

Linwood mosque hero removed as a trustee for 'negative behaviours'

Jody O'Callaghan 05:00, Jun 23 2021

A man praised for heroism during the [Christchurch terror attack](#) has been kicked off a mosque trust for “divisive behaviour” including alleged bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Abdul Aziz, who Justice Cameron Mander [praised at the sentencing of the March 15 terrorist](#) for bravely chasing him away on the day of the attack, has been removed from the Linwood Islamic Charitable Trust amid a Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) investigation over accusations of financial mishandling.

The former treasurer was sent a letter saying he had been voted off the trust on Monday for his “continuous negative divisive behaviours” and “public disrespect” of others.



CHRIS SKELTON/Stuff

Abdul Aziz has been removed as a trustee on the Linwood Islamic Charitable Trust over concerns about his behaviour.

It comes after *Stuff* revealed the [trust's disarray over the use of a \\$100,000 government grant](#), with allegations it had been misused and restaurant owners allegedly pressured to create false receipts to account for it.

Dispute over the money split the mosque's trust into two factions.

Imam and mosque founder Abdul Lateef and fellow trustee Hamidullah Khafi called for others to resign and had the Linwood Islamic Charitable Trust's bank account frozen on June 5 due to their concerns.

On the other side were chairman Ahmed Jahingir and general secretary Faisal Sayed, who denied the claims, and Aziz, who refused to answer *Stuff's* questions.

On Saturday, Aziz posted a video to his Facebook page calling this reporter a "white supremacist" and saying he had nothing to hide.

The video was removed by Facebook, but on Monday night Aziz posted another in which he questioned the behaviour of other Linwood trustees.



The-Press

Linwood mosque worshippers say they are concerned about Aziz's increasing aggression.

Jahingir and Sayed have since distanced themselves from Aziz and joined calls by Lateef and Khafi for him to resign.

A number of fellow Muslims have told *Stuff* of their concerns about Aziz's growing aggression.

Lateef said some vulnerable members no longer felt safe worshipping at the Linwood mosque.

He said Aziz could continue worshipping there, but if he showed further signs of aggression the trust would seek to have him trespass. Such action was not possible while he was a trustee.

"We praise him for whatever he did on March 15 ... but that doesn't mean he is on top of everyone over here. It's God who saved us."



CHRIS SKELTON/Stuff

Aziz, pictured here celebrating outside the High Court in Christchurch after the March 15 terrorist was jailed for life last August, was praised for his heroism during the attacks.

Stuff has previously questioned Aziz about his alleged aggression, but he refused to answer.

Trustees have cited safety concerns among their reasons for voting Aziz out, with Khafi alleging that Aziz was involved in an “attempted ... attack [on a] community member during Ramadan”.

A member of the mosque – who did not want to be named due to fears for his safety – said he laid a complaint with police after he was allegedly knocked to the ground and punched when he went to the mosque to [break fast during Ramadan last month](#).

There’s nothing like a good punch-up during Ramadan to show who’s boss! - chchtruth

Senior Sergeant Roy Appley said police were investigating an allegation of assault at the mosque. No charges had been laid.

While working with [the Christchurch Foundation to distribute donations](#) to those affected by the terrorist attack, former city councillor Raf Manji said he received defamatory allegations, online abuse, and harassment from Aziz.

He engaged the help of Netsafe, police and Facebook, and shared the concerns raised with him by the community.

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