**Quakers in Yorkshire**

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

**Minutes of meeting held on 25 September 2019 at Carlton Hill Meeting House, Leeds**

**Present:** Alison Clarke (York), Steve Hallett (P&H), Richard Hawkes (Leeds Alternate), Jim Ledwidge (BWY), Tracey Martin (Leeds), David Olver (C&K & Convenor), Rosie Roberts (S&B), Barbara Windle (QiYT)

**We began our meeting with worship.**

**1. Agenda**

We agree the agenda for today.

**1. Membership**

We are sorry to hear that Sarah Myers has had to withdraw from the Group due to pressure of work. We thank her for her contributions. We ask David to contact Central Yorkshire AM to ask them to find a replacement.

We welcome Alison and Richard to their first meeting.

**2. Review of information which will aid our task.**

We have reviewed the information which will aid our task. We receive two papers from David on the National Initiatives which are relevant to our task and a summary of Quakers in Yorkshire and meetings within the region.

We agree as follows:

1. To compile details of the volunteer roles in each of our AMs.
2. To compile details of the paid roles in each of our AMs.
3. To analyse the QiY membership statistics to see if we can find patterns.
4. To learn from the outcomes of the relevant BYM Legacy Funded Projects so as to inform our thinking.
5. To see if other religious groups have lessons for us.

We agree to seek informal contacts with the area meetings surrounding Quakers in Yorkshire and make them aware of our initiatives. We hope to learn and share experiences. [David and Rosie will discuss how to do this].

We must always keep in the front of our mind that it is the spiritual elements which are the core of Quakerism.

**3. Open exploration**

Tracey has led us in an open-exploration on what enables us to be, live and thrive as Quakers.

In pairs, we tried to summarise in a few words the features of what is central to us as Quakers.

We thank Tracey for facilitating this stimulating exercise and ask her to collate the responses.

**4. What we want GRASP to achieve**

We have reviewed the aims of this Group as expressed in the Guidelines compiled by Barbara.

We agree that our aims are to think broadly, radically, laterally, as led. This thinking may include, but not be confined to the following areas.

* Organising care for the spiritual health of meetings, such as eldership, oversight, nominations, welcoming practices and scope for sharing ideas between AMs.
* Streamlining of administrative tasks within AMs, sharing tasks between neighbouring AMs where appropriate, or employing paid staff.
* Making recommendations for the practical implementation of proposed changes and the next steps to be taken.

We have discussed the assumption that the Quaker Business Method is known and used in our meetings. We hear that there are some Friends who do not see it as a central part of Quakerism and do not understand the spiritual core of our business method. We will return to this matter.

**5. Schedule**

We note the schedule which we are due to meet of producing a progress report within 4 months (i.e. end of December 2019) and a paper for discussion within 6 months (i.e. by end February 2020).

**6. Dates of future meetings**

We agree to meet on the following dates at Carlton Hill Meeting House:

Wednesday 30 October, 09.30 to 12.00

Saturday 30 November, 10.30 to 13.00

We expect to hold a virtual meeting in December.

**7. Any other business**

(a) We note the BYM call for expressions of interest in the new meeting-centred approach (leaflet titled *Experiments in Faith*). We hear that some AMs are interested in responding. We hope that there can be a QiY response from QiY Trustees.

(b) David reported that he has submitted a short piece on GRASP for the October QiY newsletter.

David Olver

25 September 2019