

Quakers in Yorkshire Trustees

Minutes for meeting held over Zoom on Saturday 19 February 2022

Present: Gavin Burnell, Pat Gerwat, Peter Jarman, David Olver, Chris Petrie, Digby Swift, Richard Vesey.

Prevented: David Bunney, Ruth McTighe.

Quaker Faith & Practice 10.04 was read in our opening worship.

QYT-2022-02-01. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2021 have been circulated and received today.

QYT-2022-02-02. Trustees

(a) David Bower and George Penaluna retired at the end of 2021. We thank them for their service.

(b) In October 2021, QiY appointed Peter Jarman (York AM) and Richard Vesey (Craven & Keighley AM). We welcome them to this meeting.

(c) In January 2022, QiY appointed Ruth McTighe (Central Yorkshire AM). Ruth will continue with being the lead Safeguarding coordinator. QiY minute 9c(ii) reads as follows:

Ruth's appointment supersedes the appointment made in July 2021 for the same office and the same period of time but in a different capacity. We note that when a new Safeguarding Coordinator appointment is made in the future, then such appointment would also be as a Trustee of Quakers in Yorkshire if the Friend thus appointed was not already a trustee.

(d) Arthur Pritchard has ended his service as Co-Clerk and David Bunney succeeds him.

(e) The current trustees and periods of service are listed in paper QYT-2022-02-02, noting that there are vacancies from Brighouse West Yorkshire AM and Pickering & Hull AM.

QYT-2022-02-03. Clerk's Report

We receive paper QYT-2022-02-03 with the Clerk's report. This covers the following items: QiY Co-Clerks, October 2021 and January 2022 Quarterly Meetings, Racial Justice, Easter Settlement, Outreach Projects Committee, Coronavirus pandemic, Quakers in Britain Yorkshire Centre, Youth Development worker, Local Development worker, Reinvigoration and Simplification – GRASP, New Principal at The Mount.

QYT-2022-02-04. Youth Development Worker

(a) Yorkshire Youth Development Worker

We are pleased that BYM has appointed Jo Baynham as the Yorkshire Youth Development Worker. He started in January and introduced himself at the January quarterly meeting.

We thank Pat Gerwat for represented Trustee in the recruitment process.

Jo Baynham will be supported by a group consisting of Jude Acton, Bronwen Alty, Liz Schweiger, Digby Swift and Clare Wigzell. We are glad to support the group and hope that the work will be successful. We ask the Support Group to make sure that the work assists young people in all parts of Quakers in Yorkshire.

We will hope to facilitate advise and inclusion through the quarterly newsletter and other means.

(b) Financing of the Yorkshire YDW

Last year, we gave BYM the residue of the Adult School Union Fund (£26,024.11). This means that BYM has sufficient money to fund the current Youth Development Worker post to September 2022.

The BYM fund-raising team have continued to fund-raise in Yorkshire. Area Meetings have been approached asking for support. The response so far has been very positive and there are sufficient funds for at least another full year after September 2022, and hopefully for three years.

The effort by the BYM fund-raising team has demonstrated that Yorkshire Friends wish to continue this vital work for the future of Yorkshire Quakerism.

QYT-2022-02-05. Request from Central Yorkshire AM for exploration of merging charitable functions

We receive a letter from Central Yorkshire AM, dated 5 January 2022 asking us to explore the possibility of them merging their charitable functions with QiY trustees. The letter and background information are contained in paper QYT-2022-02-05.

The letter quotes Minute 9 of Central Yorkshire AM, held on 14 November 2021:

Minute 9 Report on the GRASP workshop on the future of CYAM

Ruth McTighe presented this report which is attached to the minutes. We have considered the suggestion that QIY trustees might be the umbrella organisation for all area meeting charitable functions in Yorkshire. This would leave the area meeting free to concentrate on spiritual development and active witness by reducing the demands of governance and legal compliance. We are keen to explore the options with QIY trustees. The theme of supporting the spiritual life and witness of area meeting will be on next week's agenda for Elders and Overseers. We have discussed some ideas for developing the life of the area meeting. A minute from Wakefield local meeting is attached. We ask Ruth McTighe and David Bower to write to the clerk of QIY trustees to explore the possibilities.

The background information notes that area meetings are the primary meetings for church affairs in BYM, whilst regional meetings are outside the BYM administrative structure. Thus, in principle it is up to area meetings to determine how to organise

their business. The charitable objectives of QiY and registered area meetings are very similar so QiY could, in principle, take on some of the charitable functions.

We have considered how to respond to the request.

We note that other parts of BYM are exploring sharing trustee functions, including London, Scotland and Wales.

We are aware that it is becoming increasingly difficult for smaller area meetings to deal with the requirements for legal and financial arrangements.

There are some attractions to the idea of QiY Trustees taking on some of the charitable functions of an AM, but that will mean a radical reorganisation of how we work. We currently do not have the capacity because of limited volunteer time.

We ask the Clerk, together with Digby Swift and Pat Gerwat to discuss with Central Yorkshire AM the options available to help solve their needs.

QYT-2022-02-06. Safeguarding

We welcome Liz Schweiger (QiY Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator) to this meeting.

(a) Further to minute QYT-2021-09-06, we have had an update on safeguarding developments since September.

