

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND
Meeting of trustees
1.6.2015

Minutes

Present: Pam Brunt, Robin Davis (clerk), David James, Margaret Morton, Jacqueline Noltingk

Prevented: John Phillips

15/7 Matters arising from the February meeting: clerk's report

We thank John Phillips for clerking the meeting in February, and for setting out clearly the matters to be followed up.

15/7.1 Minute 15/2.1: The Memorandum of Understanding between Britain Yearly Meeting trustees and General Meeting (GM) trustees relating to the Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer post has been received and filed, with copies given to trustees and the GM Clerk.

15/7.2 Minute 15/2.3: GM Nominations Function Group has been asked to handle the issue of representation on the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group.

15/7.3 Minute 15/2.4: GM has agreed to affiliate to CND.

15/7.4 Minute 15/5.1: GM has received the annual report and accounts

15/7.5 Minute 15/5.2: The treasurer has paid the examiner the honorarium.

15/8 Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer (SPEO)

Elizabeth Allen, convener of the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, has given us a report, attached to these minutes, on the work currently being carried out by Mairi Campbell-Jack, SPEO, and how the post is being managed. We thank Elizabeth for this thorough report. We are pleased to see how well Mairi has settled, and that the management of the post and relationships between our Function Group and the Advocacy and Public Relations Team are working out satisfactorily.

We ask the Clerk to check that the General Meeting Administrator is sending the parliamentary round-up to all Local and Area Meetings' clerks and assistant clerks, and to GM trustees.

15/9 GM Administrator

Following the resignation of Bronwen Currie (minute 15/4.1), the post of GM Administrator was advertised in The Friend and The Scottish Friend and by circular to all Scottish meetings. Nine enquiries were received but only three applications; of these two were selected for interview. The panel was Robin Davis, convener, Martin Burnell (GM Clerk), and Daphne Wasserman (West Scotland and former GM treasurer), with interviews being held in Edinburgh Central Meeting House on March 25. The post was offered to Marion Sharkey (East Scotland, Dundee meeting) who was pleased to accept. It was subsequently agreed that Marion should take up her post on April 20 but that Bronwen Currie should continue until May 15, this overlap allowing time for the handover of the computer and related papers. The treasurer has arranged with South East Scotland Area Meeting for the payment of salary and the usual overheads of national insurance and pension.

We ask the Clerk to write to Bronwen Currie to thank her for the excellent service she has provided to GM and to Scottish Friends in general, and to wish her well in retirement. Similarly we ask the Clerk to write and welcome Marion Sharkey to GM. We look forward to working with her.

15/10 Treasurer's report

a We have received a message from John Phillips, our treasurer, about the arrangements made for putting Marion Sharkey on the payroll. We thank him and South East Scotland for facilitating this.

b Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO)

We note the recent query from Marion Strachan on behalf of the Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) about whether we wished to consider applying to change GM's status to that of a SCIO.

We note that Area Meetings, especially those that own property and employ staff, are open to a higher level of risk and therefore liability. We thank John Phillips for his paper (attached) and pass it to the clerks of Area Meeting trustees for information. We agree to consider this matter more fully at our next meeting, when John Phillips hopes to be present. We will let Marion Strachan know of this intention.

15/11 Safeguarding: annual review (see minute 15/3)

The Clerk has circulated (paper attached) the replies or minutes he has received from the Area Meetings of their experience so far of operating the current policies and procedures. No incident or allegation of abuse has been reported though we note that the existence of a sound policy and good procedures has helped some Area Meetings through awkward situations. We were reminded of the need to have rigorous procedures in place whenever taking children out of the Meeting, and at residential gatherings.

We remain concerned about the delay in obtaining disclosure through the Churches Agency for Safeguarding and wish to explore going directly to Disclosure Scotland. The Clerk will discuss this with the convener of the General Meeting Children and Young Persons Function Group. We note the minute from East Scotland about referees. We note the checklist provided by West Scotland (copy attached) and the need to help small meetings comply with the policy without being over-stretched.

We urge Area Meeting trustees to seek a report annually from their Safeguarding Coordinators, and ask them to pass these reports to General Meeting trustees, as required by the General Meeting policy.

