

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13th October 2008

Present:

Rajinder Sophal (RCRE) in the Chair

Committee members:

| Name | Organisation |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Mustafa Chaudhary | Reading Muslim Council |
| Elizabeth Nyawade | Sahara |
| Harish Raichura | Gujarat Samaj |

Members:

| | Name | Organisation |
|-----|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Adlan Hussain | Alexandra Mosque |
| 2. | Surjit G Jutla | Ramagarhia Sabha Gudwara |
| 3. | Nina Sethi | RCRE |
| 4. | Monica Homer | Vincentian Association |
| 5. | JS Momoh | Legloma Association |
| 6. | Zainab Koroma | Sierra Leonean & Friends Association |
| 7. | Dr Ashok S Khare | Reading Hindu Center |
| 8. | Ajaz A Mir | Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith |
| 9. | Ejaz Elali | Pakistan Community Center |
| 10. | M Michael | OSCAR |
| 11. | G Michael | OSCAR |
| 12. | Bill Sodha | Oxford Road Community Center |
| 13. | G Matthew | RCRE |
| 14. | P Kelly | Reading Muslim Council |
| 15. | AG Mohammed Ahmed | Abu Bakar Masjid |
| 16. | G Franklin | Barbados and Friends Association |
| 17. | Manzoor Hussain | Reading Muslim Council |
| 18. | Beverley Sinclair | Church of God of Prophecy |
| 19. | A Leakar | Sahara |
| 20. | Cecily Mwanik | Utulivu |
| 21. | Haji Banaras | |
| 22. | Sebora Kamara. | Sierra Leone Foundation |

Non – Members:

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| 1. | Haji Banaras | Reading Islamic Center |
| 2. | SS Santokh | Indian Cultural Association |
| 3. | A Guita | |
| 4. | Said Mahmud | East African Muslim Association |
| 5. | Taskeen Ahmed | Imaad |
| 6. | Daryl Alleyne | ACCG |
| 7. | Feckson Kaumbe | Tithandizane |
| 8. | Owen Muganda | Zimbabwean Community Group |
| 9. | Tayo Owudunn | UNI |

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| 10. | Bianca Gallipoli | BACYP |
| 11. | Nick Woodridge | BACYP |
| 12. | Claudette Maharaj | PCT |
| 13. | Lamin Sankott | REMVO |
| 14. | Tasneem Sohpal | |
| 15. | Ida Weston | |
| 16. | Shahid Younis | Community Education Trust |
| 17. | Zahida Younis | Community Education Trust |
| 18. | Soha Hafez | BACA |
| 19. | Lukman Harees | ASLAM |
| 20. | S Hassan | ASLAM |
| 21. | Abdul Naveed | WMET |
| 22. | M Maeen | Reading Islamic Center |
| 23. | Peter Burt | The Forum |
| 24. | Bahia Alami | BACA |
| 25. | Uda Chalk | Whitley Woman's Multi Cultural Group |
| 26. | Emmylee Mesa | Tithandizane |
| 27. | Lucy Mwelwa | Tithandizane |
| 28. | Elaine Bradshaw | Reading Library |
| 29. | Keith Seville | Urban UK Network |
| 30. | Joe Akem-Che | SPAACK |

1. Apologies:

Ragbir Notta, Vip Mair, Miah Saleem,
Jamie Chowdhary, Gloria Jack, Vic Hills, Alison McQuitty

2. Announcement on the Postponement of the LSP BME Election

The Chairman read out the following announcement from the Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership:

Election of a BME Representative to the Reading 20/20 LSP Board

The welcome opportunity for the Voluntary / Community sector to elect a BME representative onto the LSP Board has generated a very high level of interest and some concerns regarding effective engagement in the process given the timescales available.

Whilst the LSP Board is keen to appoint a representative to join them as quickly as possible, they are also mindful of the need to ensure that the person who takes on the job has the widespread support and respect of the sector and BME communities as a whole.

In this context the Chair of the LSP requests that the election should be DEFERRED to allow a more considered timeframe within which to carry out this important piece of work.

The Chair would also like to thank RVA, Sakoma and all those with an interest for their efforts in trying to organise and complete the work

quickly and looks forward to working together to achieve this in the near future.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the last AGM on 12th June 2007 were accepted.

4. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. **Presentation of Year 2 Report & Survey**

The Chairman noted that an Outreach Consultation had taken place and that copy of the Report was available in the hall. He thanked Bahia Alami for her work.

