

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND TRUSTEES

Minutes of the meeting held 11th October 2021 by Zoom

Present: Martin Burnell (Clerk), Catherine Brown, Nigel Dower, Michael Hutchinson, Derek McLean, Margaret Mortimer

Prevented: None

1. Welcome

We began with a brief period of worship.

2. Anticipated financial outcome for 2021

We will not spend as much as our budget for 2021 anticipated as meetings have continued to be by Zoom and we have not had to pay travelling expenses for our representatives or committees. Area Meetings were asked initially only to pay two thirds of the quota. We agree we need not ask for the balance to be paid.

3. Independent Examiner

We agree to recommend the appointment of Gordon McKay to act as Independent Examiner for the 2021 accounts.

4. Budget for 2022

Our Treasurer has prepared a draft budget for 2022. This envisages a small deficit of £555 since our reserves currently exceed those required by our reserves policy. The budget assumes the continuation of the £8000 BYM grant, in relation to which the Treasurer has submitted an application as normal.

We agree to recommend to General Meeting the attached schedule of proposed donations and note the arrangements for GM to receive reports from representatives.

We approve the draft budget and ask Nigel to introduce it at the General Meeting to be held in Edinburgh on 20th November.

5. Signature arrangements on bank accounts

Further to minute 5 of our meeting on 13th October 2020, our Treasurer has still to check with the Co-op Bank the feasibility of introducing dual authorisation of sums over £3000. We note that he has instituted dual authorisation on our savings account.

As Derek McLean's term of office will end in December, we agree to appoint Margaret Mortimer as a fourth signatory on our accounts.

6. Equals prepayment card for GM Administrator

After consultation with our Clerk, our Treasurer has made arrangements for the GM Administrator to be provided with an Equals prepayment card to facilitate payments for goods and services up to a limit of £350.

7. Application for Training Grant

Our Treasurer received an application from one of GM's representative on the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Working group for a grant to assist with the costs of an online course in Restorative Justice run by SACRO and commencing on 28th September. In view of the timescale, the Treasurer, in consultation with the Clerk, agreed to offer half the £600 course fee. Her attendance on this course has now been deferred to next year. We note that the Community Justice Working Group supported this application.

8. Update on fundraising proposals

The General Meeting Clerk organised a Zoom meeting with members of the Friends House Fundraising Team on 24th August to discuss how we might best appeal to Friends in Scotland for contributions towards the central work, including posts physically based in Scotland. The fundraising team will come forward with proposals once they have considered the issue further.

9. Co-operation between Scottish Trustees

Robin Waterston convened a Zoom meeting of Clerks to Area Meeting Trustees on 2nd September which the Clerk to GM Trustees was unable to attend. Those present talked about current difficulties, and discussed aspects of these in some detail. It was agreed that each Clerk would circulate the most recent Trustee Minutes, to provide a better insight into the various ways we conduct business and assist with learning from each other. Tony Ellis agreed to circulate a checklist he has used to plan Trustee business. There is to be a further meeting on 2nd November. We note that there have been similar meetings between Area Meeting Treasurers and the GM Treasurer.

10. Preparations for COP26

Michael Hutchinson has reported that the events at Glasgow Meeting House during COP26 have been widely publicised and are attracting considerable interest. A team from BYM will attend and Woodbrooke is running the epilogue each evening.

11. Revision of Quaker Faith and Practice

We have had a discussion about chapter 15 of Quaker faith and practice on Trusteeship. We feel that the existing text sets out well the general principles including the relationship between

Trustees and the wider group of Friends. We acknowledge the need for a broad view of stewardship that goes beyond matters of finance and property.

We think it important that any new text allows for experiments in organisational structures that are emerging from the Simpler Meetings Project. There is a need to allow for evolving relationships such as that between General Meeting for Scotland and its Area Meetings.

We will have more detailed comments once we have seen the new draft which we understand will separate general principles from more specific supporting documents. It will be important that the language of any new documents is accessible in its description of the Trustee role.

12. Concern of NSAQM regarding simplification.

General Meeting appointed Lesley Richards from Meeting of Friends in Wales to lead a small group looking at this issue. Lesley has consulted widely with Friends in Scotland and has now drafted a report for consideration by the Group and other selected Friends. It is likely to take some time to finalise the recommendations of the Group.

13. Minutes of Parliamentary Engagement Working Group

We have received the minutes of the PEWG on 25th May, 20th July and 15th September.

14. GM Safeguarding Co-ordinator

We note that the GM Policy on Safeguarding requires the appointment of a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy Co-ordinator. At present the post of Co-ordinator is held on an acting basis by Madeleine Harding without formal appointment and the post of Deputy is vacant. We would ask GM to consider formally appointing to both posts.

15. Appointment of trustees

We note that Michael Hutchinson, Catherine Brown and Derek McLean will complete their second triennium as a trustee in December. We thank them for their contribution to the Trustee body over the last six years.

16. Dates of future meetings

Tuesday 22nd February 2022 in Edinburgh and by Zoom and Tuesday 17th May 2022 in Glasgow and by Zoom.

Martin Burnell
Clerk