

# Minutes of Central England Area Quaker Meeting held at Stourbridge Quaker Meeting House as a Blended Meeting on 16 October 2021

Clerk: Alison Ironside  
Assistant Clerk: Vic Grainger  
Assistant Clerk: Stella Roberts (zoom)

Elders on duty: Tricia Bradbury(STO), Ginnie Wollaston (zoom)(STO)

## 2021.078 Opening minute

We record that this is a blended Meeting facilitated by Stourbridge Meeting.

Our Meeting began with a period of silent worship during which part of § 3.05 of Quaker Faith and Practice was read:

*It is always to be recognised that, coming together with a variety of temperaments, of backgrounds, education and experience, we shall have differing contributions to make to any deliberation. It is no part of Friends' concern for truth that any should be expected to water down a strong conviction or be silent merely for the sake of easy agreement. Nevertheless we are called to honour our testimony that to every one is given a measure of the light, and that it is in the sharing of knowledge, experience and concern that the way towards unity will be found. There is need for understanding loyalty by the meeting as a whole when, after all sides of a subject have been considered, a minute is accepted as representing the discernment of the meeting.*

*Not all who attend a meeting for church affairs will necessarily speak: those who are silent can help to develop the sense of the meeting if they listen in a spirit of worship.*

## 2021.079 Representatives

The following meetings were represented here today:

BG&R; BOU; BUL; COT; COV; HAL; KIN; SEL; STO; SUT; WAL; WAR;

## 2021.080 Membership matters

### a) Transfer Out

David Sargeant (BUL) to Worcester and Shropshire AM from January 2022

### b) Accepted Out:

Kate Law-Jones (COT) by Central Lancashire Area Meeting

## 2021.081 Meeting for Sufferings Report

Claire Bowman, our representative on meeting for Sufferings, has presented her report to us.

She drew our attention to the safeguarding item, which means that BYM trustees are reviewing their relationships with all the Area Meetings.

The trustee workshops were also highlighted as they are an opportunity to put your opinion as a Quaker on the simpler meetings exploration.

We thank Claire Bowman for her report, which is filed.

## 2021.082 Trustee matters - loan to Priory Rooms

The papers relating to this matter have been before us.

Trustees have carefully considered whether they can make a loan to Priory Rooms, and have consulted with the auditors and our solicitors.

We note that this is a commercial loan, as necessitated by charity law.

We record that a loan of up to £120,000 is being made by the trustees of Central England Quakers to Priory Rooms for a term of 5 years under the Agreed Terms of the loan agreement to be signed by 2 trustees and 2 directors of Priory Rooms.

## 2021.083 Minutes Received

We have received a Minute from the meeting of BG&R Friends with the BG&R support group on 1.10.21

*It was agreed to ask AM and CEQ Trustees to support and acknowledge the group of Friends already assisting BG&R to continue in this role (acting as CEQ Elders) for the next 6 months until March 2022.*

These Friends are Anne Austin (COT), Tricia Bradbury (STO), Vic Grainger (SEL), Jane Holt (WAR), Hilary Johnson (COT), and Howard Saunders (BOU).

We agree to appoint these Friends as Elders with responsibility for Barnt Green and Redditch from now until the end of March 2022.

## 2021.084 Triennial Elders and Overseers Nominations Committee Report

Vic Grainger & Nicholas Paton Philip, the clerk and assistant clerk of this committee have spoken to the report we have before us.

We agree the following recommendations:

**1) That the Triennial Nominations Clerk and Assistant Clerk be attached to the AM E/O Support Group, to gain mutual support and experience especially in the intervening years of the triennium. Both parties to keep their original responsibilities.**

**2) In future the appointments of Elders and Overseers to be made for a term of 3 years starting from the date of appointment.** This will gradually bring Es and Os appointments into line with all the other AM appointments, and over time, will remove the need for the triennial process as such, which most LMs seem to find burdensome. There is no reason why an AM review of LM processes and roles of Es and Os cannot be undertaken at intervals, say every 3 years using the system of LM reps. This would retain the responsibility of AM for these appointments without the cumbersome nature of the process.

**3) We hope the discussion around the term 'Overseer' will continue as enjoined by Meeting for Sufferings.** We encourage all our Local Meetings to consider an alternative name to replace Overseer.

As a result of these recommendations, there will need to be a review of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Triennial committee and for the AM E/O Support Group; as well as a revision of the Triennial process and guidance documents. We ask the outgoing clerks with the incoming clerks and the Elders/Overseers Support group to revise all the relevant documents.

We thank Vic Grainger and Nicholas Paton Philip for their work over the last 4 years and for their report, which is filed. We are grateful for all our Elders and Overseers for continuing their duties over the extended triennium - a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2021.085 Nominations

Nominations committee have the following suggestions for service:

Ruth Livermore (KIN) to serve as Registering Officer from Jan 22 to Dec 24

Peter Ullathorne (COT) to serve as AM Trustee from Jan 22 to Dec 24

Robert Morris (HAL) to serve as AM Trustee and AM Treasurer Jan 22 to Dec 24

Gill Smith (WAR) to serve as AM Trustee Jan 22 to Dec 24 and Trustee Records Advisory Committee March 22 to Feb 25

John Kimberley (BUL) to serve on Trustee Employment Committee Oct 21 to Sept 24

Gillian Waddilove (COV) to serve on Trustee Employment Committee Oct 21 to Sept 24

We approve these names and appoint them accordingly and ask the Area Meeting Office Administrator to inform them and any clerks of the relevant committees.

### **Release from Service**

Anne Austin (COT) has asked to be released as a CEQ trustee and from the Trustee Employment Committee from 16 October 2021.

We agree to this request and thank her for her service and ask the Area Meeting Office Administrator to inform her.

### **2021.086**

We record that we are tabling the CEQ Trustees Annual Report and Accounts 2020. We will return to this next time.

### **2021.087 Thanks and next meeting**

We thank Stourbridge Meeting for hosting us so hospitably with a vegan meal. We thank the Elders serving today and for help with the blended Meeting. We hope to meet again, at Bull Street QMH on November 27th from 2.00 – 5.00pm.

Alison Ironside  
Clerk