**Foundation trustees for a new QiS (Quakers in Scotland) charity**

*From QiS-CG, for covering email/ letter from GM to Nomination Committees*

AM nomination committees are being asked to bring recommendations for QiS Foundation Trustees to GM nominations committee. This page outlines how we see the role of Foundation Trustees differing from that of a standard charity trustee.

It also mentions how, as QiS increases its responsibilities to cover multiple Area Meetings, we can make the role for substantive QiS trustees manageable and rewarding.

**Foundation Trustees**

The first task for Foundation Trustees will be to apply to OSCR, the Scottish Charity Regulator, to create the new QiS SCIO. After that, the QiS SCIO would seem likely have little of the usual formal trustee business for some time. It will be an ‘empty shell’ with no property or other assets, no liabilities, and no staff, no assets, and no income. It is only as existing charities join it, and transfer their assets, that the SCIO will begin to take on work currently done by existing AM, GM, and Dundee Friends Property Trust trustees. Other trustees will join at this time.

Until AMs transfer their assets (and this could be quite a long gap), the major task for Foundation Trustees will be the important one of finalising and implementing policies and working arrangements for the new organisation.

**How will trustees manage responsibilities previously divided between four AMs?**

As the QiS SCIO grows, more trustees will be appointed; the aim is that the full trustee body will initially include two trustees from each AM. There will be economies of scale and pooling of expertise, but without additional support, overseeing everything would be daunting. Most AMs already employ staff to support one or more of finance, property, and employment. We anticipate engaging extra staff time to help trustees manage all these areas. This may include a part-time managerial post.

**Legal liability in a SCIO versus status quo**

Our current charities are ‘unincorporated’, which means that they are not legally recognised bodies. Our trustees are personally listed as the owners of our property, and are personally liable for the legal responsibilities of our current charities. SCIOs are legal entities themselves, which means that although trustees are still obliged to act legally and responsibly, they are not personally financially liable.

**QiS trustees should not be current AM trustees**

We are advised that it would be best to avoid this position. Current AM trustees will be busy with their AM business, including asset transfers, and it would be difficult to ask them to take on the additional responsibilities. There could also be a perception that conflicts of interest could arise. Former trustees can be appointed. When an AM joins QiS, it would be possible for an AM trustee to step down from their AM role, and after a short interval take up a QiS trustee role.

**Duration and phasing of trustee appointments**

It is undesirable for too many trustees to come up for replacement at one time. Some phasing of terms of service is therefore desirable. While three years is the usual duration of trustee appointments, it may be desirable to shorten that for some foundation and early trustee appointments.