christian Environmental Link). Do we want a 2<sup>nd</sup> event?

### **Media – Reading Community Radio & Ummah Radio both featured RFF**

The Stronger Together report on Media coverage lists 8 events coverage of which 5 were Faith Forum events. Since then Nigel has been on Ummah Radio.

### **Safeguarding**

This will be a Joint Training event led by RCVYS about changes in protecting children and vulnerable adults. It will effect lots of faith organisations.

### **Reading Compact Representative**

Alan Magness was elected as representative of the Voluntary and Faith Sector on Reading Compact.

He is an active member of Reading Faith Forum and has links with most of the Christian Charities to who this is relevant. He can represent us on this body. On the other hand, if you know of a good representative who would also make a contribution, especially if they are from a different faith, then let us know.

The Reading Compact was launched in May 2000, continuing a programme of work between Reading Borough Council (RBC) and the local voluntary and community sector to set out the key principles for future relationships between the two sectors.

**Local Involvement Network - John Rogers** written report to follow

## **Community Development Strategy Steering Group – Andrew Taylor**

The major discussion at the latest Steering group meeting was around Community Development training. As a minimum, it was agreed that there was the need for representatives from RBC, TVP, PCT, RBFRS, Groundwork and RVA and a request that an organization take on administration. Provisional dates for the programmes in 2009/10 were agreed as follows:

Frontline Course 1 - 24/25/26 November 2009

Middle Managers' Course - 20 and 27 January 2010

Frontline Course 2 - 2/9/16 March 2010

Funding may be available for an event to celebrate Community Development.  
(fuller report available)

## **LSP – Tim Clewer**

There are currently 3 major areas of development on the Local Strategic Partnership.

- 1) **Working with dysfunctional families** (a project is being developed & I will bring more info as it becomes available)
- 2) **Working with NEET (not in education, training or employment)** We are planning a major conference at the Globe on Nov 27th & we will be inviting Voluntary Sector and Faith groups.
- 3) **The environment.** There are now both Christian & Muslim local environment groups working within GREN (Greater Reading Environment Network) & the LSP Climate Change Forum. People can contact me (or Jan Hearn) for any info.