



YORK AREA QUAKER MEETING

Minutes of a meeting of Trustees

held at 1400 on 13th June 2021 by zoom

1. Trustees Keith Barnes, Ros Batchelor, Nick Folkard, John Guest (Clerk) Brian Jardine, Lesley O'Neal, Roger Pierce, Jo Reilly, Geof Sewell

Prevented Barbara Penny

Invited Barbara Windle (AM Clerk). Eleanor Rhodes (AM admin assistant) Michael Sturge (assistant to the AM Treasurer) Lois Folkard (AM safeguarding coordinator)

2. Quorum 9 Trustees being present our meeting is quorate

2.1. Conflicts of Interest No conflicts of interest were declared

3. Minutes of trustee meeting held on zoom, 14th February 2021 were agreed at the meeting, have been circulated and signed by the clerk

3.1. Matters arising All matters arising are covered below

3.2 Continuing minutes

Minute 8.1.Oct 2020 Health and Safety Policy is still work in progress. Roger Pierce and Tracey Sharp (Friargate business manager) visited Harrogate LM on June 8th. They are arranging to visit each of our meetings to discuss their local policies and practice and will report when this process is complete.

4 Matters of Report and between meeting decisions

4.1 Muriel Acomb's Legacy Trustees approved by email the proposed use of Muriel Acomb's legacy by Friargate resources committee. It is to be used for improving the internet access at Friargate.

4.2 Clarification of Trustee action on Covid pandemic As the pandemic began to impact on our affairs and lockdown rules emerged, York AQM Trustees considered how to best manage their responsibility for the additional risks. It was decided that these were best managed by each Local Meeting taking responsibility for their own meeting houses, as the considerations differ, and local members are best able to assess these.

However, it is also essential that Meetings abide by government guidelines. To assist with this, a liaison group was formed with a representative from each LM, to share information and check good practice with each other. Part of minute 5 June 2020 refers.

- We have decided to leave the question of lettings to each local meeting, provided they follow the current government guidelines, and involve local Trustees in their decisions.

We believe that this devolved approach has worked well, keeping decisions local and ensuring that all users of our buildings have been safe.

Help and guidance are available from

- Government websites
- Local authorities
- BYM website
- BYM warden's discussion group
- Tracey Sharp, Friargate business manager.

Trustees are not intending to issue their own instructions or guidance, but we ask all Meetings to ensure that their local Trustees are involved in these decisions.

4.3 The new lease for 20 Falsgrave crescent has been signed.

5 Reports

5.1 Trustee annual report and accounts. **Attachment: Trustee Annual Report and Accounts (draft). Attachment: Michael Sturge's notes.**

Michael Sturge has presented the draft accounts and some notes for our consideration. We thank him and for the huge amount of work he does on behalf of the Area Meeting.

We have approved the Trustee annual report . The accounts are in draft form and not yet signed by the Independent Examiners. If there is no significant alteration to be made before they are finally agreed by the examiner, we authorise our Treasurer and Clerk to sign these accounts and organise uploading them to the required regulators.

There will be changes to the accounts including a write-off of outstanding debts at Friargate, amounting to approx. £3,000. It is likely that the independent examination will not be complete until early autumn. It is also likely that we will receive a substantial payment from our insurers relating to our pandemic loss of income.

5.2 Property committee **Attachment: Property Committee minutes**

We thank Brian Jardine for the minutes of the AM property committee. We approve the suggested 50% reduction in the property quota for 2021.

The matter of disabled access at Harrogate meeting house has been raised as a health and safety issue. We ask Harrogate premises committee and AM property committee to examine this as a matter of priority.

6 Policies

6.1 Safeguarding **Attachment: York AM Safeguarding policy**

Lois and Nick Folkard have presented the newly revised AM safeguarding policy. This rewritten policy is substantially based on the policy which Quaker Life (QL) are recommending be adopted by all of BYM's constituent meetings and organisations. Whilst it is possible that some parts of this may be revised this year by QL, we agree to the adoption of this policy and ask Lois and Nick to undertake the work involved in its implementation. This will necessitate some changes to the way we appoint Friends and staff to particular positions.

6.2 Obtaining Professional Advice **Attachment: Obtaining Professional Advice**

We thank Roger Pierce for his work on this paper and agree to its recommendations

6.3 Approval and authorisation of payments **Attachment: Approval and Authorisation of payments.**

We thank Keith Barnes for preparing an update to the AM policy on approval and authorisation of payments. We approve this policy which all our LMs and AM itself will now follow.

7. **Substantive Matters Attachment: AM Records Attachment: AM archive report**

7.1 Records and Archiving

Geof Sewell, and the ad hoc group he assembled, have produced a table which clearly identifies the Area Meeting records, which ones should be retained, where they should be kept, how long they should be kept for, which should be prepared for permanent archiving and which can be discarded. We thank those involved with this work for their significant contribution to our record keeping. We accept the systematic approach as outlined in the table (appendix A to D) as the basis for our record keeping. It is clear that further amendment to the table will be needed, both for items not yet covered and for changing circumstances.

Ros Batchelor has also produced a most useful report, outlining the work she has undertaken as AM archivist, including a significant step forward in establishing where many of the records currently are and what condition they are in. She also reports on the first steps which have been taken to form a "digital archive" of all the AM documents. We thank her for this work.

We ask the Trustee Safeguarding, Data and Records committee (Geof Sewell, Nick Folkard, Ros Batchelor and other Friends they may co-opt) to continue working on this scheme, developing and implementing related procedures and ensuring that the AM archivist role is well integrated. We also ask them to begin the work of implementing the actions proposed in Appendix E. Where differences of opinion still exist about the ways in which this is to be done, we ask them to resolve these matters within the committee.

We are clear that more work needs to be done. We agree with the general approach of this policy but not all the detailed recommendations.

8. **Broader subjects**

8.1 The Clerk continues to be very active in contacts with other Clerks of (or to) Trustees. Next week he will be attending, by invitation, the Trustee meeting of Pickering and Hull AQM. He will send you a brief report on what he learns.

The Clerks of Trustees group from across the country held a zoom meeting with Paul Parker (Recording Clerk). Trustees might be interested in a slide he showed us, illustrating what is coming our way. **Attachment: What's coming down the track**

9. Trustees only

9.1 All Friends except for Trustees were asked to leave before this item.

Employment committee minutes. **Attachment: Employment committee minutes.**

Mistakes having been made in the administration of the pension of Paul Whitmore (Harrogate Warden) John Guest is attempting to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion. He is liaising with Paul and Tom Holland, the convenor of the Harrogate premises committee. He consults with the AM treasurer. There will be some expense involved for the AM, probably in the region of £500.

We accept the recommendations in the Employment Committee minutes. We ask the Friargate business group to ensure that there is sufficient capacity within the Friargate office and its staffing. If necessary, they should apply to Area Meeting for additional funding.

Roger Pierce has raised the question of the pay and title of the Harrogate warden, Paul Whitmore. We approve his suggestion on pay and on title, subject to consultation with Paul.

9.2 Future clerkship. John Guest will be ending his service on December 31st 2022. Is any current Trustee prepared to succeed? If not, I will impress upon AM noms and AM itself that it would be highly desirable if a Trustee prepared to take on the clerkship were appointed before the middle of 2022 so that an orderly handover might be achieved.

John Guest, Clerk of Trustees
13.06.2021