15/12 Health and safety policy and risk assessment

a H&S for home worker; risk assessment

Martin Burnell as General Meeting clerk, is conducting a risk assessment for our new administrator, Marion Sharkey. We await his report.

b Health and Safety

We have discussed whether General Meeting should have a Health and Safety Policy and reviewed what happens at Area and Local Meeting level; we are aware those Area Meetings that own meeting houses have by law to have a Health and Safety Policy in place. We note that the Memoranda of Understanding between Area Meetings, with the clerks' checklists, provide good cover.

We ask our clerk to draft, in consultation with the General Meeting clerk, a note of what the General Meeting should do both in general and in session. For instance, in session we should always announce the procedure in case of fire. The availability of first aid and the means of access to emergency services is also essential.

15/13 Employment law - how to keep informed of changes

Our sole employee is paid through South East Scotland Area Meeting. We agree to ask South East Scotland Area Meeting, through our Treasurer, keep us aware of any relevant changes to employment law.

15/14 GM Function Groups - oversight

(Scope: Agenda, Children and Young Persons, Parliamentary Liaison, and Nominations; Outreach is already under review: see General Meeting minute 9, 7.3.2015.)

The clerk read what the conveners of the General Meeting Function Groups had sent him as a report, to be attached to these minutes. We are content with the way these committees are operating at present.

15/15 GM Trustees: annual report to General Meeting

With minor amendments we accept the draft (copy attached) prepared by our clerk and ask him to present it to General Meeting.

15/16 Trustees

General Meeting Nominations Committee has been working to find trustees to replace those whose term of office comes to an end this year, with the aim of trying to build in some continuity. The current position is as follows:

- coming to the end of their service in December 2015: Pam Brunt, David James, Margaret Morton

- being nominated to serve 2016-18: Beryl Milner (East). Derek Maclean (North), Jacqueline Noltingk (South-East). (No name yet discerned for West.)

To serve as clerk: Robin Davis, till the end of 2016

We note this report.

15/17 Date of next meeting

We agree to meet next on Monday 2 November 2015, at 11am in Edinburgh Central Meeting House.

Robin Davis,
Clerk

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND Trustees

Attachments to the minutes of the meeting held 1.6.2015

Minute 15/8 Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer

Scottish Quaker Parliamentary Engagement Officer Report for GM Trustees, 10th May, 2015

Management

The post is managed from Friends House and is part of the Advocacy and Public Relations (APR) team. Mairi joins in APR team meetings by Skype.

Jessica Metheringham is Mairi's line manager and they have regular meetings by Skype. Mairi has successfully completed her three-month review.

Mairi attends meetings of the GM Parliamentary Liaison Function Group (PLFG) and is in regular email contact with members of his group and its convenor. The group is closely

involved with Mairi's work and is aware of the need for that work to have identifiable outcomes.

Current work

Getting to know Friends and Networking

Mairi has engaged with Quakers in Scotland, attending General Meeting for Scotland. Along with Forces Watch, she will speak to GM in June on Militarisation in Scottish Society.

Mairi has visited Glasgow Meeting and will soon be visiting other meetings. She is producing a regular Scottish parliamentary round-up, which is sent to Meetings.

Mairi attended Yearly Meeting and facilitated some workshops.

She has met and continues to work with Northern Friends Peace Board, Forces Watch, Scottish CND, Chloe Clemmons of the SCPO and Brian Larkin of Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre.

Work with the Scottish Parliament

Mairi attended a round-table at the Scottish Parliament on Religious Freedom, organised by the Church of Scotland.

Mairi had a motion tabled in the Scottish Parliament by Alison Johnston MSP, to congratulate Mark and Tony on their wedding. tinyurl.com/oln3v3d

MSPs were contacted about the CAAT vigil to mark the Global Day of Action on Military Spending.

