**Bolton Interfaith Council- Executive meeting – 1ST June 2015.**

**Brief Report from – Strategic Officer**

A very warm welcome to everyone to our management meeting since we last met on 13th April. As previous, on behalf of BIC, with support from volunteers, we do our very best to ensure sustainability of our project work and be involved in as much community events as it is possible. Once again, recent period has been very busy with ambassadors event (family) , Interfaith networking forum, Nepal fund raising event, Huddersfield Youth event, faith trails, Building Bridges Project- Tonge Moor , St.James’s School Young People’s project, meeting Councillor Kevin McKeon, CVS meeting, Africa day, Civic Sunday, faith workers meeting, supporting international writing project, planning interfaith cricket match etc

Please see below brief details of recent work and as usual, please do not hesitate to speak to me about any part of our work or any suggestions which helps us.

**Website**- We always try and do our best to keep our website updated and Lynda Robertson does a really good job for us.

**Ambassadors**- an interesting meeting and presentation took place on 14th May with ambassadors, parents, Mr Piers Hardy- Emmanuel Church and couple of Members of our executive. Overall, the group is fantastic but there are members who need to do more and I felt the parental support is vital. Hence, some challenges which we face were clearly stated on the day alongside the many positive aspects of their work.

After our presentation at the “faith leader’s forum”- Bolton Council have given a grant of £1,000- one thousand towards the project. I suggest we donate/ give £250 to the Emmanuel Church for allowing us to use the building for almost past two years. My sincere “Thanks” to Bolton Council for the support which is valued and appreciated.

At the Civic Sunday Ceremony, four of the girls represented us and although a bit nervy, did us proud. It was good to see their parents attend too.The group have a busy programme over the next three months.

**Faith Trails-** An ever expanding project and there were some unique instances on these- St. Michael’s CE School – 38 school staff / governors, - Islamic girls school, children with special needs, and many more. Please see our website. From 1st May to end of July – there will be almost 1800 pupils etc will do the faith trails. We also attended and fully participated in a “Diversity Day” at Egerton Primary School which was excellent and booked for next year – 16th May 2016!!!

More support with faith trails would be helpful.

**Forthcoming projects**- Genocide Memorial- 18th June, Big Day out 18th July for Ambassadors at Southport for Methodist Synod, Spirit of Bolton- 1st August are the immediate ones followed later by national interfaith week 15 to 21st November 2015. The Holocaust Memorial Day will be on Wednesday 27th January 2016. Please do support these events.

**Interfaith Networking Forum**- first one for a considerable period. Philip and myself were pleased with attendance of around 20 people from various organisations. Jonny Wineberg, and two colleagues from Manchester Muslim Jewish Forum and Greater Manchester Forum of faiths attended.(more information from Philip & Chan)

**Fundraising Event for victims of the Nepal Earth Quake**- I can say for me this was a landmark and an unique rewarding event for many people which took place on Saturday 23rd May 2015. Through the requests of community people, on behalf of BIC, we managed to do these event with an unbelievable support from organisations and almost **50** (Fifty) volunteers who attended and provided many activities to collect donations.

Organisations like Aquilla Marquees provided –set it up etc at no cost, Swaminarayan Gadi Pipe Band played for almost two hours around the town centre, Sainsbury’s, Minerva Prints, Bolton Halwa Centre (Snacks), Bolton FM, John Bates – fruits, Victoria hall- Chairs, Bolton Markets – Tables, St. Philip’s Church, Smile of Hope, Bollywood Divas, young ambassadors, Mr Ganshyambhai Patel provided his van for chairs over two days, Bolton Council- security – response, Licensing and many more gave their services for free or supported the event. Bolton News gave maximum publicity which also helped too.

Above all, people of Bolton gave very generously – unbelievable experience to see people from so many backgrounds- all ages who came forward and supported this “**One Bolton**” event. It was worth all our efforts and a privilege to be part of such an event full of kindness.

British Red Cross will confirm the amount later today – However at the first count they say the collection is around **£ 2,200** - which would be remarkable.

Once it is finalised, all supportive organisations will get a letter from British Red Cross and it will be mentioned in an article in Bolton News.

**Any other**- ( to explain) Monica Ballani leaving England for India, Rob Knight’ s message – GMP at our Meetings, appreciations for volunteers, SOB funding, Interfaith Network- UK, Dip Bhatt – work experience AND concerns, suggestions etc.

Hope the brief report is helpful to everyone and please do not hesitate to ask me for further explanations.

Many thanks for your support- Chan – 1st June 2015