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## Introduction from our President

I did establish the Conservative Muslim Forum and served as its Chairman until 2014. I am now the President of the Forum and I am pleased to write these few lines.

Although I am not involved in the day to day affairs of the Forum, I do care about its wellbeing. I however feel that the Forum is ably led by Mr Mohammed Amin who is the current Chairman. Mr Mohammed Amin undertakes his duties with diligence and vision and he is extremely well supported by the Members of the Executive Committee. The Committee does meet regularly and is actively involved in arrangement of various meetings, events as well as promoting the Conservative Party in various ways.



The membership of the Forum is made up of Muslims and non-Muslims which is to be appreciated and we are all working together to maintain and improve the health of our Nation.

Best Wishes and kind regards to all.

*The Lord Sheikh*

*Baron Sheikh of Cornhill in the City of London*

*Conservative Muslim Forum President*

### The Conservative Muslim Forum's Objectives

The Conservative Muslim Forum (CMF) has nine objectives which are set out in the CMF Constitution and on the CMF website at <http://www.conservativemuslimforum.com/about-us/objectives>. They are:

1. Engage with Muslims of all persuasions and encourage them to participate in political life at all levels, from grassroots to Parliament.
2. Engage with Muslims and all other communities and encourage them to support and vote for the Conservative Party.
3. Undertake campaigning for the Conservative Party at elections and other times.
4. Encourage Muslims to make effective and positive contributions to the development of an inclusive and cohesive society in the United Kingdom.
5. Work to maintain and build bridges with all communities and religions within the United Kingdom.
6. Strive to maintain unity, brotherhood, tolerance and goodwill between all persuasions of Muslims and with the wider community and strengthen its social and cultural heritage.
7. Collate factual information on issues and circumstances relevant to Muslims of all persuasions in the UK.
8. Create an enabling environment to influence policy development from within the Conservative Party and safeguard the interests of Muslims.
9. Strive to improve the quality of life of all Muslims through addressing issues including health, education, women's issues, disability, integration and mentorship of prospective Parliamentary and other candidates within the Conservative Party's wider objectives.

In essence, the CMF's focus is on strengthening the connection between the Party and Britain's Muslims by encouraging British Muslims to vote Conservative, to join the Conservative Party, and to consider becoming Conservative candidates.

In the 2010 general election, about 15% of British Muslim voted Conservative. By the 2015 general election, thanks to hard work by the CMF and by many others in the Conservative Party, this had risen to 25%. Our goal is to achieve another significant increase by the 2020 general election.

This report summarises our activities in 2016 in support of these objectives.

**CMF Executive members in electoral politics**

Hashim Bhatti continued to serve as a councillor in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead representing the ward of Clewer North having been elected in May 2015.



Councillor Jeanne-Marie Douglas continues to represent Melton Craven ward on Melton Borough Council. Also during 2016 she served the second half of her term as the Mayor of Melton 2015-2016.

Jeanne-Marie is one of the most regular attenders at CMF events in London, despite living some distance away in Melton Mowbray.

Councillor Halimah Khaled MBE continues to serve as a councillor for Toton and Chillwell Meadows ward on Broxtow Borough Council.



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### CMF Events held during 2016

We ran six events during the year which. They are listed below in chronological order and are hyperlinked to the CMF website which contains additional details.

Date	Event
29 February	<a href="#">Event in Parliament to promote Merchavim's work</a> For the first time, we held an event jointly with Conservative Friends of Israel. The purpose was to showcase the work of an Israeli NGO, Merchavim, and the Parliamentary host and event chairman was Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East.
15 March	<a href="#">The journey to becoming an MP</a> At CMF events people often ask us questions such as: How do you get onto the candidates list? How do you get selected for a constituency? What hope is there for people who did not go to public school or Oxbridge?  We had two new MPs from the 2015 intake, Nusrat Ghani and James Cleverly TD, come and tell us about their experiences, as well as Kate Fuller from the Conservative Party's Candidates Department.
9 May	<a href="#">The EU Referendum: Remain or Leave?</a> The Conservative Muslim Forum as a body took no position on which way people should vote in the EU Referendum. However we believed it was vitally important for people to learn about the facts and then vote after thinking about the arguments on both sides. Accordingly we organised a debate between Chris Philp, MP for Croydon South (speaking for Remain) and Saqib Bhatti, Joint Secretary General of Muslims for Britain (speaking for Leave).
12 July	<a href="#">Eid al-Fitr Reception</a> The speakers this reception were Dr Tania Matthias, MP for Twickenham, Lord Sheikh, Marie van Der Zyl - Vice President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and Sir Iqbal Sacranie.
2-5 October	We had our <a href="#">regular stand at the Conservative Party Conference</a> in Birmingham to spread our message and to sign up new members. Many CMF members helped out on the stand.
25 October	<a href="#">Eid al-Ahda Reception</a> The speakers at this reception were Alberto Costa - MP for South Leicestershire, Ranil Jayawardena - MP for North East Hampshire, Dr Rami Ranger CBE - Chairman of Sun Mark Limited, CMF President Lord Sheikh, with our keynote speaker being TV presenter Saira Khan.

