

Southern East Anglia Quaker Meeting at Earls Colne, 12.07.2015

Representatives

Clacton-on-Sea - Hazel Jones, Karl Sage

Colchester – Robert Parkes, Carol Holding, Tim Holding, Jacky Hall

Sudbury – Betty Scrivener, Henry Ruse, Jane Carter

Present were 23 Friends, including 2 Attenders.

2015/35 Friends being met in the presence of God, Advices and Queries 19 was read.

2015/36 Membership matters

2015/37 Appointments

a) Triennial Appointments

AM Nominations Committee - Peter Whiteley comes to the end of his term on the Nominations Committee at the end of September 2015 . We ask Colchester LM to bring forward the name of a Friend for this committee.

AM Contributions Secretary

Further to Minute 2015/28, Nominations Committee, after consulting Trustees, proposes a different way of working to fulfil the tasks previously undertaken by the AM Assistant Treasurer (Contributions). The proposed job description divides the work between a Friend appointed to the role of Contributions Secretary and a bookkeeper employed to deal with the necessary banking tasks. The Contributions Secretary would be responsible for distributing the Annual Appeal for contributions to support Quaker work and for liaising with the bookkeeper. The bookkeeper would be paid by the hour, currently expected to be approximately £20 per hour.

Nominations Committee brings forward the name of Carol Holding as Contributions Secretary. This name being acceptable to the meeting, we appoint Carol to serve in this role from September 2015 - end August 2018. We agree to appoint Sue Dowden as bookkeeper for this work.

Rosalind Kaye came to the end of her term in this role last August. She has managed this year's Annual appeal for Quaker work, and we thank her for her service to the Meeting.

Newsletter Editor

Valerie Graves has continued to edit the AM newsletter; in December 2014 she came to the end of her 7th triennium; in other words, she has been the editor for over 21 years. We thank Valerie for her unstinting service in this role, and suggest that she continue for as long as she feels able.

We also thank John Kay for his work in support of the editor, as graphic designer and printer, over many years. The newsletter is an invaluable resource for Friends across the Area Meeting and serves to keep us connected with one another and with Quakers beyond our Area Meeting.

Greenwood Trust

Silva Garton-Rogers has asked to be released from the role of trustee for the Greenwood Trust. Nominations Committee brings forward the name of Carol Holding for this role. This name being acceptable to the meeting, we appoint Carol to serve from July 2015 to end June 2018.

Richard Waynforth Trust

Further to Minute 2015/29, Nominations Committee, were asked to bring forward the name of a trustee for the Richard Waynforth Trust, in consultation with AM Trustees. We appoint Robert Crowley to serve from July 2015 to end June 2018.

Archivist Frances Tebbutt will complete a triennium as Archivist in September and is willing to serve another triennium. We reappoint Fran to serve until end Sept 2018.

Trustees

By the end of this year, Hazel Jones comes to the end of her term as Trustee, and there is another vacancy created by the appointment of an existing Trustee, Tom Tebbutt, as Treasurer. We ask Nominations Committee to bring forward the names of two Friends to replace them.

Assistant Treasurer We ask Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend to serve as Assistant Treasurer, who would take care of accounts for the smaller Local Meetings ready for presentation to the bookkeepers each month.

b) Representatives

QPSW Conference 30 Oct - 1 Nov 2015 at Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick We agree that we wish to send two representatives to QPSW Conference and to pay their expenses. We ask Nominations Committee to find names of Friends to represent us and for the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

OCEA/QPSW biennial conference

AM Nominations Committee invites Friends to express their interest to Nominations Committee in attending the Quaker Council for European Affairs and Quaker Peace and Social Witness biennial conference, to be held in Belgium 4-6 December. The deadline for registration is 31 July. We agree to pay the costs and expenses for a Friend to attend on our behalf. We ask the clerk to proceed with the arrangements.

2015/38 Trustees Report and Accounts for 2014

(a) Presentation of Trustees Report

Hazel Jones, clerk to Trustees, presented the annual Trustees report. We note that this will be the last occasion on which Hazel will present the annual report as Clerk of Trustees, and we thank her for her service in this role.

We heard how Trustees measured the work of the AM in terms of the seven priorities in the 2009-2014 Framework for Action, as described in the report.

We heard how the appointment of professional bookkeepers in August 2014, whilst leading to an increase in overheads in the short term, is expected to reduce in the longer term the cost of the annual examination, streamline our financial reporting, and simplify the task for Treasurers, so that it may be easier to fill these posts in the future.

Friends' attention is drawn to the explanation of how previously restricted funds will soon, in order to conform to the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice, be defined as unrestricted. Trustees plan to move the previously restricted funds resulting from John Savage, Tony Wheeler and other smaller Sudbury legacies to unrestricted funds and will treat them as a designated Sudbury Legacies Fund.

We note the point raised in the report, that finding members and attenders to fulfil key roles, especially in relation to financial matters, has been a challenge and, if this trend continues, we will have to question the capacity of the AM to continue to function as a viable Area Meeting.

(b) Presentation of 2014 Accounts

Tom Tebbutt, Treasurer, presented the accounts for the year ending December 2014. He reminded us how difficult the year had been, from the point of view of recording and managing our accounts, due particularly to the tragic and untimely death of Roy Prockter, who was then AM Treasurer.