A meeting has been set up with Alison Johnston (Green MSP for Lothian)

Militarisation of Scottish Society

This is going very well. Good contacts have been made with Forces Watch, QPSW staff and Quakers in Scotland involved with militarisation work. Mairi has undertaken research on militarisation in society, and put together plans for the rest of the year, including talking at the Just Festival in Edinburgh this summer and promoting the white poppy. There are plans to petition the Scottish Parliament on armed forces visits to secondary schools.

General election (until May 2015)

Mairi has participated in the project on the general election, which has been led by the FH Advocacy and Public Relations Team, ensuring that Scotland featured in election blog posts and on social media.

She wrote to Nicola Sturgeon to clarify the SNP position on the renewal of Trident.

Trident

The Trident briefing for the General Election was produced and distributed to Scottish Friends, along with other relevant briefings.

Minute 15/10b Treasurer's report

CHARITY INCORPORATION A charity seminar arranged by Balfour & Manson, 26th February 2015, addressed by Alan Gilfillan

The most common **types of charity** are those that are

- incorporated (i.e. the charity has its own legal personality: applies to companies limited by guarantee, or Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations, **SCIOs**); or
- unincorporated associations or trusts (in which individual members or the charity's trustees carry personal liability, and are the owners of the charity's contracts and property).

In the simplest situation, in the former case the charity can own its own property; in the latter situation the property may be owned by designated office holders or trustees – but should they be named individuals, deeds must be conveyed to successors whenever individuals change responsibilities.

In the case of SESAM, we are a charity and an unincorporated organisation. The deeds of ownership of our AM properties were drawn up before we had trustees, and they were therefore drawn up to show that the relevant officers (AM Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Treasurer) stand for the meeting's affairs.

Should a charity incorporate?

A charity can apply to change from unincorporated status to a SCIO; note that about one-third of new applications for charitable status in Scotland are now for setting up SCIOs. A charity can also become a company limited by guarantee (as is the case with most large charities, especially those with a number of employees).

Major issues to consider are

- potential liabilities (premises, employees, significant contracts) and whether things could go wrong from the charity's perspective;
- trustee succession (are individual members deterred from agreeing to serve as trustees by worries about trustee liability?)

Transferring a charity's status:

Whether this can be undertaken depends on the charity's governing document. Is it clear that it has the power to wind itself up? Can its assets then be transferred to a new organisation, such as a SCIO?

An application to OSCR will take 3 to 6 months for consideration. The charity needs to explain how reorganisation will "enable the charity to be administered more effectively". A new (modern) **governing document** will need to be prepared and approved by OSCR, i.e. the new SCIO is set up and approved by OSCR before the existing charity is wound up. The new SCIO is then already in place and is ready to receive the charity's assets.

Governing documents:

Note that Quaker Stewardship Committee has taken two years working with the Charity Commission to have a model governing document approved for use by AMs in England and Wales if they wish to transfer their status (I do not know whether any have yet embarked on this step). While this model could be used as a basis for discussions, the

regulations for CIOs under the Charity Commission are not the same as those for SCIOs in Scotland, so work would have to be carried out to adapt it before having it approved. We should also need to work through its provisions to ensure that they fit satisfactorily with our normal Quaker practice in Scotland.

There is plenty of guidance from OSCR about SCIO regulation, and model governing documents are available for Scottish charities from solicitors and elsewhere. These tend, of course, to be very long, over-complicated, and not appropriate for Quaker business method.

Regulation:

Charities that are also companies are regulated both by OSCR and by Charities House. Regulation of SCIOs by OSCR (a single level of regulation) is much less burdensome than Company House regulation, and OSCR have taken pains to make SCIO regulation as similar to that of unincorporated charities as possible.

Arranging a transfer:

Give plenty of notice in order to obtain approval for the new organisation's governing document by OSCR. Then, aim to achieve the actual transfer at the end of the charity's normal accounting year. It is absolutely necessary to have new bank accounts in place: banks cannot allow a new legal entity to simply take over an existing account.

The charity will need:

- Lists of assets and liabilities;
- Existing contracts (note that consent will be needed for these to be taken over by a new organisation – this may be obvious if, for example, there are rented premises, but perhaps not so obvious if a photocopier is rented!)
- A legal transfer agreement (normally four or five pages) listing assets to be transferred on the due date, and transferring the title to land and buildings when land registration is complete (arranged with the charity's solicitor);
- [Note that liabilities cannot be transferred in the same way]
- The closing financial statements for the old organisation.