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### Other items published on the CMF website during 2016

The table below picks up the items we published on our website during the year which have not been mentioned elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Date	Item
9 January	Mohammed Amin went <a href="#">canvassing for London Mayoral Candidate Zac Goldsmith</a> near Gants Hill.
28 January	Lord Sheikh's House of Lords speech on <a href="#">English Language Classes for Women</a>
22 February	Executive Secretary Shaheen Thantrey represented the CMF at a <a href="#">reception for affiliated groups</a> hosted by then Party Chairman Lord Feldman.
9 March	While the CMF does not normally take policy positions, occasionally it does. The CMF Executive unanimously supported the views of Lord Sheikh and Mohammed Amin that <a href="#">The Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill [HL] is misconceived</a> .
10 March	The CMF announced that, in accordance with its normal approach of not taking policy positions, the CMF as a body <a href="#">would take no position on the EU Referendum</a> .
17 March	Lord Sheikh's House of Lords speech on <a href="#">Occupied Palestinian Territories: Development</a>
17 March	Lord Sheikh's House of Lords speech on <a href="#">India: Freedom of Religion</a>
22 March	The CMF declared that it was <a href="#">shocked by the terrorist bombings in Brussels</a> .
7 April	Sajjad Karim MEP and Mohammed Amin <a href="#">together signed a book of condolences</a> at Manchester Town Hall for the victims of the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels and Lahore.
16 April	Executive Member Raza Anjum, founder of the campaigning group Conservative Connect, <a href="#">organised a multilingual song</a> to aid campaigning for Zac Goldsmith. The song can be watched on our website.
23 April	Deputy Chairman Ash Zaman <a href="#">supported a campaigning day for Zac Goldsmith</a> organised by a number of Conservative Party affiliated groups.
28 April	Lord Sheikh's House of Lords speech on <a href="#">The Economy</a>
30 April	Executive Member Ajantha Tennakoon went <a href="#">campaigning for Zac Goldsmith</a> in Barnet.
3 May	Lord Sheikh's House of Lords speech on <a href="#">Black and Minority Ethnic People: Workplace Issues</a>
23 May	Lord Sheikh's House of Lords Remarks on <a href="#">Libya during Queen's Speech Debate</a>
13 June	The CMF expressed its deep sadness about the <a href="#">mass killing in Orlando, Florida</a> .
16 June	The CMF strongly supports its members seeking elective office, and also serving local Conservative associations as officers. We published a short profile piece on Executive Member Attic Rahman, <a href="#">Chairman of East Ham Conservative Association</a> in Newham.
17 June	The CMF expressed its <a href="#">shock and horror at the murder of Jo Cox MP</a> .
29 June	The CMF published its condolences to the government and people of Turkey following the <a href="#">terrorist attack at Istanbul Airport</a> .
14 July	The CMF published its <a href="#">formal response to the Conservatism and Human Rights Commission</a> organised by the group Bright Blue.
14 September	In the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2016, Mohammed Amin was awarded an MBE for services to Community Cohesion and Inter-faith Relations in Greater Manchester. At their individual expense, the members of the CMF Executive organised a <a href="#">dinner to recognise this honour</a> .
18 September	Executive Member Mike Mogul attended an <a href="#">event hosted by Gavin Barwell MP</a> to discuss proposed boundary changes and raise funds for the local Conservative Association.

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8 October	We continued to promote Muslims who are helping to run their local Conservative Associations with a <a href="#">profile of Shakeel Ahmed</a> , Chairman Wandsworth Tooting Conservative Association.
16 October	Executive Member Raza Anjum <a href="#">hosted the Bishop of Lahore</a> during his visit to the UK.
22 October	Executive Member Raza Anjum <a href="#">met with the ambassador of Jordan</a> during his visit to Saffron Walden.
17 November	Following the election of Donald Trump as US President, Lord Sheikh and Mohammed Amin <a href="#">wrote letters to the American ambassador</a> to express the concerns held by many Muslims.
22 November	<a href="#">Deputy Chairman Ash Zaman canvassing at CCHQ</a> for the Sleaford and North Hykeham by-election.
6 December	Mohammed Amin, Executive Member Lady Sheikh and Executive Secretary Shaheen Thantrey attended the <a href="#">Family Values Award lunch</a> in Parliament hosted by David Rutley MP and organised by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
20 December	Mohammed Amin wrote <a href="#">on behalf of the CMF to the German ambassador</a> to express our condolences after the Christmas market attack in Berlin.
22 December	The CMF issued a policy statement <a href="#">recommending that UK mosques and madrassas teach the Holy Quran in English</a> . The statement also contained a list of some Quran translations which we recommend.

