

Press release: Commission announces Class Inquiry into two connected charities

The Charity Commission has today announced a class statutory inquiry into Idaara Maarif-E-Islam ([506755](#)) and The Voice of Truth ([1094754](#)).

Idaara Maarif-E-Islam's objects include the advancement, preservation and welfare of Islam. The Voice of Truth, which is no longer in operation, had objects to promote the benefit of the community in Birmingham and the West Midlands in particular, but not exclusively, the Shia Muslim faith.

The Commission has concerns about financial irregularities linked to Gift Aid claims involving both charities. Further concerns include inconsistencies between the income and expenditure reported in The Voice of Truth accounts for the year ending 31 March 2016, and the charity's bank records for the same time period.

The Commission's records show significant connections between the two charities, as substantial payments have been transferred between them, and that at least one trustee of Idaara Maarif-E-Islam has also served as a trustee of The Voice of Truth. The inquiry will therefore seek to establish if this close relationship has been in the best interest of the charities and if any resulting conflicts of interest have been adequately managed by the trustees.

The Commission is also concerned about payments made by The Voice of Truth to individuals and a company who may be connected to the charity, and will seek to establish if these payments have been made in the best interests of the charity and if any conflicts of interests have been adequately managed by the trustees.

As a result of its concerns, the Commission opened a class statutory inquiry on 26 October 2017. The inquiry is examining:

- The administration, governance and management of the charities with specific regard to the extent to which trustees have:
 - Responsibly managed the charities' resources and financial affairs, in particular the adequacy of the charities' financial controls.
 - Managed any conflicts of interest or loyalty arising between Idaara Maarif-E-Islam and The Voice of Truth and individuals connected to both charities, and ensured that any transactions between the two charities have served the charities' best interest.
 - Adequately managed risks to the charities, their property and reputation.
 - Maintained an accurate record of the identity of the trustees on

the register of charities.

- The extent to which any weaknesses in the management and administration of the charities identified by the inquiry were a result of misconduct and/or mismanagement by the trustees.

With specific regard to trustees of The Voice of Truth, the inquiry will also examine the extent to which they have:

- Ensured that the submission of accounting and returns information comply with statutory requirements.
- Prudently managed Gift Aid claims.
- Adequately processed sensitive data such as the personal details of individuals collected directly by Idaara Maarif-E-Islam or received from third parties pursuant to the relevant legislation at the time.
- Properly authorised and monitored payments to connected persons and/or companies.

And, with regards to the trustees of Idaara Maarif-E-Islam, the extent to which they have:

- Adequately protected sensitive data such as personal details of donors pursuant to the relevant legislation at the time.

In January 2018, The Voice of Truth was removed from the register of charities after the inquiry found that it had ceased to operate.

The Commission's investigation continues. The inquiry intends to publish a report setting out its findings and conclusions on conclusion of the inquiry. Reports of previous inquiries are available on GOV.UK.

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.
2. Search for charities on our [check charity tool](#).
3. Under section 34 of the Charities Act 2011, the Commission has a duty to remove charities from the register that no longer exist or cease to operate.
4. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
5. The opening of an inquiry is not in itself a finding of wrongdoing.

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Charity regulator investigates Idaara Maarif-E-Islam and The Voice of Truth

Press release: We're urging ex-forces personnel to join our ranks

We've been given a prestigious award by the Ministry of Defence for our continued commitment to inspiring and supporting both veterans and reservists. The award is given to employers who support defence and inspire others to do the same.

It was presented to company representatives Royal Naval Reservist Lieutenant Commander Robert Jaffier, now an asset and resource manager, and Ron Calderwood-Duncan, Head of Engagement and Culture Change.

Robert, who nominated the company, said:

I am delighted that the hard work carried out by Highways England to recognise the achievements and skills of ex-military personnel has been recognised.

In practical terms, Highways England appeared a good fit for me to be able to continue my civilian career while pursuing my personal development as a reservist.

The main challenge was settling back down to civilian life from my time out on operations and become reacquainted with the culture of the business that had evolved while I was away. So, it's great that my workplace offers successful applicants a buddy who is someone

who has experienced making the transition from military life to working for Highways England. I am delighted to offer my support as a buddy for new recruits, and I urge anyone from the forces looking for a career change to consider Highways England.

The Ministry of Defence makes awards under its Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. Employers have to show their values are aligned with the Armed Forces Covenant.

Since signing the Armed Forces Covenant in June 2017, we've actively been supporting leavers from the Armed Forces reintegrate into civilian careers, and to help operate, maintain and improve motorways and major A roads in England.

We launched an ex-military recruitment programme earlier this year which incorporated an insight day for service leavers to find out more about how it works, and the roles it can offer. It employs and supports both reservists and veterans, with up to 10 days paid special leave for reservists to attend military-related training.

There are many career routes available, from working on major projects or support functions such as HR finance and IT through to hands-on operational roles running the everyday traffic operations.

You can search and apply for jobs at Highways England via our [careers webpage](#).

You can also read the [Armed Forces Covenant promise in full](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: We're urging ex-forces personnel to join our ranks](#)

We're calling on ex-military personnel to consider a career in roads – after being rewarded for our work supporting people coming out of the armed forces.

Press release: Criminal exploitation and 'county lines': learn from past mistakes, report finds

A report published today finds that local agencies must learn lessons from past sexual exploitation cases to respond to 'county lines' and other child criminal exploitation.