

Minutes of the Forum held on Thursday 8th December 2011

The Forum was attended by 27 people from 11 churches and other organisations.

1 **Opening Worship**

The opening worship was led by Jon Halden and Nick Harcourt-Powell

2 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Rev Greg Webb, Rev Chris Ramsey, Betty Scrivener, Rev John Clark, Peter Heard, Ray Delaney, Martin Sparks, and Lynda Sebbage.

3 **Welcomes**

A welcome was extended to Terry Tennens of International Justice Mission who would speak to the meeting about their work.

4 **Minutes of October Forum**

Subject to one amendment, the minutes were approved and then signed by the Chair.

5 **Matters Arising**

- Perspectives – it had been discovered that No 72 – as well as CTiS – were in discussions with Perspectives with the aim of taking their work further in Sudbury. It was hoped to work together with this aim.
- The list of activities suggested at the AGM had been considered. It was suggested that in the planning ahead, account needed to be taken of the initiatives from Sudbury Town Council for the time the Olympic Games were running – including a Town Twinning “It’s a Knockout”
It was noted that Party in the Park would be on July 22nd from 11.00 am to 9.00 pm. It was agreed that CTiS should have a centre stage event – a Christian escapologist or “Tuf Talk”. The children’s activity should be run again, and the barbecue.
Pentecost Praise 2013 would go ahead.

CR to write to
STC to say that
CTiS prepared
to help in any
way.

The Chairman commented that the more people who get involved with running these activities, the less work there would be for each person.

6 **Treasurer’s Report**

Thanks were expressed to Peter Heard [in his absence] for all the work he undertakes as Treasurer. In accordance with the agreement reached at the EnGp meeting that acceptance of the report showed approval of all payments made, Peter Halden proposed that the Treasurer’s report should be accepted. David Ford seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed.

7 **Updates**

- There was no update available from the **Town Pastors** but it was noted that more people were needed at the prayer base.
- Jane Kohler outlined the background to the CTiS involvement in proposals to develop **Chilton Woods**. They had for a time been dropped but it now looked as though the proposals could be resurrected. Jane

Kohler was prepared to continue to represent CTiS in any discussions. It was also agreed that Chris Rowe, representing Springlands Christian Fellowship, should be involved.

Jane Kohler and Chris Rowe to be involved with Chilton Woods Project

- Tim Ayrton had suggested that CTiS become involved with **Community Money Advice**. Ellie Read from No 72 spoke to the meeting about the money advice needed and given. She explained that for 3 years money management courses had been run and that specific problems had been referred to Christians Against Poverty. She emphasised there was a need to provide a better service for many more and to increase the 1:1 support. She made the following points:
 - they would continue to work with either CAP or CMA but the decision had not yet been taken which
 - time was a major factor, advisors were needed and administrators
 - Money was needed for setting any new system up – for a laptop, professional indemnity, encrypting software. It was suggested that there would be a need for £1000 to set up and then approximately £1000 - £1500 per year. These figures are based on 5 volunteers
 - they needed prayer
 - they were re-opening the drop-in sessions on a Friday from 12.30 to 2.00
 - if they are to go down the line of working with CMA, more people will be needed.
- Rev John Clark had said he wished to stand down as Chairman of the **Marriage Focus Group**. Thanks were expressed for all that he had done. If anyone felt able to take this role over, they should contact either Roger Pullan or Peter Halden.
- Roger Pullan showed the plastic **logo** available to churches to indicate they were part of Churches Together and gave details of alternative material and prices. All church reps had been emailed and some replies were coming in. It was agreed a charge should be made for the logos. Roger would prepare an order form – and would also enquire about the price of car stickers with the same logo. All reps were asked to make sure their churches considered purchase of the logos.
- **CTiS leaflets** needed distribution particularly in areas where there was new housing. It was understood that Gavin Clarke was prepared to do this, but if anyone wished to volunteer, they should give their name to Chris Rowe.

Volunteer needed to take on role of Chairman of MFG

Roger to design and circulate order form

Reps to ensure churches aware

8 **International Justice Mission** – see end of minutes

9 **Future Events** – were listed on the calendar attached to the agenda.

10 The meeting closed in prayer

Notes from talk on International Justice Mission given by Terry Tennens on 8th December 2011

International Justice Mission is a Christian Human Rights Agency the UK office of which is based in Bures. It brings rescue to victims of slavery, sexual exploitation and other forms of violent oppression. IJM lawyers, investigators and aftercare professionals work with local officials to secure immediate victim rescue and aftercare, to prosecute perpetrators and to ensure that public justice systems – police, courts and law – effectively protect the poor.

Mr Tennens said that there were more in slavery today [about 30 million people] than at any other period in history. Slavery was defined as “abuse of freedom” or “where someone is not free”

He told the story of Elizabeth – a 14 year old Christian girl – who was sold into prostitution. She prayed to be released before the anniversary of her capture. She was released through the intervention of IJM.

The focus for his talk would be the Olympic Games and human trafficking. He listed the anticipated problems – even for the Sudbury area as follows:

- Considerable increase in the number of visitors and workers coming into the country
- A surge in trafficking for sexual exploitation
- Increased begging and street crime

He listed agencies concerned with this issue. They included the Salvation Army, More than Gold, Hope for Justice, Stop the Traffick and Street Pastors [or in Sudbury’s case, Town Pastors]

It was noted that in January IJM would be doing a training for street/town pastors. There would be a pilot session in Colchester and anyone interested should get in touch with Terry.

If slavery, or trafficking was suspected, it should be reported to the police, or the UK Human Trafficking Centre in Birmingham or to the Serious Organised Crime Agency.

The signs of trafficking were:-

- Evidence of being controlled
- Evidence of inability to move or to leave work
- Bruises and signs of physical abuse
- Fear or depression
- Not speaking on behalf of oneself
- Lack of passport or identification

He suggested that people in Sudbury who wanted to do something about this could:

- Raise awareness
- Pray [prayer walks]
- Become a town pastor
- Be aware of tourism issues [Stop the Traffick were taking a lead in providing hangers for hotel door handles that indicated that “no trafficking takes place” in that hotel.]

In answer to a question, Mr Tennens said that IJM was funded 70% by Christian sources, 15% from foundations and trusts with a small amount coming from government.

Mr Tennens was thanked for his most interesting talk.
Further information can be found at www.ijmuk.org