A letter from Cllr Fiyaz Mughal

Appointment of Cllr Fiyaz Mughal as the Advisor to the Leader of the Liberal Democrats on Interfaith, Preventing Radicalism and Extremism

I was recently appointed in this role and have been working with communities over the last 15 years in the statutory and voluntary and community sectors. Recently, I have also successfully devised and undertaken social projects that tackle radicalism and extremism within some faith communities and have also been appointed to sit on the Government’s Local Delivery Advisory Group which will look at the implementation of the Prevent programme at a local authority level. The Prevent programme is a difficult one and previously some of the language used by Government has not been inclusive and which has led to some communities disengaging from the process.

We as the Liberal Democrats have always advocated for strong safety and security measures though crucially, without the infringement of our personal hard won civil liberties. The two can go hand in hand, though increasingly this Government has introduced draconian measures that are seriously infringing and impacting on our civil liberties. This is why a sensitive approach must be taken to these matters since once we lose our civil liberties, is very difficult if not impossible to get them back.

Within my role, I would like to ascertain your views on the following:

- Is there a discussion to be had on our position on faith communities, since this comes across to a few faith communities as confused? Some faith communities think of our Party as ‘faith-unfriendly’ which is not the case, though this perception is something that we need to work on.

- What are your opinions on what we should do to tackle radicalism and extremism?

- What are the potential impacts on communities and civil liberties by the introduction of draconian information gathering measures by this Government?

- What in your opinion distinguishes us in these areas from Labour and the Conservatives?

I would like to see this as a start to the discussion and I can be contacted on Fiyaz.mughal@googlemail.com or 0793 960 9481. I look forward to hearing from you on these important issues and can I thank you for taking the time to read this.

Best Wishes,

Fiyaz Mughal