(b) We receive a draft Gender Diversity Policy (paper QYT-2022-02-04). This has been prepared by our Safeguarding Coordinators, the Under 19s Coordinating Group and consultation with Holiday School and Junior Holidays.

We have discussed the document. We note that there are really two parts – the policy itself and the implementation of the policy. The policy should be less time dependent but it is likely that the implementation will need to be seen as current guidelines which will change with time. It is also likely that there will always be some Friends who are not happy with the policy. The best practice is that we listen sensitively to concerns.

We agree to adopt the document which will be called Policy and Guidelines for Supporting Gender Diverse Young People.

We agree to review the Policy and Guidelines annually, starting in June 2023.

We endorse the following statements from the Policy:

“As a Quaker body we are committed to our testimony of equality and believe there is that of God in everyone. We accept everybody irrespective of how they choose to identify and present themselves”. (Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017 minute 38).

We accept everybody irrespective of how they choose to identify and present themselves. All young Quakers have an equal right to participate in Quaker events and experience belonging in their Quaker community. It is important to ensure young people are not prevented from participating based on their gender needs.

We thank all Friends involved in developing this policy.

QYT-2022-02-07. Implementing GRASP recommendations and supporting the Co-Clerks

Further to minute QYT-2021-09-07 we receive paper QYT-2022-02-06 on how to implement the GRASP recommendations and also how to support the QiY Co-Clerks. This is particularly needed if the quarterly newsletter is to continue.

We agree to try to find a person, or persons, to do the work. Because the amount of work will depend on the experience of those taking on the task, the time involved is uncertain. We agree to offer an honorarium, the amount to be agreed by the Clerk and Treasurer. We agree to budget up to £1,000 this year.

We ask the Clerk to take the matter forward and advertise the role by emailing meetings.

QYT-2022-02-08. Finance matters

(a) We receive the Treasurers report (paper QYT-2022-02-07a) in which he states that the financial position is sound with about £973,465 in total investments (most of which is in restricted, or permanent endowment funds). The investments increased in value last year by about 12.3%. However, the trend is downwards with less income and higher costs.

We thank the Treasurer for carefully preparing the accounts and financial papers for this meeting.

(b) We receive the draft annual accounts for 2021 and details of unrestricted, restricted and endowment funds (paper QYT-2022-02-07b). Income and expenditure were low last year due to the consequences of the pandemic.

The Clerk will draft an annual report and circulate to Trustees for comments. Then the accounts will be sent to the Examiner.

(c) We have reviewed the impact of the annual accounts for 2021 on the Reserves Policy. Although the application of the policy indicates that we have substantially more reserves than necessary, we decide to make no changes as both 2020 and 2021 were exceptional years.

(d) We receive a copy of the letter sent by the Clerk and Treasurer to AM Treasurers regarding the amount needed to fund QiY activities in 2022. (paper QYT-2022-02-07c).

QYT-2022-02-09. Independent Examiner

Minute QiY 19/07/07 of Quakers in Yorkshire, held on 20 July 2019 appointed Crozier Jones to examine the accounts and agreed that trustees could “appoint for a further term if appropriate”.

The work of Crozier Jones has been satisfactory so we appoint them to examine the 2021 accounts.

QYT-2022-02-10. Investment matters

(a) We receive the minutes of a meeting of the Investment Group held on 9 November 2021 referring to a meeting with Rathbone Greenbank held on 26 October 2021 (paper QYT-2022-02-08a).

(b) We approve an update to the Investment Policy to include a reference to an acceptable level of risk by adding:

Trustees accept that all investments carry a level of risk. Having regard to the need to both protect the value of the funds and to receive income to fund expenditure, trustees agree that a medium level of risk is appropriate. The aim of our investment should be to generate a return over a long term of about 3% above the rate of inflation. This approach will mean that funds are invested with a substantial exposure to equities with the consequent fluctuations in their value.

(c) We agree to the recommendation of the Investment Group that the funds of the General Charity and the Linton Taylor Bequest (both relatively small) are invested by Rathbone Greenbank in one of their Unitised Ethical Portfolio Funds. We ask the Treasurer to work out timing and details with Rathbone Greenbank.

(d) We receive an Investment Report summary for 2021 (paper QYT-2022-02-08b).

(e) We appoint Richard Vesey to join the Investment Group.

QYT-2022-02-11. Grant applications

(a) Brighthouse Burial Ground

We have received an application for work to Brighthouse Burial Ground. We are reminded that when QiY took over the Buildings Fund we inherited an obligation to pay towards the maintenance work at this burial ground. We agree to award a grant from the Buildings Fund of £700 for 2022.

(b) Huddersfield Meeting House

We have received an application to improve the ventilation in Huddersfield Meeting House. We agree to award a grant from the Forrest Fund of £1,500.

(c) Individual Grant

We have received an application to assist a Friend to meet the cost of necessary work to an old and damp house. We agree to offer a grant from the General Charity of £700, subject to the rest of the cost being met by other means.

QYT-2022-02-11. Dates of next meetings

We have already agreed to meet on:

Saturday 18 June 2022

Saturday 17 September 2022.

We hope to be able to meet at Carlton Hill Meeting House.

David Olver
19 February 2022