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Description automatically generated*GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND**

**QUAKERS IN SCOTLAND**

**CO-ORDINATING GROUP**

**Terms of Reference**

***Approved by minute 23/11/11 of General Meeting for Scotland held 11 November 2023.***

1. **Summary of purpose**

To support General Meeting for Scotland and Area Meetings in Scotland in developing a new model for Quakers in Scotland to be a faith community that wants to be together, do things together and worship together.

To bring recommendations and guidance based on the discernment of Area Meetings and General Meeting to the Options for Scotland Working Group 2’s report, allowing for further openness to new and creative thinking. The group’s membership shall reflect the spirit-led, inclusive, self-confident community, which its work aims to strengthen among Quakers in Scotland.

To assist the General Meeting for Scotland, Area Meetings in Scotland and the Dundee Friends Property Trust in becoming a single Quaker charity for Scotland, identifying the organisational changes required.

General Meeting minutes 21/03/19, 22/09/16 and 23/06/11 refer. General Meeting minute 23/09/08 confirms the purpose of the Group, which in summary is:

* For draft documents to be brought to General Meeting for the decision on having a single charity, following liaison with the six trustee bodies;
* For wider options to be brought to General Meeting and the four Area Meetings on how best our meetings might evolve, if they wish, and be grouped together;
* how we could improve common ways of working together, such as for eldership and pastoral care, and for learning and growth.

1. **Membership**

2.1 The Group will comprise about ten Friends (members or attenders), appointed by General Meeting for Scotland. The Group shall include Friends from the four Area Meetings in Scotland, including, as far as is possible, Friends that reflect the perspectives of the six Quaker trustee bodies. Continuity with Friends serving on the Options for Scotland Working Group 2 will be an advantage. The Group shall appoint its own convenor from amongst its membership.

2.2 The Local Development Worker for Scotland will be in attendance with the Group to contribute to its remit and task.

2.3 The Group may invite others to attend specific meetings, but not co-opt members without nomination through General Meeting. The Group may form working groups tasked with taking forward particular aspects of the Group’s brief. These working groups will be convened by one of the Group and may involve other Friends well placed to contribute. They will report back to the Group. The full Group will minute their consideration of any recommendations of a working group.

2.4 The period of service is from appointment to the end of 2025, or as subsequently defined by General Meeting.

2.5 The Group should ensure suitable induction for members, as required.

**3. Conduct of Meetings**

3.1 All meetings will be conducted using the practice of Quaker meetings for church affairs.

3.2 Meetings will be held as often as required to fulfil the Group’s purpose and to fit the timetable required for meetings of the General Meeting. The convenor is responsible for arranging the meetings, which may be held in person or online, or blended, to suit the requirements of the tasks.

**4.      Duties and responsibilities**

4.1   To reflect further on ways of working as a single community of faith and witness for Quakers in Scotland, bringing recommendations to GM building on the work of the options for Scotland 2 group and the decisions already taken by GM.

4.2   To work with Area Meetings and the six trustee bodies to establish a single Quaker charitable body for Friends in Scotland, bringing a final proposal to Area Meetings and then General Meeting. The proposal shall include whether it is appropriate that the charitable body shall be a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation).

4.3   To prepare a draft governing document and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). To provide a schedule of the required policies and other documents for a single charity, working alongside the various trustee bodies to begin the process of amalgamating best practice across the five existing bodies (General and Area Meetings), in preparation for producing an agreed set of documentation for the new charity.

4.4   To provide commentary, where the Options for Scotland Working Group 2 has not already done so, on points raised by Friends at General Meeting held 10 June 2023 and the Area Meeting minutes (ie 035/23 of West Scotland AM held 15 April 2023; 15/23 of North Scotland AM held 22 April 2023; 2023/05/05 of South East Scotland AM held 9 May 2023; 23.05.03 of East Scotland AM held 13 May 2023), and any subsequent points raised by these meetings (GM minute 2023/09/08 also refers).

4.5   To set out the implications of the proposed new structures and arrangements for the current role of General Meeting for Scotland, as defined in *Quaker faith & practice* *5.03*, and of Area Meetings, as defined in *Quaker faith & practice* *4.10*.

4.6   To develop and keep under review a timeline to achieve the remit and task as set in 4.1 - 4.5, and to bring significant changes to General Meeting and Area Meetings.

4.7   Keep a watching brief on related changes being adopted by Quakers elsewhere in Britain Yearly Meeting to learn from the experience of others.

4.8   The group will seek to engage with Friends throughout Scotland, not just through existing formal structures.

4.9   The Group will liaise with the Dundee Friends Property Trust on matters relating to the Trust’s charitable status and potential inclusion in a single Scottish Quaker charitable body.

4.10 The convenor or nominated Friend from the Group shall report regularly on the business of the Group to General Meeting in session, consulting with the General Meeting clerk and Area Meeting clerks as required.

4.11 The Group will liaise with the GM Custodian of Records on the archiving of its minutes and papers.

**5. Authority**

5.1 In undertaking this task, General Meeting for Scotland is acting as an umbrella body for the Quaker community in Scotland. General Meeting does not have authority over the Area Meetings in Scotland, but works with and for them as defined in *Quaker faith & practice* *5.03*. Area Meetings will minute their own decisions as to the outcomes.

5.2 The Group can liaise with the four Area Meetings in Scotland and General Meeting to seek to ensure that decisions minuted by these bodies reflect the relationships between them and the authority of the Area Meetings for their own affairs.

5.2 The Group will work to a budget as agreed with the General Meeting treasurer and reported to the General Meeting.

5.3 The Group may communicate and liaise with such Quaker meetings, Trustee bodies, groups and individuals that further its remit and task. The Group may send communications through the General Meeting administrator, and may place documents and information on the General Meeting website, informing the General Meeting and Area Meeting clerks when they do so, to fit in with General Meeting and Area Meetings agenda planning.

Drawn up under the authority of General Meeting minutes 23/06/11 and 2023/09/08, and approved by minute 23/11/11 of General Meeting for Scotland held 11th November 2023.