

Report and proposal to Colchester Quaker Meeting re. Mulanje Hospital, Malawi

~ Rod Usher 18th January, 2017

Background: At a recent Business Meeting Friends heard a description of a thriving hospital in Malawi. David King explained that his daughter Isobel was currently a doctor in the hospital, which was in need of support. The gathered Meeting hoped that consideration would be given to this request from a person actively working in Malawi, and who was known to several members of the Meeting. The Medical Director of the Hospital is a Quaker, although the hospital itself is supported by the Church of Scotland, and several missionary societies.

2. A meeting was convened by Rosalind Kaye, to which Phyl Reid, Martin Raynor and Rod Usher were appointed.

3. Both Martin and Rod researched the Hospital, via the impressive website, and derived a clear impression of the well organised and effective provision for a large area in south-east Malawi. In addition, current information has been obtained of projects which the hospital community is hoping to develop. The Accounts for 2016 are given in full on the website. This level of transparency was welcomed. The hospital is well supported by the government of Malawi, the Scottish Government and several missionary societies. It is clear that there are also many substantial individual donors from overseas.

4. After studying the current information on the hospital and its aspirations the above group make the following recommendations:

- that Colchester Quakers should make a grant to the hospital to be used at the discretion of the Medical Director
- that the Meeting should invite the hospital to select a project, over a three year period, which Colchester Quakers could support
- that a preference should be stated by Colchester Friends that the funds could be used for a project with long term consequences, such as described by the Director as 'sustainable livelihoods projects', which would probably include improved nutrition in the area.
- a project of this nature would involve the development of transferable skills, with lasting benefits to individuals and communities.

5. Sums involved:

We suggest that Colchester Quakers could donate £3,000 in the first instance followed by £2,000 for a further two years. (A total of £7,000 over three years.) We are confident that Dr Isobel King would report on the project when she returns to England.

6 . Area Meeting:

The group is aware that Area Meeting is also looking to support projects which will bring benefits to communities. Colchester Friends would recommend this request from Mulanje Hospital to Area Meeting, in session, in order that its considerable funds, already allocated for 'charitable giving', can start to work in communities which have proved an urgent need, either in this country or abroad.

(Example: The Mulanje Hospital needs sponsorship for hospital beds, for those who are unable to pay any fees for medical attention. Nobody is turned away from the hospital. A sponsored bed would cost £650 per annum, and would bring benefit to 30 people in a year. A number of beds could be sponsored in this way to bring benefit to individuals and the hospital as a whole (the general hospital currently has 200 beds).