Liabilities:

The accounts of an organisation may not show its liabilities very clearly, perhaps because they are not understood by the trustees. In particular, there may well be a liability owed to a pension fund – can this liability simply be transferred to a new organisation? Usually the process of transfer crystallises the debt, meaning that it must be paid up before the transfer can be concluded. Such matters should be clearly shown in a charity's accounts and must be clarified before embarking on the process.

Bank accounts:

New accounts are required.

There can easily be problems with **standing orders** (mainly regular sums coming into the bank accounts) so there may be a lot of chasing up to be done. After closure of an account the recipient bank will usually just return the sums to the donors.

OSCR will accept a letter from the bank saying that it will sort things out in the future, and it may be possible to keep an old account open until all activity has ceased (early discussion with the charity's banks is recommended).

Employees:

Employees must be informed, and conditions of employment left unchanged (TUPE regulations).

Accountants:

It is wise to seek early advice from the charity's accountants, and specifically advice on the presentation of the first accounts of the new organisation (e.g. clarity about the treatment of restricted funds).

Update:

Letterheads, website, marketing materials etc.

Trustee liability:

Limited liability implies that the liability of an individual is limited in extent. The organisation bears the bulk of the liability. Any immunity clause within a trust deed or a governing document may not in fact be upheld in a court case: a trustee who is found to have acted improperly or who has performed tasks carelessly could be found to be personally liable in any case. The test is usually one of "what would have been reasonable under the circumstances?"

Charities commonly take out trustee liability insurance... but read the fine print! There are usually lots of exclusions.

Any liability arising from a period before a charity changed its status to become incorporated would remain with the trustees themselves, though a new SCIO could give an indemnity to the old trustees at the time of transfer (within the transfer document) if it has sufficient assets.

Loss of charitable status:

Should a charity lose its charitable status for any reason, the organisation simply ceases to be a charity. Should a SCIO lose its charitable status, it ceases to exist (something that could conceivably worry a bank).

Trading:

There is no reason why a charity or a SCIO should not have a trading subsidiary (which would be registered as a separate company).

Brief notes prepared by John Phillips

Minute 15/11 Safeguarding: annual review**Safeguarding - review 2015**

-----Original Message-----

From: Robin Davis [<mailto:robin.davis@phonecoop.coop>]

Sent: 18 March 2015 2:43 PM

To: Philip and Felicity Bryers; Kate Philbrick; John Phillips;
dauidsanders@btinternet.com

Subject: Safeguarding in Scottish Quaker meetings

Dear Friends

At a meeting of the trustees of General Meeting held 14 February, I was asked to remind each of the clerks to trustees of the Scottish Area Meetings of the need to review their Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Documents each year, and to ask you now for

- 1 any comments that may be helpful in updating GM documents (which are used by each AM as models) in due course
- 2 any comments about the process for obtaining CRB checks for Friends working with children in Meetings - does it still work as it should when using the Churches Agency on Safeguarding process?
- 3 the name of the AM's current Safeguarding Officer.

Trustees set no date by which this information should reach me, but clearly if this is supposed to be an annual routine, we should all try and give it some priority. Would you be able to respond by the end of April? or sooner if you have notes to hand already?

Many thanks,

Robin

East Scotland

4.5.2015

Hello Robin

My apologies for being a few days late with this response.

When I received your request I passed it for comment to the 4 LM Clerks, the AM Safeguarding Coordinator and the AM CYP advocates. Sadly I have received only one response, from an LM Clerk. I suspect this is a reflection of the very limited numbers of children in our AM.

We have however held two recent discussions on Safeguarding at meetings of AM Trustees. This response is based largely on those meetings.

1. Several months ago Trustees raised a query about the requirement to approach one non Friend for a reference. We spoke about this with Neil McKechnie in Glasgow LM and subsequently amended our document as indicated in the minute extract from a meeting of Trustees on 6 December 2014.

