



## Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17 January 2017 at the Unity Centre

1 **Welcome:** Terry Green chaired the meeting

**Present:** Terry Green, Bernard Payne (St Columba's Third World Group), Sue Bownas (CAFOD), Gill Miller (Dept of International Development Studies at University of Chester), John Tacon, Vicki Jenner, Katie and Brian Rowe (Christian Aid and Chester Friends of Palestine), Margaret Lord and Lindsay Cussons (Baha'i), Matthew Jessop (Quakers), Gerald Grant, James, Linda and Stuart Shuttleworth, Terry Walsh (Chester CND), Ann McCarthy (CAFOD and Christian Aid) and Stephen Maund (speaker for the evening – see separate note)

**Apologies:** Wyn Holroyd, Tony Walsh, Peter Hobson, Heather Lannin and Kath Stephenson

2 **Minutes/ notes of Forum meetings, and matters arising:**

- **Forum Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Letter to Chester supermarkets asking them to promote Fairtrade Fortnight is in process.

Forum members expressed concern over overseas aid budget and how money being allocated. Seems to be a shift in emphasis.

“Food for All” event is still a possibility.

Sue Bownas has sent the letter re climate change which we all signed to Chris Matheson.

- **“Making Change Happen” Duncan Green talk 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016:** book review by Clare Short attached for information

- **Committees 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017** *Chair to report on key issues covered, with particular reference to:*

- **DEC Yemen Crisis Appeal:** HL had spoken about poor response to Yemen appeal. Committee discussed how the Forum should respond to such appeals. Should the Forum just respond with an email message urging members to donate as individuals or do we think we can make donations when crises occur? Committee, with JT's advice as Treasurer, think there is enough money in the bank to send a donation IF Forum members consent. JT then gave the Forum an update on Forum's finances. Committee aims to maintain £300 in the bank for replacement of laptop and other equipment if needed. However JT has spare laptops if we need a replacement. Forum's total income was £582 for year and we spent £602. Subs are now due so more money will be coming in. The proposal then is to donate £100 to DEC for the Yemen crisis. Forum members agreed.

- **The university's “Sustainable Futures” project – CWDF as one of the student case studies:**

VJ gave a brief outline of the proposed project. The students will undertake to research ways of increasing our membership and getting our message out to the wider public. The proposal has now been accepted by the university and can be sent out to Forum members. GM stressed that the project needs to look beyond the student population.

- **Possible visit to UN agencies in Geneva:** GM put forward a proposal for a study visit to UN agencies in Geneva. BP and TG met with GM to discuss proposal. Committee felt that it would be quite difficult to recruit enough people particularly in view of the high cost of accommodation. The students stay in hostels at a cost of about £45 a night but perhaps not appropriate for Forum members. Visits to the UN agencies are free of charge.
- **Local action on Fairtrade Fortnight:** How Forum members can support Heather Swainston in her projects during Fairtrade Fortnight was discussed particularly the “Funday in the Park” on Sat 4<sup>th</sup> March. A letter from the Forum to Chester supermarkets will go out shortly

### 3 Admin matters:

- Bank statement dated 31st January - balance was **£543.77**, but there are two cheques for £130 in the pipeline (CHAWREC & DEC) so they will reduce the balance to £413.77. JT has kept the January forum collection of £5.66 as ‘cash-in-hand’ to pay small expenses (postage & photocopying)
- Both individuals and groups need to pay their subs asap

### 4 Around the Table:

Updates from our members on current activities, events and issues:

LS: Stepped down from involvement with VSO. VSO has changed their focus away from supporting experienced people working in developing countries

SS: Thinking of going to Uganda to assess usefulness of multi-agency working in special school. Going late May, early June

BP: Protests re Donald Trump on the day of his inauguration at 3pm Eastgate and 4pm at the bridge over St Martin’s Way. “Build bridges not Walls”

KR: Chester Friends of Palestine Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. 7:00-9:00 pm, Riverside Building University of Chester. Prof. Allan Owens from the University’s Faculty of Education on the theme of ‘Returning.’ It’s about exploring the consequences of political and military occupation from a human perspective. Contact 01244 674448.

KR: drew Forum’s attention to Daily Mail’s campaign to get the aid budget “slashed” Committee to discuss whether any further action

GM: Reminder re talk on Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Jan in Best Building by Dr Nick Henwood

JT: Fracking back on board in UK.

JT: Foodbank has worked with the Council, CAB and Plus Dane to help establish a Poverty Truth Commission in West Cheshire. Launch is on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb from 10.00 – 2.30 at Chester Racecourse. Investigation and research into poverty in Cheshire

TW: Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Jan: Tree planting in Countess of Chester Country Park

LC: World Religion Day attended well

AM: Son Anthony, firefighter, one of leaders on trip to Nepal with fire cadets to help build a school in a remote region. Details will be sent out shortly if anyone would like to sponsor him

TG: Some good news – Coca cola taking up the call to use recyclable plastic

TG: Amnesty International event on Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 7.00pm in Quaker Meeting House Free entry

- Reference to CWDF Diary entries: version of 16<sup>th</sup> January attached)

### 5 Arrangements for next Forum meeting:

- **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March:** Full Forum meeting, 6.45 for 7.00pm at The Unity Centre. Prior to our regular business, Ann McCarthy will be giving an illustrated talk about her visit to Vietnam.