**NORTH OF SCOTLAND QUAKER AREA MEETING TRUSTEES**

**MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS**

Held by Zoom on Friday 22nd March 2024 at 19:00

Present: Tom Sayles, William McEwen, John Hitchen, Edmund Holt, Peter Heald, Jane Booth, Anthony Buxton.

Prevented: Anthea Mason

**1) Consideration of the draft Trustees’ Annual Report and Accounts (Appendix 1)**

We have received the final draft of the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 from our treasurer following the completion of the consolidation by our bookkeeper Heather Hartman. The annual report includes additions and amendments to the draft requested by trustees,  the Area Meeting Clerk  and Friends.

We note that the accounts show a small surplus of £1,777 and that both income and expenditure increased substantially over the year. We record a legacy from the estate of Ann Millar to Aberdeen Meeting of £10,000.

We accept the Report and Accounts for 2023, subject to the examination by AJB Scholes, and thank all those involved in their compilation.

**2) Consideration of the response received by QiS CG to our concerns**

As part of the on-going work towards a single Quaker body for Scotland, Area Meetings have been asked to approve the draft Governing Document in time for a special General Meeting on 6th April 2024. We have received a detailed consideration of the responses from the Quakers in Scotland Co-ordinating Group (QiS CG) to concerns and comments raised by NSAM Trustees in Minute 5/24 **(Appendix 2)**. We have also received and considered a revised draft of the Governing Document which has been updated in light of feedback from AMs. Trustees are mindful that AMs are being asked to agree to the Governing Document as a working draft, which is subject to further legal advice, testing and change. Trustees are encouraged that QiS CG were responsive to the concerns we raised and have answered them satisfactorily.

We accept that the draft of the Governing Document dated March 2024 forms a basis for an application to OSCR. We will consider contacting our solicitor Ashley Swanson at a later stage for legal advice about whether any issues would be raised with reference to NSAM’s current governing documents.

**3) Thoughts on the QiS process from Sylvia Thomson, Inverness Meeting**

Sylvia Thomson of Inverness AM has sent trustees a paper commenting on the QiS draft governing document (January 2024) with questions and comments regarding SCIO status and the transition process, the purposes of the proposed charity and possible implications for membership **(Appendix 3**). Trustees feel unable to answer these concerns, and recommend that the paper should be considered by NSAM for sending to QiS CG. We thank Sylvia for her thought and effort in putting together this paper.

**4) Consideration of the draft Memorandum of Understanding for Property issued by QiSCG to Trustees and Premises Committees**

We have received a draft Memorandum of Understanding relating to Property owned by Quakers in Scotland **(Appendix 4)**. It is noted future management of Meeting Houses, Burial Grounds and other property owned by Friends will be the responsibility of the Local Meeting and their Property Committee (Premises Committee) with oversight and guidance from QIS Property Committee. We recognise that this is a draft document which will need further consideration before a final agreement. We will give further consideration to this MoU at the next Trustee meeting.

**5) Report from Aberdeen LM about options for 100 Crown Street (Appendix 5)**

We received a report from Aberdeen LM of a meeting to consider possible future uses for 100 Crown Street and note that, in view of the possible changes to structures to Quakers in Scotland, it may be inadvisable to act in haste. Trustees feel we need more time to consider the suggestions in detail and will bring the matter to a future Trustee meeting, when we will also hear from Peter Heald and Anthea Mason about their visit to consult Burnett & Reid Estate Agents. We thank Aberdeen Friends for their work.

**6) Update of RCI**

Friends have received a report on the requirements for registering under the Scottish RCI legislation and the progress with this registration, with a deadline of 1st April 2024. William and Edmund were asked by Trustees at an earlier trustees meeting to investigate both the requirement and the process. It became evident that one of the trustees had to start the process and become the “Recorded Person” and be allocated a Recorded Person Reference Number”. William has done this and has received the RPRN RP003333. Each trustee, including William also has to be recorded as an Associate. William has done this.

The remaining trustees now need to be added as Associates and are asked to send the requested information to William as soon as possible, bearing in mind the deadline. Friends ask William to record the relevant details on their behalf on the register as Associates

**7) Renewal of 2023 Tenancy Agreement with Alban Associates**

Nicola Henderson at MacKinnons Solicitors has still not received any communication from Alban Associates regarding the renewed tenancy agreement for 100 Crown Street dated September 2023. We have asked her to clarify whether this lease can be nevertheless be considered to be in place by its observance, and to attempt to contact Alban Associates again.

**8) BYM Annual Return**

Tom advised us that the BYM annual return has been completed and submitted online. The Memorandum of Understanding (<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/memorandum-of-understanding-february-2024>) between NSAM and BYM has not been signed.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Trustees’ Report and Accounts 2023

Appendix 2 – Trustee comments on draft Governing Document with responses

Appendix 3 – Comments on Governing Document (Sylvia Thomson)

Appendix 4 - Draft Memorandum of Understanding for Property

Appendix 5 - Report from Aberdeen LM about options for 100 Crown Street