A question has been raised as to the appropriateness of requiring two referees for adults working with children 'one of whom should be a Quaker and the other a non-Quaker who knows the volunteer well.'
(Safeguarding Procedures and Guidelines. Page 25. Section 13)

Enquiries have confirmed that this wording is in the recommended pro forma distributed by the relevant BYM officer. It is also understood that a neighbouring Area Meeting asks for two referees but normally only takes up one of them.

After discussion we agree to a revised form of words as follows:

'They should also be asked to provide two referees who know them

well, at least one of whom should be a Quaker.'

We agree to distribute a note of this change to Local Meeting Clerks, our Safeguarding Coordinator and our CYP Advocates.

At a meeting of AM Trustees on 18 April 2015, we considered minute 51/15 of West Scotland AM, and in particular the Safeguarding checklist for meetings. We agreed that this was a very useful addition to the lengthy policy and procedure documents but we felt we should make some changes to suit our local circumstances. We understood that almost all situations likely to arise within our meetings in respect of vulnerable adults are deemed to fall outwith the requirements for disclosure and agreed to make this clear in our version. Our Safeguarding Coordinator has been asked to undertake the changes to the checklist and once this is done we will ask our Trustees to sign it off and circulate it widely.

2. We have had limited need to process disclosures. Where we have done so we have found the delays in receiving disclosure certificates very frustrating. We do however appreciate that the Churches Agency on Safeguarding is operating with a restricted number of disclosure forms from Disclosure Scotland. We have been satisfied with the support from Friends House and find particularly useful their agreement with the Churches Agency that Friends who are on the BYM list of serving Clerks are automatically deemed to be admissible verifiers.

3. The current AM Safeguarding Coordinator is Pam Brunt of St Andrews Meeting. We do not have an Assistant Coordinator. For your information, our latest tabular statement records just 13 children across our 4 LMs.

Trustees have noted that they should have a review of the Safeguarding Policy on their agenda for our Spring meetings.

I trust that this response has covered all your points.

In friendship

Philip

North Scotland

31.3.2015

Dear Robin

Being new to trustees, I am not able to speak from experience. However, I have been in touch with Penny Selbie (the former AM Safeguarding Coordinator) and with the two Friends serving now. Penny has sent a brief response, and it is good to hear that the others will be going to Woodbrooke for training. I have also spoken to David James, who has nothing to suggest beyond what follows.

In response to your 3 points:

1. Apart from anything relevant in Penny's note, there is no comment to pass on.

2. Penny Selbie's response:

At the end of 2013, I wrote a short report for AM Trustees about my role as AM safeguarding co-ordinator at the request of Nigel Dower.

During 2014 there was nothing to report apart from the slowness obtaining Disclosures. However I am able to report that all Friends working with C&YP in NSAM are now all disclosed.

Since they were appointed I have spoken to Anthea & Clunie & have handed all the papers I had to Anthea. Both Anthea & Clunie have applied to attend the Safeguarding Co-ordinators course at Woodbrooke in Autumn 2015.

3. Anthea Mason is the current Coordinator (appointed for 2015-2017) and Clunie Conochie is Deputy (also for 2015-2017).

I hope this helps.

In Friendship
David

South East

Report to the trustees of SE Scotland AM

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Report on Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, November 2014

AM trustees last discussed the AM's policy and procedures documents (concerning the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults) at their meeting in February 2013. All documentation was formally adopted by Area Meeting and was subsequently distributed with covering letters to Local Meeting clerks or correspondents. It is good practice to review the use of such documents periodically, and following a reminder from the clerk of General Meeting trustees I wrote to Madeleine Harding, David Sterratt and Mary Jane Elton to ask them

- Whether they could let me know of any incidents during the past eighteen months that have been referred to them (as Safeguarding Officers) or which have required reference to the documents;
- Whether they have become aware of any issues that suggest that the documents should be reviewed or modified;
- Whether there are any further individuals in the AM whom I should contact in order to obtain an overview of the documents' effectiveness.

I also sent email queries to further contacts in Kelso, Polmont, Central Fife and Portobello/Musselburgh.

