

# The Forum of Churches Together in Bedfordshire

## Minutes of the Forum held on Wednesday 19 May 2010 at The Sacred Heart Catholic Church Flitwick at 7.30pm

**Welcome** The Rt Revd Richard Inwood (Chairman) welcomed all present.

Bishop Richard thanked Father Denis for providing accommodation for the meeting of the Forum. He also thanked all who had prepared the buffet meal for us.

**Opening Worship** Canon Denis McSweeney led the Worship

**Address** The Revd Dr Andrew Prasad  
Moderator of the Thames North Synod of the United Reformed Church

Andrew spoke from personal experience of the Church in South India and the Church in Great Britain. He highlighted some of the differences and explained why certain areas in India became part of a particular denomination; it depended on who had gone to them with the Gospel. He asked us to consider whether we might be 'Churches Together' or 'Christians Together'.

The Address will be available on the URC Thames North website.

We broke for discussion followed by a time of questions for the speaker.

Bishop Richard thanked Andrew Prasad for giving his time and speaking at the Forum; he was given a book token.

**Business Meeting** 52 present

### 1 Apologies

Chris Barnes	Alan Ledwick
Revd John Bradley	Fergus Milne
Revd Anne Brown	Father Bennie Noonan
David Burns	Col Eric Northwood
Alan Dansey	Gerald Peacock
Phyl Davidson	Revd Canon Stephen Purvis
Revd Cass Howes	John Tusting
Paul Hunt	Wendy Waters
Revd Lynda Klimas	

### 2 Approval of Minutes of Forum held 14 May 2009

The Minutes had been circulated and copies were available at the meeting. These were agreed to be a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

### 3 Matters Arising None

**4 Chairman's Report** Bishop Richard gave more details of the items listed in his Report. The name of the late John Stubbs was added to those listed in the small working group who had worked to slim down the structures and the Constitution; John had died while this work was still being carried out. Bishop Richard paid tribute to John for all the work and support he had given to BEC.

House building at Wixams is increasing and it is hoped that an ecumenical Christian worker might be appointed for January 2011. The URC are providing funding for the purchase of a house and a representative of the URC is visiting Wixams in June 2010 to assist with finding a suitable dwelling. It was confirmed that the worker does not have to be a member of a denomination, in which case, BEC would become the employers.

The Report was noted by the meeting.

## **5 Good Practice Report by Revd Dr Colin Davey (Examples from CT and LEP Reports)**

Colin thanked all Groups who had returned their questionnaires and suggested that other Groups might adopt or adapt these examples to use in their own situations.

Colin was thanked for all the work undertaken to prepare this Paper.

## **6 Finance**

### **(1) Receiving Annual Accounts for 2009**

These had been signed by Mrs Gill Hillier, Independent Examiner

Proposed: Peter Ormerod Seconded: Enid Clifton

Adopted and agreed by all present.

### **(2) Receiving Draft Budget for 2011**

The Treasurer explained that the CEDO's Fee had been calculated and agreed with Bishop Richard and the Revd Dr Colin Davey.

The Income is based on the Income received in 2009.

Proposed: Peter Ormerod Seconded: Michael Lawton

Agreed by all present.

### **(3) Subscriptions from CT Groups and LEPs 2011**

It was proposed that Contributions from Denominations should remain at £1250 and Subscriptions from CT Groups and LEPs should remain at £20 per church in each Group. This was agreed with the understanding that smaller churches in some Groups might pay less.

### **(4) Appointments:**

**Honorary Treasurer** All agreed that Peter Ormerod should continue to be Treasurer. He agreed that he would be happy to stand again.

**Honorary Independent Examiner** Mrs Gill Hillier has agreed to continue to be our Independent Examiner.

Both Peter Ormerod and Gill Hillier were thanked for their work.

**7 Appointment of Chair** Bishop Richard explained the situation in view of the revised Constitution. Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting held by BEC on 21 April 2010:

*'In view of these changes, it was proposed that the present Committee would continue until the October meeting and the new Committee would meet on Wednesday 19 January 2011. Bishop Richard agreed to continue as Chair until the October meeting.*

*The new Committee will appoint a Chairperson and can co-opt three other people.*

*They will plan dates of future meetings, times and venues.*

*All those present agreed to these plans.*

*All information will be sent to Church Leaders after the Documents have been approved at the Forum'.*

It was agreed that Bishop Richard would continue as Chair up to and including the BEC meeting in October 2010.

## **8 Adoption of Revised Constitution (Copies had already been circulated)**

Bishop Richard pointed out that a considerable amount of time had been spent in revising the Constitution.

Several amendments were made; the final copy is attached with these Minutes.

1 Objects and Aims (2) This is altered to: *'to relieve financial hardship anywhere in the world by making grants from funds raised directly or co-ordinated fundraising efforts by member churches'.*

2 Vision The following sentence is inserted between .. the kingdom of God and We believe that .. *'The Bedfordshire Ecumenical Committee (BEC) is the executive arm of Churches Together in Bedfordshire, which meets formally once a year at its Forum'.*

5.3 Treasurer - *'to be appointed by the Annual Forum'*

5.4 CEDO role The paragraph is deleted and replaced with:

*'The CEDO's role would be primarily to facilitate networking as set out in the 'Overview and Tasks' described in the CEDO Job Description'.*

The above amendments were agreed by all present.

Proposed: Revd Richard Howlett Seconded: Alan Smith

5.3 Up to three other persons, changed to: *'up to six other persons ...'*

Final sentence:

*'Such a composition gives a standing group of 11, with up to six others, and two persons in attendance by virtue of role, making a total of 19'.*

Proposed: Ian Gordon      Seconded: Alan Smith

20 In Favour    2 Against    7 Abstentions

It was noted that 4 from each CT Group and 2 from each LEP were permitted to vote.

## **9 County Ecumenical Development Officer - Appointment Process**

Copies of the Job Description had been circulated.

The post will be advertised from 1 June with the closing date 30 June.

Interviews will be held on 13 July 2010.

The advertisement will be on the CTE Website and denominational websites. All were asked to make this known through their church websites and magazines.

Ian Gordon spoke of the enjoyment in carrying out such a role, "A wonderful job and so worthwhile". He and his wife Adrienne had been the CEDOs in Bedfordshire until July 2007.

## **10 Any Other Business    None**

## **11 Date of the next Forum**

A provisional date was arranged but this is to be confirmed.

We will check with CTE that this date does not clash with conference dates.      **Action: JH**

Wednesday 18 May 2011 at 7.30pm at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Flitwick.

**\*\*\* The date is changed to Wednesday 25 May 2011 to avoid a clash with Christian Aid Week and the Annual Conference for CEOs \*\*\***

Bishop Richard thanked all who had attended the Forum.

After the closing Prayer we all said the Grace to each other.

The meeting ended at 9.20pm.