



**Promoting a Conservative Party for all**

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Introduction from our President

As President of the Conservative Muslim Forum, I am pleased to write the introduction for the Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2017.

I fully support the activities of the Conservative Muslim Forum and although I do not get involved in the running of the Forum, I am happy to provide advice when asked. The Forum is ably led by Mr Mohammed Amin MBE since I relinquished the position of Chairman of the Forum in 2014. Mr Mohammed Amin MBE is robustly supported by an active Executive Committee which meets on a regular basis.



Since its inception in 2005, the membership of the Forum has been open to everyone. The Forum promotes interfaith dialogue and the development of harmony between various racial and religious groups. The Forum is an integral part of the Conservative Party and always promotes the policies and philosophy of the Party. We believe that the Conservative Party is indeed a one nation party and it will only get stronger if it receives support from everyone in the country.

*Lord Mohamed Sheikh*

## 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 <https://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%. As discussed later in this report, during the 2017 general election, this fell back, but our goal is to achieve a significant increase by the general election which is expected in 2022.

This report summarises our activities in 2017 in support of these objectives.

## Composition of the CMF Executive Committee

In accordance with Clause 4 of the Constitution, the Executive Committee is elected triennially. At the AGM held on 14 March 2017 the following were elected to serve until the AGM in 2020:

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Chairman        | – Mohammed Amin  |
| Deputy Chairman | – Ash Zaman      |
| Secretary       | – Faruk Miah     |
| Treasurer       | – Samir Thantrey |

Nine Members of the Executive Committee

Ajantha Tennakoon  
Attic Rahman  
Dr Alam Ara Khan  
Cllr Hashim Bhatti  
Cllr Jeanne-Marie Douglas  
Kamru Ali  
Lady Shaida Sheikh  
Mike Mogul  
Tahara Amin

At the EGM held on 25 October 2017, the CMF Constitution was amended. As well as improving the numbering of the document and making minor presentational improvements, we refined the provisions in Clause 4 governing co-option of Executive Committee members. They now read as follows:

*(5) In addition the Executive Committee has the power to co-opt other members from the CMF's membership from time to time without any limitation upon the total size of the Executive Committee. Unless expressly provided otherwise in this constitution, co-opted Executive Committee members have the same powers and responsibilities as elected Executive Committee members. Subject to reconfirmation in accordance with sub-clause (6) below, co-opted Executive Committee members will serve until the expiry of the remaining term of the elected Executive Committee.*

*(6) Each Co-opted Executive Committee member requires reconfirmation by the Executive Committee on the first anniversary of their co-option.*

On 14 November 2017 Dr Anwara Ali was co-opted onto the Executive Committee.

CMF Executive members holding elective office

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.

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

## Conservative Muslim Forum - Annual Report Year Ended 31 December 2017

### CMF Events held during 2017

Due to the spring being taken up with the general election campaign, we ran fewer events during the year than we normally would. They are listed below and are hyperlinked to the CMF website which contains additional details.

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Event</b>  |
|---------------|---|
| 28 January    | CMF Executive Member Halimah Khaled organised her annual " <a href="#">Building Bridges</a> " event in Nottingham. This was attended by several Executive members and CMF Chairman Mohammed Amin acted as Master of Ceremonies.                                     |
| 28 March      | We held an event in Parliament " <a href="#">Shared Citizenship in Israel – Building a Multi-Ethnic Democracy</a> " jointly with Conservative Friends of Israel to showcase the work of Israeli NGO Merchavim.  |
| 1 July        | CMF Executive Member Ajantha Tennakoon organised a visit of about 20 people to the <a href="#">Amaravati Buddhist Monastery</a> .   |
| 10-11 October | CMF Secretary Faruk Miah was the principal organiser of a CMF delegation of 47 people to <a href="#">visit the European Parliament</a> , with Syed Kamall MEP as our host.  |
| 25 October    | The CMF held a <a href="#">reception to celebrate Eid al Adha</a> which had fallen in the summer months. The Parliamentary Host was Stephen Kerr, MP for Stirling, who CMF Chairman Mohammed Amin had met while attending the Mormon Pageant in Chorley on 28 July. |

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### Other items published on the CMF website during 2017

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. In particular, they show how active CMF Executive members have been in attending events to spread the CMF's message.