### Resources for Conservative Party members

This is a new section of our website introduced in 2016, where we have made some of our resources available to all. The items published during the year were:

13 January – the booklet "[Does Islam allow British Muslims to vote?](#)" by Michael Mumisa.

14 January – data from the National Census of [Muslim demographics by constituency](#). This gives the Muslim percentage for all constituencies in England and Wales, and in particular lists those where Muslims constituted 10% or more of the residents in 2011. The relevant percentages will be higher now as British Muslims are on average a relatively young demographic.

17 March – a listing of all 40 black and minority ethnic ([BME](#)) MPs in England & Wales with demographic details of their constituencies. This shows that the average Conservative held seat in England & Wales is 7.62% BME, which is slightly higher than the average 6.35% BME ratio of seats held by a Conservative BME MP. In other words, the average Conservative BME MP represents a seat that is slightly "whiter" than the average Conservative held seat.

Conversely, the average Labour held seat in England & Wales is 20.47% BME. That is significantly lower than the average 26.73% BME ratio of seats held by a Labour BME MP. In other words, the average Labour BME MP represents a seat that is significantly more BME than the average Labour held seat.

As the above resources contain only information that is widely available from other sources, they have been published on our website which can of course be read by other political parties.

We have also published other resources which are available only to Conservative Party members on application to our Executive Secretary Shaheen Thantrey or from other contacts within CCHQ.



## Mentions in Parliament and in the media

### Parliament

In 2016 the Conservative Muslim Forum was only mentioned in Parliament once. That was by Lord Sheikh on 6 May 2016 in his speech in the House of Lords debate on "Black and Minority Ethnic People: Workplace Issues."

### The media

Mohammed Amin appeared in the media on over 40 occasions during 2016 in his capacity of CMF Chairman. A few of the more notable instances are listed below.

31 January	Interviews on a number of BBC local radio stations about Trevor Phillips' comments about integration at an event organised by the think tank Policy Exchange.
7 May	Quoted in The Guardian, The Times, The Independent and on BBC News regarding Zac Goldsmith's London Mayoral campaign.
25 September	Interviews on 13 BBC local radio stations about how we can combat extremism while protecting freedom of religion and belief.
20 November	Interviews on 9 BBC local radio stations about what the election of Donald Trump as President means for American Muslims.

Other members of the CMF Executive occasionally appear in the media either on behalf of the CMF or in other Conservative capacities.

### Attending or speaking at events organised by others

Members of the Executive of the Conservative Muslim Forum also played major parts in events of other organisations.

- On 5 March Mohammed Amin [spoke to Luton Conservatives](#) about how to extend their appeal to Muslim voters at an event organised by Basit Mahmood, Chairman of Conservative Future Luton.
- On 2 April Mrs Falak Ahmed of the Conservative Women's Forum [organised an event in Bradford aimed at promoting community cohesion](#) and combatting hatred against people of other faiths or ethnic groups. Mohammed Amin spoke about the need to combat antisemitism.
- On 13 July, the [Israeli Embassy hosted its first ever Eid reception](#), to mark Eid al-Fitr, a religious festival celebrated by 20% of Israel's citizens. The CMF assisted by inviting a number of guests in coordination with the Embassy. Several members of the CMF Executive were very pleased to attend the event.

## Concluding comments

It is now some 11 years since the CMF was first established by Lord Sheikh. Over that time, some important trends have been in evidence.

British Muslims are increasingly recognising that the Conservative Party of today is genuinely inclusive and are increasingly willing to vote Conservative and to join the Conservative Party.

I believe the reason is that British Muslims increasingly understand that the Conservative Party sees Britain as composed of individuals and families, who all want similar things for themselves, and who have equal rights.

The calibre of the people involved with the Conservative Muslim Forum continues to grow, making the organisation stronger.

Our key strategic challenge is to spread our message more widely geographically, and to further accelerate the willingness of British Muslims to vote Conservative.

Our goal is that significantly more Muslims vote Conservative in 2020 than the 25% who did so in 2015, which itself was a major increase from the 15% in 2010, showing that our efforts since inception are steadily bearing fruit.

*Mohammed Amin*

*CMF Chairman*