

## GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

### Minutes of the meeting of trustees held in Edinburgh 6.11.2014

Present: Pam Brunt, Robin Davis (Clerk), David James, Margaret Morton, Jackie Noltingk, John Phillips

#### **1 Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer (SPEO): appointment process**

Robin Davis has reported on the outcome of the interviews held in Edinburgh on 30 October. 32 people applied and the panel interviewed five of them. Unfortunately it was not possible to come to an outright decision on the day about whom to appoint. Two of the candidates will be seen again, by Skype, on 18 November by the same panel. The members of the panel are confident we will be able to appoint one of these two.

The four members of the panel were Robin Davis, Clerk to Trustees, Elizabeth Allen, Convener, Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, Jane Dawson, Yearly Meeting Advocacy and Public Relations Team Lead, Jessica Metheringham, Yearly Meeting Parliamentary Engagement Officer.

#### **2 SPEO: memorandum of understanding**

We received on 30 October the first draft of a memorandum of understanding between Yearly Meeting Trustees and General Meeting Trustees. We are extremely concerned at the late arrival of this document which came to us on the same day interviews were being held. We unite with the view that no appointment should start before the memorandum has been fully agreed. This is now urgent.

We have at this meeting spent time on a preliminary review of the text as presented in the draft. The Clerk will produce a revised and simplified version for circulation to trustees and to members of the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group [and with a copy to the General Meeting Clerk].

We will if asked report on how General Meeting uses the annual Yearly Meeting grant, paid essentially to enable General Meeting to fulfil its responsibilities under Quaker Faith and Practice section 5.03b, but its inclusion here is not relevant.

#### **3 Budget for 2015**

John Phillips has presented us with a draft budget for the coming year. He drew our attention to the additional demand placed on General Meeting by the appointment of the SPEO, and reported on his conversations with Area Meeting Treasurers.

We confirm the strategy of using the General Meeting reserves to help defray the costs of the post, and that £4000 should be used in 2015 for this. We urge the Area Meeting treasurers to stress to Friends that General Meeting has made a commitment to the establishment of this post and to consider their annual giving in this light. We advise putting a notice in the Scottish Friend explaining how the post is being financed, and also inviting individual donations. John Phillips will discuss the mechanics of this with Area Meeting treasurers. In presenting the budget to General Meeting, John will put the £4000 from reserves in a separate line in the table.

We otherwise agree the budget as presented by our treasurer and ask him to present it to General Meeting for its meeting on November 15.

We thank our treasurer for his work.

#### **4 Administration**

Bronwen Currie has returned from her spell working for the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Israel / Palestine. She is finding the demands placed on her by the subsequent talking and travelling very heavy, and this has come at a time when she is preparing the new edition of the Book of Members. We record our thanks to Bronwen, and particularly for her continuing work for General Meeting when having these other responsibilities.

#### **5 Safeguarding policy review**

The policy on safeguarding adopted by Trustees in March 2013 says we will ensure the policy is reviewed annually. We ask the Clerk to seek from the General Meeting Safeguarding Coordinator advice on how we conduct the annual policy review which we agreed in that policy document. We will then ask the Area Meetings to review their own policies and report back to trustees by June 2015.

#### **6 Same sex marriage**

We note the message dated 2.11.2014 sent by the General Meeting Clerk to Registering Officers and Area Meeting Clerks of the implementation arrangements for same sex marriage in Scotland.

#### **7 Date of next meeting**

We agree to meet next on Tuesday 24 February 2015 in Central Edinburgh's Meeting House at 11am.

Robin Davis, Clerk