| Date        | Item  |
|-------------|---|
| 1 February  | CMF Executive member Ajantha Tennakoon organised an event " <a href="#">Spreading Religious Harmony</a> " to mark World Interfaith Harmony Week.  |
| 2 February  | CMF President Lord Sheikh and CMF Chairman Mohammed Amin wrote to the US Ambassador about " <a href="#">President Trump's Executive Order regarding immigration.</a> "  |
| 14 February | " <a href="#">Dan Watkins visit to Tooting Islamic Centre.</a> " We publicised this visit as Dan Watkins, who was the Conservative candidate for Tooting is a good friend of the CMF.   |
| 21 February | Several members of the CMF Executive supported " <a href="#">Telephone canvassing in CCHQ.</a> "  |
| 26 February | " <a href="#">CMF at the British Kebab Awards</a> "   |
| 14 March    | " <a href="#">Report on CMF Annual General Meeting</a> " held on that date.   |
| 22 March    | CMF statement on the Westminster Bridge terrorist attack " <a href="#">Today's horrific terrorist attack in London.</a> "   |
| 23 March    | CMF Deputy Chairman Ash Zaman attended the <a href="#">Trafalgar Square vigil</a> after the Westminster Bridge terrorist attack.  |
| 23 March    | " <a href="#">CMF Treasurer Samir Thantrey attends Pakistan Day celebrations</a> "  |
| 25 March    | " <a href="#">CMF Treasurer Samir Thantrey at The Citizens Foundation charity dinner</a> "  |
| 12 May      | " <a href="#">CMF Chairman campaigning in Tooting</a> " in support of Dan Watkins   |
| 23 May      | " <a href="#">CMF statement: The terrorist bombing in Manchester.</a> "   |
| 5 June      | " <a href="#">CMF statement on the London Bridge Attack</a> "   |
| 19 June     | " <a href="#">Attack on Muslim worshippers near Finsbury Park Mosque.</a> "   |
| 14 July     | " <a href="#">CMF Executive members Mike Mogul attends Chris Philp "Thank You" event.</a> "   |
| 23 July     | " <a href="#">Mike Mogul attends Croydon Conservatives fundraiser.</a> "  |
| 1 October   | " <a href="#">CMF at Conservative Party Conference.</a> " As usual, the CMF Executive had a large turnout at the Party Conference in Manchester. We were however disappointed by the poor location within the Party Zone of the stand allotted to us. |
| 8 October   | " <a href="#">CMF at Centre for Turkish Studies Gala Dinner.</a> " Several members of the Executive attended this dinner.   |

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|-------------|--|
| 2 November  | <a href="#">"CMF at the Turkish Embassy"</a> to attend Turkey's National Day celebrations.   |
| 4 November  | <a href="#">"Hashim Bhatti shortlisted for LGiU (Local Government Information Unit) Award."</a>  |
| 16 November | <a href="#">"CMF supporting Enfield Southgate Curry Evening."</a> One of the CMF's key messages is the need for Muslim Conservative Party members to participate fully in the activities of their local Conservative association. It is by our actions that we demonstrate that Muslims are an integral part of British society. |
| 11 December | <a href="#">"British Government support for Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims."</a> We added this page to our website to show just how much the British Government has done to assist this persecuted group.  |
| 13 December | <a href="#">"CMF at launch of "A Very Merry Muslim Christmas."</a> Three CMF Executive members attended this event organised by the APPG on British Muslims. The report showcases the work in the UK of Muslim charities.  |



## Conservative Muslim Forum - Annual Report Year Ended 31 December 2017

### Mentions in the media

Mohammed Amin appeared in the media on over 25 occasions during 2017 in his capacity of CMF Chairman.

A few of the more notable instances are listed below.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| 2 April    | On 12 different BBC local radio stations consecutively to discuss the Court of Appeal changing Marine A's conviction for killing a member of the Taliban in Afghanistan from murder to manslaughter. |
| 9 June     | On the Islam Channel satellite TV channel to discuss the outcome of the general election.  |
| 3 October  | On Brigham Young University Radio to discuss Mohammed Amin's participation in the International Religious Freedom Symposium.   |
| 24 October | On satellite TV Channel S to discuss the Government's Race Disparity Audit.  |

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 7 February, CMF Chairman Mohammed Amin gave a talk to the Oxford University Conservative Association. The talk was recorded and can be heard on YouTube at the link <https://youtu.be/IMBcDNwACaY>
- On 2 July, a number of CMF Executive members attended the Prime Minister's Eid Reception at 10 Downing Street.
- On 6 September a number of CMF Executive members attended the launch of CMF President Lord Sheikh's book "Emperor of the Five Rivers: The Life and Times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh".
- From 30 September to 6 October, CMF Chairman Mohammed Amin attended the annual International Religious Freedom Symposium organised by Brigham Young University's International Centre for Law and Religion Studies, held in Provo, Utah and Washington DC. Mr Amin was introduced as Chairman of the CMF and his speech addressed the question "Do Muslim religious texts cause religious persecution?" The session can be watched on the BYU website at the link <https://www.iclrs.org/event.php/2017+Annual+Symposium/Media/English/3929>

Concluding comments

It is now some 12 years since the CMF was first established by Lord Sheikh. Over that time, British Muslims have increasingly recognised that the Conservative Party of today is genuinely inclusive and have been increasingly willing to vote Conservative and to join the Conservative Party.

We do not have reliable statistics before 2010, when about 15% of British Muslims voted Conservative, but all the available information indicates that it was a much lower percentage than 15%.

Due to the hard work of the Conservative Muslim Forum, and others, by 2015 about 25% of British Muslims voted Conservative.

Unfortunately, in 2017 we saw a reversal of this trend.

In this year's general election, while the Conservative Party's overall vote share increased from 36.8% in 2015 to 42.4% in 2017, amongst British Muslims it fell back from about 25% in 2015 to about 11% in 2017.

The reasons for this reversal of the long-term trend are complex. However the CMF will do everything it can to ensure that this is no more than a temporary blip in the longer term trend of growing numbers of British Muslims recognising that the Conservative Party is the right political party for them.

*Mohammed Amin*

*CMF Chairman*