

Report by Nominations Committee

The task of Nominations Committee is to recommend to Local Meeting the names of Members and Attenders to fill specific posts or to join committees for which the Meeting has responsibility.

In the past twelve months, the Committee has met four times and made thirty-odd nominations. The Committee consists of: Andrew Carter, Chris Hughes, Terry Kay, Phyllis King, Chris Moore, Roger Pierce, Alison Ralph and Christine Wilde.

The Committee has no Convenor. Instead, the Committee has agreed to adopt the business model of 'distributed (shared) leadership'. In this arrangement, Alison Ralph issues the agenda, Chris Hughes chairs the meeting, Terry Kay prepares the minutes, and Roger Pierce presents the annual report. Alison keeps and maintains the large table of members and appointments showing who holds and has previously held appointments. All members of the Committee share the task of individually approaching Members and Attenders considered best to fill vacancies.

Appointments normally consist of two consecutive terms of three years. So the Committee must also ask those people whose first term of office is due to expire whether they wish to serve for a second term. Significantly, whatever (Quakerly) reservations they may have had about first accepting office, very few decline to serve a second term.

The Committee adopt various criteria to identify those considered most suitable to fill new vacancies. These criteria are: technical ability (for some specific posts); previous experience; likely availability; contribution to the team mix of skills, personalities, age and gender. The Committee agrees a short-list for each appointment, precedence and allocates Committee members the tasks of discreetly approaching candidates. Email has made considerably easier and quicker the task of co-ordinating the approaches.

Friargate has, by comparison with other Local Meetings locally or even nationally, a very large membership. So the nomination process should be easier in terms of the larger pool from which to fish for candidates. But this does not appear to be the case. Instead, a small number of stalwarts seem to fill posts in one committee after another or two at a time. The potential of many others may therefore not properly utilised because that potential remains unknown. A voluntary register of Members' and Attenders' interests, qualifications and experiences is therefore desirable. Local Meeting is therefore invited to discuss the appropriateness and frequency of a voluntary register, and agree responsibility for collection and oversight.

'Technical offices' – like Treasurer - are the most difficult to fill because even those Members considered eminently suitable by Nominations Committee are often very wary of accepting responsible appointments for which they feel that they lack the qualifications or experience. So Nominations Committee has invited a Member of New Earswick Meeting with specialist experience of training Members to share their approach at our meeting on 7 December.

Roger Pierce on behalf of Nominations Committee