



السلام عليكم

30<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Please find our response below to your letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020

*"We acknowledge your letter dated 24th December 2020 received via Moulana Amin Sadak.*

*This is the first letter we have received from CIS after months of communications including emails, 2 petitions, letters and numerous attempts made by Br. Mahmood Ahmad to arrange a meeting to resolve the issues and address community concerns for which we received no response."*

The emails you refer to in the above text expressed trivial matters and therefore were not considered a priority, but a response was pending.

The petitions you refer to was not a request for dialogue, but a demand for an unconditional surrender of properties and assets, to a group of unknown origin. The amateurish demands in the petition did not care to add a name or return address for CIS to respond to. Our Secretary at the time Reshad Beekhun, stated that this has happened before and advised us to ignore on the above grounds.

Br. Mahmood Ahmad did not contact CIS to resolve any issues, but phoned the Chairman directly, to conduct a regime change via a deal to remove certain trustees and promised to keep others.

This type of underhand deal was not considered ethical, moral, or Islamic, hence the meeting and subsequent requests were declined.

*"We would like to remind you that we are in this unfortunate position solely because of your refusal to discuss the concerns of the community you were supposed to be serving. The current situation was easily avoidable should you have taken your responsibilities seriously. It is ironic you are asking our response in 7 days from date of your letter despite not even once having the common decency to acknowledge receipt of the numerous attempts of communicating with you."*

All correspondence barring an email, (including your response to our letter), were sent anonymously with no sender details or return address. Therefore, CIS could not respond

*"We would like inform you more about the landlords / previous trustees for which you have accused as having a track record of mismanagement amongst other accusations. The landlords /previous trustees are all regular Worshipers of the Chingford masjid for the last 25 years and are well respected in the Masjid and Waltham Forest. Worshippers in the masjid, which you claim to be trustees of, hardly know you because you are infrequent to the masjid."*

Regular worship and public respect constitute one of many Muslim virtues and may Allah (SWT) reward you accordingly, but to manage our society requires a series of skills and competencies that you clearly lack. CIS have documented evidence outlining a clear track record of mismanagement, incompetence, and negligence during your governance period.

*“The actions taken by the landlords were as a last resort, as CIS did not respond to the above-mentioned correspondence, including a petition by large number of worshipers and no attempts were made to resolve those concerns. Further, there are concerns with regards to the existing trustees.”*

The issue of signatories on the Land Title EGL337184 and EGL379997 and your actions taken against CIS will be decided in court.

*“a) Four out of five trustees are from the same extended family. The CIS was representing approximately 1200 Muslims households in Chingford and close family connection of the trustees does not represent independence and raises a conflict of interest. This further shows that the ill intentions of existing trustees by appointing their family members to gain majority for important decision making in Trustee’s meetings.”*

All the existing CIS trustees were recruited into the committee with a majority vote. No member actively requested membership. Every trustee recruited since 2016, was to fill a skills gap, i.e. to address the accounts, banking, human resources, safeguarding, health & safety, fire safety and planning for number 90.

*“b) All existing trustees barring one are not elected by Mosque worshipers. They were appointed by other Trustees who have now resigned due to existing Trustees mismanagement and had no influence in decision making.”*

As stated previously your actions led to key competent and committed trustees to resign in frustration, resulting in a crisis which ultimately required our recruitment and intervention in late 2016

*“c) All trustees barring one are infrequent users of the Mosque. Most of the worshipers are not aware of the Trustees of CIS as they have not seen them. You cannot run the charity and Masjid from your home. You need to come to the Masjid and listen to peoples concerns and listen to people’s suggestions which was not happening.”*

Managing the trust is a multi-faceted operation, requiring skills and competencies similar to running a business. Although you have illegally occupied the premises, CIS as a courtesy have maintained all the utilities and essential services remotely, to ensure the worshippers are not affected.

CIS members have listened to genuine concerns and suggestions, resulting in local discussions and discourse. CIS like any organisation does not respond well to threats and is well within its right to defend itself.

