

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND TRUSTEES

Minutes of the meeting held 23rd February 2021 by Zoom

Present: Martin Burnell (Clerk), Catherine Brown, Nigel Dower, Michael Hutchinson, Derek McLean, Jacqueline Noltingk

1. Welcome

We began with a brief period of worship. It was noted this meeting was being conducted through video conferencing because of the covid-19 restrictions.

2. Annual Report of Trustees for 2020

We have considered the wording of our Annual Report to General Meeting as drafted by our Clerk and incorporating some minor amendments. We adopt this as our Annual Report and ask Martin Burnell to speak to it at GM in March.

3. Future Meetings of Quaker Trustees in Scotland

Following the informal meeting by Zoom of Quaker Trustees in Scotland held on 12th October, Clerks to AM Trustees were asked for feedback whether they thought there should be further such meetings and if so the frequency; in what areas they felt joint working might be beneficial; and whether there were any areas on which they felt training might be helpful.

The responses have been circulated. Although some suggested a smaller group should meet, we see value in occasional meetings of all trustees. We suggest there should be six-monthly meetings of a core group consisting of the clerks to trustees plus one other from each trustee body. Possible areas of joint working are consolidation of local meeting accounts, a model health and safety policy and model risk assessments and investigating whether a group insurance policy would offer savings. Health and Safety and new legislation in general were seen as areas of training need.

We agree our Clerk should arrange an initial meeting of the core group in April at which there can be further discussion of possible areas of joint working and training, and consideration as to future arrangements for calling and holding such meetings.

We note that NSAQM has submitted a minute to GM which will be considered at the March meeting continuing to advance the view that General Meeting and the four Area Meetings should be merged into a single charity. We feel that the fundamental issue is building a flourishing Quaker community in Scotland and that a process of discernment is needed before moving to any particular change in organisational arrangements.

4. Draft accounts for 2020

Our Treasurer has prepared an initial draft of the accounts for 2020 and has sought views on a number of issues. We approve the accounts subject to the inclusion of a specific item for our contribution to the salary of the Parliamentary Engagement Officer and some other minor corrections, and subject to any comments from the independent examiner. We note that the accounts will be presented to GM in June. We will consider the accounts again together with the annual report to OSCR at our May meeting.

5. Funding of Enquirers Day and other GM events

Up to now, we have adopted the principle that a charge should be made for Enquirers Day and events such as the Family Weekend aimed at covering most, if not all, of the costs of accommodation, refreshments etc. It has been suggested that the costs of Enquirers Days should be fully met by the General Meeting. We agree to recommend to GM that funding for a one day enquirers event be met by General Meeting as part of extension work and that a charge continue to be made for residential events including the Family Weekend and Teenagers' Weekend with a 30% subsidy from General Meeting. In making this recommendation, we have assumed that Area Meetings will continue to meet requests for bursary assistance.

6. Funding and price of 2021 Book of Members

We are printing 554 copies of the Book of Members this year (which allows for a few spares) at an average cost of £3.31. Area Meetings were charged £3 per copy last time with a cover price of £3.50. This margin allowed for the cost of posting out those copies they could not deliver by hand.

We agree that the charge to Area Meetings this time should be £3.30 per copy. We note that no price has been printed on the cover and two Area Meetings intend to meet the entire cost of their copies from AM funds. We will look at the question of a cover price for the next issue in two years' time.

7. Camfield Trust Grant application.

Our Treasurer is submitting the normal annual report to the Camfield Trust regarding the use made of the grant. Travel expenses were much reduced in 2020, although we made a substantial contribution to the Northern Friends Youth Events Trust. The Camfield Trust has indicated that it is willing to support costs of setting up blended meetings. Since these are likely to be substantial, we feel justified in making a further application to the Trust for 2021.

8. Revision of GM Governing document

At our meeting on 13th October, we agreed some minor, factual revisions to the GM Governing Document. We have now considered some additional revisions designed to reflect the current role of the General Meeting. We accept these subject to the frequency of meetings of General Meeting being defined as "at least once but normally four times pa", and agree to send the

revised document to GM for approval. We note that there will need to be consultation with all meetings in Scotland prior to any approval by GM and OSCR must be notified.

9. Consultation on proposed changes to Scottish charity law

We note that our Clerk, after consulting the GM Clerk, convenor of the PLWG, fellow trustees and Clerks to AM trustees has responded to this Scottish government consultation, the closing date for which was 19th February. A copy of the response is attached to these minutes.

10. Update on ACTS

It was decided at an ACTS Members meeting held by Zoom on 29th October last year

- A. 1. *to set up the Scottish Christian Forum (SCF) using the SCIO constitution that was voted on in April 2020*
- 2. *to appoint the Ecumenical Officers of existing ACTS member churches along with appointees from those churches not having EOs as an Implementation Group for the SCIO*

- B. 1. *The Members of ACTS empowered the Implementation Group to: take necessary advice from both legal sources and OSCR to aid their work*
- 2. *approach people with a view to appointing Trustees for SCF*
- 3. *provide administrative support for the first year of the SCF*

- C. *The Members of ACTS resolved to*
 - 1. *Call an EGM of ACTS when appropriate to implement the dissolution of ACTS*

We note that Quakers will be represented on the implementation group by our current representative to ACTS, Adwoa Bittle. We earlier had input to the constitution that will be used and voted for it in April 2020.

11. Update on Safeguarding

BYM issued an updated model safeguarding policy in December 2020. We agree to review the GM Safeguarding Policy in the light of the new model and to consider this at our next meeting.

Further to minute 9 of 13th October 2020, it has not proved possible to include Area Meetings within GM's enrolment with Volunteer Scotland as they are not subsidiary charities of GM and it would have also involved undue centralisation of disclosure requests. The Clerk has informed Area Meetings, who now have the option to enroll individually (there is no charge) or to continue the existing arrangement with DDC.

12. PEWG

We have noted the minutes of the PEWG of 21st October, 24th November and 12th January. We are pleased that Andrew Tomlinson, our new Parliamentary Engagement Officer has settled in well and is making a valuable contribution. Our Clerk, together with the Convenor of the PLWG, is seeking an early meeting with the Recording Clerk and other Friends House staff to discuss the funding arrangements from 2022 onwards. We will discuss this further once we are clearer what the views are of the BYM Trustees.

13. Revision of Quaker faith and practice

We have been asked by a sub-group working on the revision of *Quaker faith and practice* for our views on what should be included on trusteeship. The Clerk will circulate the email about this and we will consider how we can respond. We have provisionally penciled in a Zoom meeting for 23rd March at 2 pm to discuss this.

14. Any other business

We note that this will be Jacqueline Noltingk's last meeting as a trustee. We thank her for her diligent service as a Trustee since January 2014.

13. Dates of future meetings

Friday 21st May probably by Zoom and Tuesday 12th October, hopefully in Glasgow.

Martin Burnell
Clerk