

Chester World Development Forum



Minutes of the Forum Meeting held on

Tuesday 10 July 2018 in The Unity Centre

***Unfortunately our speaker, Helen Tandy, who was to give a talk on
“Ethical Investment – and Divestment”
was unable to attend through illness***

1 Welcome: TG chaired the meeting

Present: Terry Green, Margaret Lord (Baha'i), Brian Turner, Tom Ormiston (Our Lady's Justice and Peace Group), Terry Walsh (Chester CND), Mark Rideal (Chester CND and Chester Friends of the Earth), Gerald Grant, Katy Rowe (Christian Aid), Brian Rowe (Chester Friends of Palestine), Vicki Jenner, Steve Harrow, Bernard Payne, Ann McCarthy (CAFOD), John Tacon and Neil Gibbons (Jacob's Ladder)

Apologies: Prior apologies from Gill Miller, Linda Shuttleworth, Heather Swainston, Lindsay Cussons, Tony Walsh, Kath Stephenson, Mike Johnson, Matthew Jessop and Elizabeth Bott.

Before the formal meeting began, TG read out a card which AM had received from Pam Price, one of our longstanding members who can no longer attend meetings through ill health. The card congratulated CWDF on their 25 years and wished us well for the future.

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

- Forum AGM of 8th May 2018 (previously circulated, including note of Gill Miller's talk "Does Aid Work") – no matters arising
- Chair to report on key issues covered in Committee meetings held on 11th June and 2nd July 2018. Meetings were largely devoted to planning 22nd June celebrations, future meetings with speakers and discussions relating to GPDR

3 25-Year celebration event – brief post-mortem:

This was a very enjoyable evening which was attended by a good number of past and present members. Bernard Payne opened the evening with a very interesting and comprehensive PowerPoint presentation showing many of the significant events in the life of CWDF over the last 25 years. It was amazing to see how many of the original members are still campaigning "to make the world a fairer place" and how they don't really seem to have aged – well not that much!

This was followed by a very thought provoking presentation from Gill Miller, Senior Lecturer Emerita, Dept of Geography and Development Studies, University of Chester entitled "*Into the Future – the Next 25 Years*". Gill encouraged CWDF to consider the challenges and opportunities in working towards "the world we want" and concluded with a "wish list" for the next 25 years.

Many of our original members will remember Romy Tiongco for his commitment and enthusiasm for CWDF and Linda Tiongco for her work with Christian Aid. They now work in the Philippines but happened to be back in the UK in June and were able to come to the celebration. It was so good to see them again. Romy gave an update on the very important but challenging work he does in the Philippines.

Both Chris Matheson MP and Christine Russell, former MP, spoke about the importance of our attempts to keep development issues high on the political agenda and wished us well for the next 25 years.

A text message of good wishes was also received from Gyles Brandreth (former MP)

Extra item

Because our speaker for tonight's meeting was indisposed, BP again showed his and Gill Miller's PowerPoints - which can be viewed in full on the CWDF website. Slides included a look at the lists of past and present constituent members, a collage poster of some of our past events, important key features of CWDF such as our links with MPs and the University of Chester, our collaboration with Heather Swainston and her work with Cheshire Development Education Centre and our association with CWaC's Fairtrade Steering Group. Over the years CWDF has been involved in the major issues of "Make Poverty History" (with a coach trip to Edinburgh), Jubilee Debt Campaign (trips to Birmingham and Genoa for G8 summits), Trade Justice, One World Week, Tax Evasion, Climate Change (The Wave in London) and Fairtrade (taking part in many local events such as the "Rich /Poor meal" in the Town Hall, part of the World Development Day, and very recently the Fairtrade Family Funday in Storyhouse).

The remainder of the slides included a number of photographs of past events.

Following the PowerPoints TG asked for thoughts from present members on how CWDF could keep moving forward. The following points were mentioned:

- Could do with more local events to engage Cestrians on development issues.
- CWDF is very proactive in attempting to influence leaders through petitions, signing cards, Hustings meetings prior to elections, inviting MPs to meetings and lobbying MP in London.
- Perhaps need to clarify with GM what she meant by "Provide opportunities to bring together NGO professionals and local people to learn, share and support". At present we do this through our speakers – but we are only preaching to the converted.
- Discussion on linking issues together might be useful. How do development issues impact on one another? Could this be the role for CWDF?
- Make our presence felt more in Chester – eg have a table at International Women's Day. Committee to consider this.

4 Treasurer's report: Latest statement shows balance of £450. Still some groups and individuals not paid their subs. Committee are chasing this up

5 Chester City of Sanctuary – consideration of Michael Johnson's briefing note (previously circulated)

Neil Gibbons, a founder member of Jacob's Ladder, gave a more detailed explanation of the idea of Chester becoming a City of Sanctuary. Neil is also involved in Chester Friends of Palestine. In February 2017 he attended a workshop organised by Chester Cathedral on the refugee situation in our area. As a result of that, a group known as Jacob's ladder was formed. The aim of the group is to raise the profile of refugee issues in the Chester area and to do this through Chester becoming a City Of Sanctuary. The group want it to be a collaborative effort and are looking for interested parties to sign up to support their aims - they will be speaking to around 19 organisations over the course of the summer. The group want to send out a message of welcome to refugees.

They've already organised a very successful "Refugee Week" with events in the Cathedral, Storyhouse and the museum. They are very keen on using art therapy, as art goes beyond language barriers.

The group is looking tonight for endorsement from CWDF – asking for an agreement that we will offer support in whatever ways possible.

BP proposed that we give this endorsement, giving due mention to Jacob's Ladder/City of Sanctuary developments in our publicity arrangements. This was unanimously supported.

6 Arrangements for forthcoming events/ relevant activities, including:

- Consideration of Diary listings: Linda and Romy Tiongco will be speaking on August 2nd at 7.30pm in Hoole URC on their work with MuCAARD (Muslim Christian Action for Advocacy Relief and Development) in The Philippines.
- Consideration of events/ activities from “around the table” – nothing to add.

7 AOB

JT: Fairtrade Steering Group – meeting on Monday 16th July in HQ at 10.30 at which Louise Gittins, the councillor who has responsibility for Fairtrade, will be present. Important decisions will be made and JT will keep us informed

JT: Expressed concern about Barclays Bank which is the only bank still supporting investment in tar sands. Canada’s tar sands produce some of the dirtiest and most polluting oil in the world. To get oil from the tar sands onto the market, Canada wants to build 3 huge pipelines crossing forests, mountains, Indigenous lands and many rivers.

JT: Also expressed concern that both Chris Matheson and Justin Madders, MP for Ellesmere Port), both voted in favour of a third runway at Heathrow. JT would like to arrange meeting with both MPs to discuss.

JT: Is a member of Chester for Europe – anyone interested go to website

TW: Thanked CWDF for publicising the Hiroshima event on August 6th and the Peace Train in October. Future of Chester CND group is uncertain at present.

BR: Chester Friends of Palestine meeting outside HSBC at 10.00 am on 14th July. All welcome. CFoP are having a break over summer so there will be no meetings in July and August

TO: CAFOD’s “Share the Journey” walk in solidarity with refugees took place in Ellesmere Port. 60 miles was clocked up which goes towards CAFOD’s campaign to walk 24,900 miles (mileage round the world)

8 Date of next meeting: 11th September in The Unity Centre, 6.45 for 7.00pm