All costs incurred by CIS for services used during the illegal occupation will be accounted for in court proceedings.

*“d) As mentioned above, petitions, emails and letters raising concerns were not responded, addressed and totally ignored. This had led to growing frustration in regular attending worshippers.”*

Answered previously

*“Above factors lead to eviction of CIS to safeguard the interest of worshipers at the Masjid and the Muslim Community at large. The worshipers are now happy and satisfied by this action and fully support the decision.”*

Your actions are not considered an eviction under English common law.

As the signatories on behalf of the CIS, you did not use your personal wealth, but signed on behalf of CIS and utilised donations made in good faith, therefore this issue will be decided in court.

*“The petition and letters that we had written not only identified the issues but suggested the solutions of organising democratic, free and fair election giving the powers to worshipers at the Masjid and the Muslim Community to elect their own Trustees who will be independent, competent, and hold knowledge and experience in Islamic and worldly knowledge.”*

The current members of the entity know as CICC are signatories on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012 document (Appendix A), abolishing elections. CIS are not prepared to reinstate an election system, as we do not consider this to be in the best long-term interest of the Masjid.

*“We have looked into your Soft Transition Proposal and we are encouraged that you are willing to discuss the issues we raised in a manner which will Insha-Allah lead to an amicable resolution.”*

The CIS proposal is not a discussion document but a path to secure the future prosperity of the trust for Muslims in Chingford.

*“One major issue which we need to discuss is your suggestion of no elections for appointment of the Trustees. This cannot and must not be the case - the Chingford Muslim Community donate their funds to the Masjid not any trust who runs the masjid (CIS or CICC) and it’s important that they play an important part of any future appointment of Trustees. Funds (Cash and Bank account) belongs to the Masjid. The elections must be transparent, inclusive and accountable and there must be equitable opportunities to compete in the election i.e., existing and previous trustees should have equal opportunity to stand in the election. Elections should be held every 2-3 years to ensure better representation for the Muslims community and to ensure right skills and knowledge exist in the composition of the board.”*

In accordance with document (Appendix A), CIS are not prepared to reinstate an election system.

CIS agree that everyone needs to contribute both formally and informally. Therefore, CIS have amended element 5, barring previous office bearers and trustees from the new board for a 10-year period. Existing 5 CIS trustees will adhere to a life term restriction.

*“We invite you, once again to a face-to-face meeting to resolve issues. Our meeting should be supervised and chaired by Moulana Amin Sadak.”*

CIS have outlined the elements and conditions required for a successful resolution.

CIS agree that all correspondence is channelled via Moulana Amin Sadak as an independent arbitrator throughout these proceedings.

*“We are hoping that you all see the wisdom of a discussion – something you had every opportunity to avail previously but ignored leading to the current situation.”*

Wisdom is using knowledge, experience, understanding and insight to accomplish our shared goals. Throughout our tenure within CIS, our shared goals have been transparent, open and recorded in accordance with our constitution. You largely shared those goals and agreed with our aims and objectives at our monthly board meetings. These ‘issues’ you now infer in your response, is a product of a few individuals who feel their founding status affords a right that supersedes legal requirements and best practice.

CIS is committed to legal and Islamic best practice adherence.

## Changes to Soft Transition (Assessment A) – letter dated 24th December 2020

### *“Element 5*

*No previous or existing CIS ‘Office Bearer’ or ‘Trustee’ will be eligible to re-apply for a period of 10-years from the adoption of the new constitution to the new board. Current CIS members will adhere to life term non-eligibility.”*

The elements and conditions outlined by CIS are non-negotiable; therefore, a meeting is not necessary or required.

CIS will consider a rejection or non-response as final and initiate legal proceedings as outlined in the Hard Transition.

جَزَاكَ اللهُ خَيْرًا

Ismail Dadabhai (Chairman Chingford Islamic Society)

Sent on behalf of all Chingford Islamic Society Trustees