Comments from respondents:

No incidents have been reported over the past eighteen months. However, it was pointed out that the documents are regularly referred to both before relevant events and during training. A more detailed reply was received from Kim Smith of Portobello/Musselburgh, who pointed out the problems (well-known, I suspect) with the long delays experienced by volunteers awaiting criminal records checks through the Churches Action on Safeguarding office.

John Phillips
January 2015

Note added in March:

I asked Madeleine Harding whether she could contact staff at Friends House about the CAS issue, and to consider whether Scottish Friends should consider registering in Scotland. She has not yet passed any thoughts on to me.

West Scotland

11.4.2015

(Area Meeting minute 51/15)

Safeguarding

Margaret Wadsley and Gill Reid, our Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator, have produced a checklist for the Safeguarding Link Person from Local Meetings. Margaret has spoken to the paper, which has been circulated in advance of this meeting and a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Trustees have now adopted a Safeguarding Policy from which the checklist is derived. We are concerned that local meetings can fulfil their obligations on safeguarding and provide a link person who is responsible for communicating with the Safeguarding Coordinators and confirming that the items on the Safeguarding Checklist have been covered as appropriate. It is important that we have a practical system that enables Friends to meet their responsibilities without being overwhelmed by them. We have heard of the regulatory and legal burden that can wear down on us, both as meetings and individual Friends. We understand that what is required from us is due diligence, adapting what is needed to individual Local Meeting situations. We have a collective responsibility for our public meetings, and our members and attenders, and need to manage that responsibility so we can be confident that we have acted with that due diligence where needed. We encourage Local Meetings to share the burden through the cluster system of meetings and to work with our Safeguarding coordinator and Trustees to ensure what is necessary can be done. We ask Margaret to report to us annually on the working of this policy and liaison with Local Meetings and clusters.

We agree to meet the costs of Link Friends booked in for the Facing the Unthinkable (Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults) Training Event at Edinburgh on Those booked so far are: Gill Reid – Ayr Local Meeting, Elaine Millar – Dunblane Local Meeting and Gwen Johnstone – Glasgow Local Meeting.

WEST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING
Safeguarding: checklist for Meetings

Every Local Meeting has to appoint a link person to Area Meeting's Safeguarding Coordinators. This link person should:

- 1 Ensure Local Meeting has considered safeguarding and bring this forward as an item once a year on Local Meeting agendas.
- 2 Make sure the Meeting has a copy of the West Scotland Area Meeting Safeguarding Policy and General Meeting procedures.
- 3 The link person should ensure a safe recruitment policy is adopted for all those responsible for the children and for wardens/deputy wardens if they are working with or will come into contact with vulnerable groups. This includes appropriate disclosures and references.
- 4 Make sure all adults responsible for vulnerable groups including children at their Local Meeting are members of the PVG Scheme and that a Scheme disclosure or record update has been obtained for them to work within the Local Meeting.
- 5 Should make sure the Local Meeting has a file containing information on all the volunteers working with children and young people and record its location. This should include a CV, job description and two references.
- 6 Ensure the Local Meeting informs the Area Meeting Safeguarding Coordinators of any concerns that arise.
- 7 Ensure the Local Meeting informs the Safeguarding Coordinator of any changes in personnel and make sure the appropriate files are updated.
- 8 List those who have been trained in safeguarding vulnerable groups. This includes training for clerks as verifiers. Suggest others who may need training.
- 9 Make a list of those people who attend your Local Meeting who could be considered vulnerable adults. This may be difficult but it is important. Some Meetings may feel they have no vulnerable adults but they should report this.
- 10 To report progress on safeguarding to one of the Safeguarding Coordinators.

Margaret Wadsley, Safeguarding Coordinator
Gill Reid, Deputy Safeguarding C
April 2015

Minute 15/14 Function Groups - oversight

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND
Function Groups

As trustees we receive reports of the meetings of the various GM committees or "function groups".

