

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND TRUSTEES

Minutes of the meeting held 30th May 2017 in Edinburgh

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

Prevented: none

1. Annual Report to GM

We have agreed wording for our annual report to GM. We see value in continuing to report on our activities in this way and agree that the reports should cover the last complete calendar year. As our Clerk is unable to attend the next GM, the report will be presented by Nigel Dower assisted by other Trustees.

2. Legacy from Jenny Auld

We have heard that GM is to receive a legacy from the estate of Jenny Auld of approximately £25,000. We have discussed possible uses of this sum, bearing in mind that it must be used to support the activities of GM and that its use will be subject to final decision by GM. We feel that approximately half of this sum might be offered to BYM to support an additional half day's work per week by the Parliamentary Engagement Officer over the next three years, but that it would be wrong to use all of the legacy to meet our contribution to this post.

We will advise BYM Trustees that, subject to agreement by GM, and subject to any conditions attached to the legacy, we would be prepared to contribute an extra £4000 pa on top of the £6000 pa already agreed. This would be on the understanding that the other funding GM receives from BYM would continue as at present.

We would also ask BYM Trustees to fund another half day pw bringing the total to 3.5 days pw as recommended in the Review Report (minute 4(d) of our meeting on 6th February 2017 refers).

We ask our Clerk to contact the Convenor of the PLFG asking her to provide information to the Recording Clerk before BYM Trustees meet on 10th June as to the extra work which an addition to the working week of the PEO would facilitate.

We also recommend to GM that the use of the remaining part of the legacy should be considered over a period of time, bearing in mind that it should be led by discerned need rather than by the existence of the funding.

We note that BYM Trustees will be considering their financial contribution to the PEO post on 10th June, the same day as GM. It may be possible for their decision to be reported to GM, but in any event we ask GM to give Trustees authority to conclude negotiations with BYM Trustees on behalf of GM on the basis of the GM contribution being a maximum of £10,000 pa. We feel this matter needs to be concluded urgently to give some certainty to the postholder.

We will forward this minute to BYM Trustees and to the GM Clerk.

3. GM Function Groups

We note that GM is to consider proposed changes to the existing structure of Function Groups. We will consider at our next meeting what implications the new arrangements have for the work of Trustees, in particular communication between Trustees and the various groups and in regard to our responsibilities for safeguarding, which we feel require clarification.

4. Broader Memorandum of Understanding between GM and BYM

We have discussed the possible content, nature and purpose of a broad memorandum of understanding governing the relationship between General Meeting for Scotland and Britain Yearly Meeting. We hope to be able to consider a similar document drawn up between Woodbrooke and BYM which may be some guide. We ask our Clerk to contact the Recording Clerk to clarify his objectives and thoughts in suggesting such a document, and whether the Woodbrooke document is the sort of template he had in mind.

We ask our Clerk and the GM Treasurer to prepare an initial rough draft of such a document for further discussion. The Clerk will also look at the existing MoU for the Parliamentary Engagement Officer in conjunction with the Convenor of the PLFG to see what amendments will be required to this, but we see this more detailed document being an annex to the broader MoU rather than being merged with it.

5. Dates of future meetings

Tuesday 24th October in Edinburgh and Tuesday 6th February 2018 in Glasgow

Martin Burnell
Clerk.

ANNUAL REPORT OF TRUSTEES FOR 2016 to General Meeting for Scotland

The work of Trustees in 2016 was dominated by issues arising from the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, including developing and agreeing with BYM Trustees a review process for the Advocacy Project. In addition Trustees maintained their normal oversight of the General Meeting's finances, its employment arrangements and the operations of its various groups to ensure GM complies with charity and employment law.

Trustees discussed ways in which the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group might work more effectively and recommended that it be strengthened by two additional members. We also encouraged the PLFG to take more time over its meetings and to set aside some time for team building.

The Advocacy Project, under which General Meeting and BYM Trustees agreed to fund a part-time post of Parliamentary Engagement Officer based in Edinburgh, runs until 31st December 2017. Trustees were anxious that a review of the future of this project be undertaken by the end of 2016 so that decisions could be taken in good time as to whether it was to continue and if so, on what terms.

It was agreed with the Recording Clerk that two independent Friends be asked to undertake this review and to report to GM Trustees and BYM Trustees. Our Friends Douglas Rennie of Northumberland AM and Beryl Milner of Leeds AM were appointed and submitted their report at the end of December recommending that Scottish Parliamentary engagement work should be accepted by Trustees of BYM and GM as core work for Quakers in Britain and that the project should continue for at least another three years, ideally with increased hours.

The existing management arrangements, after some initial difficulties were ironed out, are now seen to be operating satisfactorily. Trustees continue to be in discussion with BYM Trustees regarding the funding arrangements if the project is extended. The Recording Clerk has suggested that the existing memorandum of understanding regarding the operation of the post be broadened to encompass the whole of the relationship between General Meeting and Britain Yearly Meeting and this is something on which we shall be working in 2017.

Other work of Trustees in 2016 included the preparation of guidelines on donations and affiliations to external bodies which were subsequently approved by General Meeting and consideration of the reporting arrangements for safeguarding coordinators appointed by AM trustees. We noted proposals to lay down the Children and Young Person's Function Group which are to be considered at a future General Meeting.

We are grateful for the support given during the year by the GM Administrator, Marion Sharkey, including preparation for the publication of the new edition of the Book of Members. We also appreciate the campaigning work of Mairi Campbell-Jack, the Parliamentary Engagement Officer.

We thank those who have served as trustees during 2016 and those who have joined and are serving in 2017 (see below).

Martin Burnell, clerk

June 2017

Trustees 2016

Robin Davis (clerk), Michael Hutchinson (West), Derek McLean (North), Beryl Milner (East) (until June 2016), Catherine Brown (West) (from September 2016) Jacqueline Noltingk (South East), John Phillips (GM treasurer ex-officio)

Trustees 2017

Martin Burnell (clerk), Michael Hutchinson (West), Derek McLean (North), Catherine Brown (West), Jacqueline Noltingk (South East), Nigel Dower (GM treasurer ex-officio)