The Chairman then reported on the year highlights:

- There were considerable expectations, however, for most of the year Sakoma had been without dedicated staff.
- The Stronger Together Team are now in place and linking with each of the key Reading voluntary sector forums is providing support that will enable the Sakoma Voice to be heard.
- Representation work had been undertaken on the Ethnic Minority Forum, UNI, the Local Strategic Partnership and Reading Declaration Group, within the Stronger Together Partnership and on the new LINKs Board.
- Huge thanks were offered to Liz Nyawade for her work as Vice-Chair over the year.
- Thanks were offered to Zainab and Ragbir who had stepped down and to Harish Raichura for his stalwart work as Treasurer.
- Sakoma currently had no dedicated funds.
- Sadly, a training course on funding had been poorly attended.
- Emphasized importance to be engaged with key decision makers and build up on recognition of Sakoma that was already in place
- New committee to build up independence of Sakoma especially financially.

6. **Election of Sakoma Committee**

Uncontested nominations had been received for the following posts:

Chair – Vip Mair

Committee Members – Mignon Michael, Jamie Chowdhary

Nominations for the Vice-Chair from Elizabeth Nyawade and Manzoor Hussain

A call from the floor for further nominations brought forward candidates

- Miah Saleem & Adlan Hussain for the Treasurership
- Cecily Mwaniki for the final committee member place - uncontested.

The Chairman asked that the uncontested places be accepted by the meeting.

Mustafa Chaudhary stood up at this point and, noting that he had been the one member of the outgoing committee who had not been thanked, went on to object to the appointment of the nominee for Chair on the grounds that he is a statutory worker with the Police and had been heavily involved in the TV Programme.

The Chair responded that Vip was a member of RCRE in the voluntary sector and that Mustafa had himself been employed by a statutory agency.

Mustafa noted that there were discrepancies in the ability some participant to vote – 2 organisations who had applied for membership had been blocked by there being no proper panel meeting to consider applications for membership. Mustafa requested that the acceptance of applications for the new members to be opened up to a decision by the meeting on the grounds that such a precedent had been set at an earlier meeting.

The Chair stated that conditions of membership were relatively straightforward and stated in the constitution that new members were encouraged and the process for acceptance was through a Membership Panel. The Chair asked for the number of new organisations that have applied to be members. Representatives from 3 organisations came forward.

It was further claimed one organisation had been listed twice. Mustafa requested that the Chair appointment be deferred.

This was rejected by the Chair and a lively debate ensued across individual participants across the hall where it became clear that a further application from the Sri Lankan Muslim Group had received no response over a 6 month period. The Chairman apologised for this error.

Mustafa requested the minutes of the membership panel. The Chairman responded that the membership criteria is as stated in the constitution in which the organisation must have a constitution or set of rules; they demonstrate some activity and are active.

A request additionally came from the floor for the date of the last membership panel. Liz Nyawade stated that this had been held at ORCC approximately 6 months earlier. She clarified that the membership panel does not meet at specific times but only when needed.

Zainab Koroma stepped out from the floor and took the microphone to object on behalf of a number of the people in the audience to the whole

proceedings. She called for the elections to be halted. A number of people left the meeting, during the proceedings.

In response to an additional call from the floor for the election to be halted, Liz Nyawade made the point that the new committee was needed to take work forward, to learn and move on. The Chairman also emphasized that this was the 3rd time that Sakoma have tried to hold elections.

After a lengthy debate the Chairman asked to move on with an election for the contested positions. The eligible voting cards were counted (19) and voting was conducted by secret ballot and the results announced:

Elizabeth Nyawade - 13
Manzoor Hussain - 4
Spoilt Paper – 1

Elizabeth Nyawade was appointed Vice Chair

Miah Saleem - 7
Adlan Hussain - 9
Spoilt papers - 2

Adlan Hussain was appointed Treasurer

7. LINK Representative
Nina Sethi explained the role of the new LINK
8. With no other business the Chairman thanked everyone and passed to the Stronger Together Team to run the second part of the program.
9. Togetherness Café Workshop
Yasmin Bador introduced the Togetherness Café Event on question of “What are the funding issues in my organisation as a Black & Minority Ethnic Group”.
Conclusions from the event would be used to enable Sakoma to identify and act on the needs of their clients.
Everyone was thanked for their work and ideas. The event concluded at approximately 9.15 pm.