Tom reported that the total income for 2014 was £86,100, and the total outgoings £138,600, resulting in an overall difference of £52,500. We understand that this was a planned overspend in line with our discernment process identifying the need to maintain our meeting houses to a good standard. We heard how our discernment process moved on to the next phase, and as a result we began looking for ways to use our money for good, in line with our charitable objectives.

We thank Tom and the LM Treasurers for these accounts and for their ongoing work.

We have received and accepted the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014 prepared by Whittle and Co, independent examiners, to be signed by the Treasurer and the Clerk to Trustees at their next meeting with Whittles.

We agree to retain Whittles as our independent examiners for the coming year.

We recognise the massive workload undertaken by the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Trustees on our behalf, maintaining the functioning of the Area Meeting, for which we give our thanks. We thank Hazel and Tom for presenting the report and accounts, which will be uploaded to the Area Meeting website and are available to any Friend on request. The summary reports will be attached to these minutes and appear in the newsletter.

2015/39 Discerning our purposes: Glebe House update

Further to Minute 2015/30, we have been in communication with Glebe House over our decision to make a donation of £30,000 to them for the year 2015-16, and with a view to

renewing that donation over the next two years. Peter Clarke, Director of Glebe House, wrote to the Area Meeting to express his thanks. He wrote:

I would like to thank the Area Meeting for their generous donation. It is a real boost and affirmation of the work we are undertaking. As the Meeting is aware the transition support for the young men we work with is an area we are keen to develop. It was identified as a key factor in our recent outcome research findings. All Care Leavers face difficult times and the current services generally available are far from able to meet need. This is further magnified for the young men with the complex needs we work with.

The Trust has been working over recent times to further the understanding and relationship between the Therapeutic Community model we work to and Quaker values. Placing these two considerations together led us to a natural conclusion of revisiting the Circles of Support and Accountability model that Friends were so influential in bringing to the UK. We are hopeful that this project will consolidate the work and progress of the cohort completing the Glebe House programme and also begin to address the issues faced by all those leaving the care system. This is a project that seeks to meet immediate need and also lay foundations for addressing wider issues.

I believe it was a real challenge in faith for Trustees to make the step to develop this project by underwriting the cost through both an increase in fees and with our reserves. This generous donation is therefore gratefully received and significantly eases the pressure inherent in that decision. That is much appreciated. If there is anything the Meeting would like us to offer please do not hesitate to contact me.

We ask our clerk to confirm with Glebe House our wish that we be kept informed on a regular basis of how the Circles project develops. If possible, we would like to hear how our donation has been used. We would welcome information from Glebe House about how it plans for the Circles project to be sustained into the future. This could inform our own future discernment about support of alternative projects.

2015/40 Greenwood Trust

Greenwood Trust trustees are inviting the constituent meetings served by the trust to share in providing for educational support to children and young people under 25 who are in need of support. We heard that the Greenwood Trust has an income which is too small to allow it to satisfactorily support the children and young people eligible to receive funding help.

We readily accept our responsibility to support the educational needs of our young people, as far as we are able. We have funds to do this, thanks to several legacies. We look forward to increased liaison between our Overseers, our appointed trustees to the Greenwood Trust, and the young people concerned, so that we can direct young people to appropriate sources of funds and help reduce requests to the Greenwood Trust from young people in our meeting.

We agree that we do not require Greenwood Trust funds at present but can review this if the need arises.

2015/41 Meeting for Sufferings report

Robert Parkes is our appointed representative to Meeting for Sufferings (MfS) and he attended his first meeting on 4th July. He reported that MfS has been asked to take action on the big issues identified at Yearly Meeting in May, such as social inequality, social injustice, and housing as a tested concern. These are complicated, interconnected issues, often exacerbated by climate change. There are no easy solutions but Quakers are doing what they can in the knowledge that we can make a difference.

The concern for refugees is especially pressing. Quakers in this country and in Europe are on the case, in collaboration with others. In the meantime, we are urged to challenge the rhetoric around migration – a rhetoric which gives licence to politicians to introduce policies based on exclusion rather than being human-centred.

Robert also gave news of a conference being organized by the Quaker Housing Trust to further explore housing as a tested concern. This is likely to be later in the year and we will look out for details.

Robert's report will appear in the August newsletter and on the AM website and is attached to these minutes.

2015/42 Area Meetings in 2016

We ask LMs to consider the following dates and locations for Area Meetings for Church Affairs and to report back to AM in September:

Sundays:

10 January - Colchester, 13 March - Clacton, 8 May - Sudbury, 10 July - Earls Colne,

11 September Colchester, 20 November - Colchester (3rd Sunday due to Sale in Colchester)

2015/43 Welcome to Quakers folders

Further to Minute 2015/34, we heard from John Kay that he was unable to produce cost-effective folders similar to the London Friends "Welcome to Quakers" folders. The clerk reported that she is in discussion with Jen Larner, clerk of Ipswich and Diss Area Meeting, with a view to sharing the cost between the AMs of producing a larger quantity of folders, thus reducing the unit cost. Jen is going to get two further quotations and will confirm that the AM would like to proceed.

We ask our clerk to take this forward and to report back in September.

Signed,

Alison Parkes

Alison Parkes

Clerk