

NEWS RELEASE

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LOCAL RACIAL EQUALITY CHARITY ACCREDITED AS LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER

THE RACIAL equality charity, Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum (CECF), has received its official Living Wage accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation, becoming the latest employer in Cambridge to demonstrate its commitment to fair pay.

CECF contacted Cambridge City Council following the council's Anti-Poverty Summit event that was held for voluntary and community sector organisations and other public sector partners to feed ideas into the council's next Anti-poverty Strategy. The council then assisted CECF throughout the process of applying for accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation, which indicates they have pledged to pay all their staff at least the Living Wage of £8.45 per hour.

CECF provides racial equality services to promote an understanding between people from different ethnic groups and to help all groups play an active part in Cambridge life. One of the charity's key services is the Cambridgeshire Human Rights and Equality Support Service (CHESS) that provides advice for people suffering from inequalities, discrimination, harassment or victimisation and infringements to their human rights, including within their employment. The Forum is also developing a refugee service.

Employers choose to pay the Living Wage on a voluntary basis and can then be accredited by the Living Wage Foundation. The nationwide Living Wage campaign has been promoted in the city by Cambridge City Council since 2014, as part of its Anti-Poverty Strategy.

More follows

The campaign's aim is to encourage employers to pay their staff more than the national minimum wage of £7.50 per hour for staff aged 25 and over. The Living Wage Foundation's rate is calculated each year to reflect the true cost of living and is currently set at £8.45 an hour outside London. In comparison, the national living wage is less generous and does not reflect true living costs because it is based on median income – currently at 55% of the median national income.

Cambridge City Council was awarded Living Wage accreditation in 2014. The council now works with other employers across the city to show them the benefits of paying the Living Wage and to support them in becoming accredited by the Living Wage Foundation.

More than 3,000 companies and organisations have been officially accredited as Living Wage employers in the UK by the Living Wage Foundation, including more than 50 in Cambridge.

Cllr Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Communities, said: "I congratulate the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum for being awarded Living Wage accreditation by the Living Wage Foundation.

"They have now joined 51 other local employers in Cambridge who share a clear commitment to tackling economic inequality through the principle of fair pay. The 'real' Living Wage is essential for people on the lowest incomes who struggle with the cost of living in Cambridge. It can also benefit employers by boosting productivity and improving the recruitment and retention of staff.

"Obtaining Living Wage accreditation is a straightforward process, and I would encourage organisations and businesses large or small to consider joining the growing band of local employers who pay it. The city council is ready to help you through every stage of your journey towards accreditation."

Eddie Stadnik, Chief Executive Officer at Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, said:

“It is very important as an employer that we show that we value our staff and set an example, as a charity tackling inequality, regarding the principle of fair pay.”

Cambridge employers wishing to find out about becoming accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as Living Wage employers can find out more at www.cambridge.gov.uk/living-wage or by contacting the council on livingwage@cambridge.gov.uk.

Ends

Notes for editors

1. Consumers can locate all the Living Wage employers in Cambridge by using the [Living Wage Employer Map](#)
2. Contacts:

Cllr Richard Johnson, (Labour Group) Executive Councillor for Communities, email richard.johnson@cambridge.gov.uk, tel: 07712 129529

Cllr Zoe O’Connell (Liberal Democrat Group), Opposition spokesperson, email: zoe@complicity.co.uk, tel: 07932 679179

Cllr Oscar Gillespie (Independent/Green Group), Opposition spokesperson, email: oscar.gillespie@cambridge.gov.uk, tel: 07851 820806

Andrew Limb, Head of Corporate Strategy, email: andrew.limb@cambridge.gov.uk, tel: 01223 457004

David Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager, email: david.kidston@cambridge.gov.uk, tel: 01223 457043
3. For more information about the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum contact Eddie Stadnik on 01223 655241, or email: eddie@cecf.co.uk