**Quakers in Yorkshire**

**Group to Reinvigorate and Simplify Structures and Processes (GRASP)**

**Minutes of meeting held on 16 March 2020 at Carlton Hill Meeting House, Leeds**

**Present:** Jim Ledwidge (BWY), Tracey Martin (Leeds), David Olver (C&K & Convenor), Rosie Roberts (S&B), Barbara Windle (QiY Trustees)

**Prevented:**  David Bunney (CY), Alison Clarke (York), Richard Hawkes (Leeds Alternate)

**We began our meeting with worship.**

**1. Agenda**

We agree the agenda for today.

**2. Membership**

Steve Hallett has asked Pickering & Hull AM to release him due to pressure of work. We thank him for his positive contributions to the work of the Group.

We note that Rosie Roberts is moving to York and that Sheffield & Balby AM are seeking a replacement. We agree to co-opt Rosie to the Group.

**3. Minutes**

The minutes of our meeting held on 30 December 2019 have been circulated.

**4. 2 March meeting**

The notes of our meeting held on 2 March with Paul Parker (Recording Clerk) and Sandra Berry (Director of Woodbrooke) are received.

This was a productive meeting and we were able to offer advice on the locations of Local Development Workers and a possible Hub.

**5. Minutes received from area and local meetings**

Minutes have been received from:

York AM held 11 January 2020

Sheffield & Bably AM held 12 January 2020

Brighouse West Yorkshire AM held 19 January 2020

Craven & Keighley AM held 8 February 2020

Leeds AM held 9 February 2020, incorporating minutes from Ilkley LM, Rawdon LM and Roundhay LM

Bradford LM held 1 March 2002

Tabled today:

Settle LM held 1 March 2020

Rawdon LM discussion held 8 March 2020

Brighouse West Yorkshire AM held 8 March 2020

**6. Feedback on the reaction in area and local meetings**

We have reported on each of our areas and heard how local meetings are approaching the issues.

We are pleased to hear that our Interim Report has been welcomed and that there seems to be a general recognition of the need to simplify in order to free up resources for worship and witness. The rate of progress is variable between local meeting. Some meetings are understandably very engaged with other matters, particularly the Climate Emergency, and they do not see GRASP as top priority.

We note that a number of meetings are looking at the future of eldership and oversight and how to care for Friends, both spiritually and pastorally. Sharing the two roles is being actively considered.

We have discussed the role of property and note that there have been relatively few comments on the resources taken up with property management. However we have a lot of meeting houses in Yorkshire so that it must take up significant resource.

We conclude that the timescales for considering GRASP are likely to take up most of this year, but that this could be positive if it engages more Friends and leads to Friends being more enthusiastic about change.

**7. Online survey**

We thank Tim Herrick (Sheffield & Balby AM) and Rosie for creating an online survey to enable Friends to respond to the questions in our Interim Report. The survey has been circulated to Sheffield & Balby members.

We endorse the survey and encourage its use by Friends in other area meetings. The primary purpose is so that Friends can engage with the issues before taking part in meetings which are discussing reinvigoration and simplification.

We have discussed how to deal with the responses from the online survey. We ask that responses (when complete) are sent to all GRASP members. If necessary, David is willing to process the results.

**8. Factual information**

We receive information on (a) the roles in AMs and (b) on trends in membership. This has been compiled by David and is an expanded and updated version of the information circulated last September. It will be included in our main report.

We think it would be useful to add an overview of property and also a summary of financial resources in the area meetings and Quakers in Yorkshire (all of which should be publicly available).

**9. Work to be done in next phase of GRASP**

We have discussed the work to be done in the next phase of GRASP.

It had been originally intended that we would now be producing a final report but it is clear from reaction to our Interim Report and Consultation that Friends wish for more time to consider the options for reinvigoration and simplification.

We agree to compile, in the next few months, a report which collates our current thinking on options. It will also include copies of minutes received and factual information.

We agree that there may be a role for us to be pro-active in helping Friends find their way through the options.

**10. Date of next meeting**

We agree to meet virtually on Tuesday 21 July 2020 from 10.00 to 11.30.

We ask Tracey to make the technical arrangements.

David Olver

16 March 2020