

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND TRUSTEES

Minutes of the meeting held 18th October 2022 by Zoom

Present: Martin Burnell (Clerk), Andrew Blackadder, Nigel Dower, Michael Hutchinson, Margaret Mortimer, Robin Waterston

Prevented: Katrina McCrea

1. Welcome

We began with a brief period of worship. We welcome Andrew Blackadder to his first meeting as a trustee

2. Budget for 2023

Our Treasurer expects that for 2022, income will broadly balance expenditure without the final third of the general quota contributions expected from Area Meetings. Expenditure continues to be lower than before the pandemic. We agree that we should not ask AMs for the outstanding part of their contributions for 2022.

We have considered the draft budget for 2023 which Nigel has prepared. This takes account of the agreement with AMs and BYM that there would continue for this year and next to be a £10,000 contribution from General Meeting to BYM to support Friends House posts based in Scotland, of which £6000 is shared between the AMs and £4000 comes from GM funds. At the moment our reserves are more than we need and can cover this.

We hope to continue to receive grants of £8000 from BYM towards the administrative costs of the General Meeting and £1400 from the Camfield Trust. On this basis, the budget envisages a deficit of £2895.

We agree the proposed budget subject to an adjustment to the provision for staffing costs and some aspects of presentation. Nigel is to re-circulate the list of proposed donations which we will agree by email. We ask Nigel to present the budget at General Meeting in November, We thank him for his work on the accounts and budget, noting that his term of office ends on 31st December after six years of service as our Treasurer. We are grateful for this service.

3. Authorised signatories

We agree that Katrina McCrea, Robin Waterston and Margaret Mortimer should be added as signatories on the Triodos account and Robin Waterston as a signatory on the Co-operative Bank account.

4. Independent Examiner

We agree to recommend the appointment of Gordon McKay to act as Independent Examiner for the 2022 accounts which will be prepared by Nigel as his final act as Treasurer.

5. Safeguarding Update

The Scottish Safeguarding Policy has now been finalised in draft by the ad hoc working group and a final draft of the Guidance is complete and just waiting formal acceptance by the group. The next stage will be to send the documents to the Recording Clerk, BYM Safeguarding Officer and Volunteer Scotland seeking any comments. These will be considered by the working group before coming to GM Trustees for approval and submission to GM.

Once the model documentation is agreed by GM, it will need to be formally adopted, with or without amendment, by each AM. The working group plan to organise a programme of training on a Scotland-wide basis as part of the implementation of the policy. Copies of the current drafts have been circulated to GM trustees.

6. Future of GM Fund for Healing

We agreed at our last meeting that since little use was being made of this fund, we needed to consider better ways of using the money consistent with the original intention of supporting spiritual healing. We ask Robin Waterston to write an article for the Scottish Friend seeking views on the use of the Fund and ask the Clerk to contact Nicola James who is involved in the West Scotland Healing Group.

7. Use of legacies

We still have almost £13,000 left unused from the Jenny Auld legacy and we have £10,000 from the Alan Parker bequest. We think it important that legacy funds are actively managed to support specific projects or concerns rather than current expenditure, but that it is for GM as a whole and not trustees alone to determine the use of the money.

We agree that legacies should be recorded as a single entry in the accounts, noting any specific restrictions placed on individual donations. Amongst possible uses of these funds are assisting the adaptation of buildings to enhance energy usage or in connection with organisational change within Scottish Friends. We will advise General Meeting that Trustees will continue to explore this issue.

8. Update on fundraising proposals

It does not appear that BYM has any further plans for a specific Scottish fundraising appeal other than the continued production of a tailored Scottish version of the annual appeal leaflet. At a meeting organised by the GM Clerk on 19th July with AM Treasurers plus Nigel, Martin and BYM representatives, the AM Treasurers expressed a wish for the specific financial contribution to BYM in respect of the parliamentary liaison post to continue as they felt this element made it easier to raise funds as compared to a general appeal for the central work. It was accepted that since this post was now entirely funded from BYM central funds and was no longer an experimental project, and since it was no longer the only BYM post based in Scotland, any

special financial contribution should be towards both Scottish-based posts. It was noted that the current figure of £10,000 is now arbitrary as it does not cover even half the cost of the parliamentary liaison post, let alone the local development worker.

It was accepted that we should continue for the next year or two to send a special contribution of £10,000 from GM to BYM, of which £6000 would be raised by quotas on the Area Meetings.

9. Meetings of Clerks to Scottish Trustees

The clerks to GM and AM trustees have continued to meet periodically by Zoom. The meetings have primarily been used to share issues of current concern and to consider areas where a Scotland-wide approach would be helpful. Employment and property issues have been the main topics discussed. We are pleased to note this useful sharing of experience and note that there is now a similar meeting for treasurers.

10. Minutes of PEWG

We have received the minutes of meetings of the PEWG on 17th May, 19th July and 6th September.

11. Update on ACTS

Progress in setting up the proposed Scottish Christian Forum continues to be slow. It is now proposed that ACTS will continue purely as a fund holding and grant-making body and that the SCF will not be a registered charity, but will be the main focus for ecumenical work in Scotland.

Despite not being a charity, the SCF will need an agreed constitution and a meeting is being held on 16th January 2023 to discuss the form this might take. Adwoa Bittle continues as our representative on the Church Leaders Forum and on ACTS, while Mary Woodward is now representing us on the Ecumenical Officers Group. Martin has attended some meetings in support of Adwoa and she has requested that he supports her at the meeting on 16th January in the interests of continuity. We agree to this.

12. Any other business

Martin Burnell comes to the end of his term of office as our Clerk on 31st December. He has offered to prepare a report on the work of Trustees in 2022 to go to GM in March after approval by Trustees. We are happy to accept this offer. We thank Martin for his service as our clerk over the last six years.

13. Dates of future meetings

We agree to meet on 7th February 2023 at 11 am in Edinburgh with as many of us attending in person as possible and others by Zoom. We will discuss dates of future meetings at that meeting.

Martin Burnell (Clerk)