Agenda FG

Adwoa Bittle, May 19:

"I feel the group is functioning well. I take the lead with organising calls and then we share the decision making about afternoon session topics. I then organise the speakers etc. If this is what is meant to happen then it does! Next call 24/5/15 to confirm all GM's for this year. Then to start thinking for next year. "

Nominations

Alyson Buchan, May 18:

“Jacqueline Noltingk was appointed until December 2016 - so with your extension, she now finishes when you do.

Beryl and Derek will be appointed to take over from Pam and James - January 2016 to December 2018.

We asked Margaret Morton to be reappointed for two years - January 2016 to December 2017, but she is unwilling to continue. We are now looking for a Trustee from the West to be appointed from January 2016 to December 2018.

I come to the end of my first triennium as Nominations Convenor in December 2015. It's been a difficult job, but I have a good group now. At the beginning, I didn't have a group - there were two missing as the Area Meetings had failed to appoint. The Agenda Group had a similar problem and Adwoa wasn't sure who the group was. She too has sorted it out now. That's down to a lack of communication.

Another lack of communication came between Central Nominations and GM Nominations, when we were looking for a name to replace Peter McCaffery as our representative on QCCIR - Central Noms. nominated Kate Arnott. I have e-mailed the Clerk of Central Nominations as I think we should be clear about who is nominating Scottish representatives - she has not replied yet, but she is new.

We've also had some misunderstandings caused by people expecting to be nominated for a second triennium. It has become normal to appoint people for two triennia, so if we do not nominate for a second triennium, we cause offence. This must be a problem throughout the Society 'though.

I inherited some out of date job descriptions and hope to get them updated before the end of the year.”

Parliamentary Liaison FG

Meets regularly and sends me the agenda and minutes. See the report, item 2.

Children & Young Persons FG

Not yet heard - emailed Madeleine Harding, May 18

Outreach FG

Under review by GM

Minute 15/15

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

**Annual report of the trustees
June 2015**

Who are your trustees? We have one trustee from each Area Meeting, plus the treasurer (ex officio) and a clerk, all appointed by General Meeting in session. We can each serve for up to three triennia. This extended period is to allow for continuity. This year the trustees have been Pam Brunt (East), David James (North), Margaret Morton (West) and Jacqueline Noltingk (South-East), with John Phillips as treasurer and myself, Robin Davis, as clerk. We have met three times, shortly before a General Meeting, in November, February and May.

Essentially we are here to serve the meeting, ensuring General Meeting operates “in a manner that is consistent with its object” - in other words as laid down in Quaker Faith and Practice which the charity regulator has accepted as our “governing document”. We have to act with “due care and diligence” - we deal with the detail - and we make sure we abide by current legislation. You discern the priorities. That is why we have spent many hours over the last two years working out how best to take forward General Meeting’s desire to have a member of staff who would help us put our view to Scottish parliamentarians. As you know this led to an agreement with Yearly Meeting Trustees for a post to be created as part of the centrally managed Advocacy team but working here in Scotland, a post that has been called Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer. This is at this stage a three- year post. Mairi Campbell-Jack was appointed and she has already started work on a number of tasks, under the supervision of the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group.

Our administrator, Bronwen Currie has stepped down from that post after six years, serving the meeting with zest and efficiency, for all of which we are extremely grateful. Bronwen demonstrated you can be of service even when living on an island off the West coast. Her successor is Marion Sharkey from Dundee, whom we welcome warmly. Formally the trustees are her employer and so it fell to us to undertake the process of recruitment.

Other matters dealt with during the year have included a review of how our policy and procedures for safeguarding and the protection of vulnerable adults is working, and of course the rather important subject of finance. It is the trustee body that agrees the annual report and accounts, has these properly examined, and then presented to the General Meeting - and the charity regulator. Towards the end of the year we look at the budget, including suggested grants and donations. This year we have had to urge Friends to give that bit extra in the funds to support the employment of the Parliamentary Engagement Officer. What you may not realise is that we also keep an eye on how our committee system is working. receiving reports from the Function Groups on their activities, and making recommendations to the central committee and to General Meeting as necessary.

It is engrossing work but rewarding in the overview it gives of the health of our religious society in Scotland and the breadth of its activities. We thank you for upholding us.

Robin Davis, Clerk.