



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BY ZOOM
ON MONDAY
9th NOVEMBER 2021 AT 2.30pm**

PRESENT: Sue Brownlie, Faith Cartwright, Brian Collingridge, Charles Henderson Phil Parratt, Margaret Stenhouse, Margaret Stocks

PREVENTED:

BY INVITATION: Anna Mullett, Martin Wall, co-clerks to WSAQM

ELDER: Faith Cartwright

WELCOME AND OPENING WORSHIP

21.56 READING

Paragraph 10.01 from Quaker Faith and Practice was read during our opening worship.

21.57 CLERKING OF THIS MEETING

Standing aside from the table, the clerk asked the Trustee Body (having described a particular situation that had taken place) if fellow Trustees were still content for her to clerk this meeting.

Trustees were in agreement that we support our clerk in this meeting.

21.58 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

The Agenda has been accepted.

21.59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

21.60 TREASURER'S REPORT

a) General situation

The treasurer reported that the pandemic continues to adversely affect hiring income at Taunton, Minehead - and to some degree Spiceland - and has depressed voluntary contributions. Minehead is the worst affected of the LMs. Wellington has fared much better with a support group hiring space on weekdays providing much higher hiring income than in pre-pandemic days. Taunton MH hiring income is slowly picking up.

Overall funds after distributions to BYM are likely to be slightly up on 2020 (the funds are at present about £26,000 up on the year and a lot of this will go - in large lump sums - to BYM in the next month or so).

b) Ilminster gift - update

Margaret Stenhouse has reported that earlier this year agreement was reached to limit the time for use of the gift to 3 years, from 16th May 2021 - the date of the agreement. One possibility had arisen but Ilminster Friends found that it had already been spoken for. However the estate agent has agreed to let Ilminster Meeting know as soon as any other suitable property comes on the market.

c) Wellington MH heating

We have heard from Brian Collingridge that one room in the Meeting House now contains 2 night-storage heaters, which are improving things. Regarding the situation in the main Meeting room, Wellington Friends will make a decision next Sunday, 14th November, as to the preferred system. The options are either for radiant wall-mounted heating, which would use a time-switch to prevent excess use of electricity, or for under-bench heating with additional radiant heating.

d) Quinquennial surveys

The AM treasurer has reported that the reports for Minehead and Taunton have not yet been received. An update from the surveyors, Benjamin and Beauchamp, indicated that their delayed reports would be available by the end of October. As these have not yet arrived it may now be necessary to make a further request for their despatch.

21.60 RECEIPT OF MINUTES

a) TMHMC (plus annual report)

The co-clerks of Taunton Meeting House Management Committee regularly send the Minutes of their meetings to Trustees. We also acknowledge receipt of their annual report, which has been circulated to all Trustees

b) Sub-groups of Trustees

The Finance and Property sub-group and the Policy and Communications sub-group have each made their Minutes available to all Trustees.

21.61 REPORTS FROM EACH LOCAL MEETING'S TRUSTEE ON THEIR CURRENT SITUATION

- **Bridgwater**

Meeting for Worship is held weekly at Bridgwater Arts Centre. Numbers attending range from 3 to 7. Zoom and blended Meetings have taken place, but not for the present. Numbers must be a concern for the future and for providing role holders to Area Meeting

- **Burnham-on-Sea**

Sue Hammond-Lovatt reports that Burnham's system of email meetings continues to work well and attendance is being maintained. There is still no news of any possible transfer of the LM from this AM to North Somerset Area Quaker Meeting.

- **Ilminster**

We have been meeting in person throughout the summer with numbers ranging from 5-12. As restrictions eased we went back to shaking hands and having tea/coffee after Meeting. We even had a shared lunch, which used to be a regular monthly event. However as local infection rates increased during October, we have gone back to wearing masks and keeping our distance from each other for the time being.

- **Minehead**

Minehead meeting was able to restart their meetings in person on 18th April. Initially we had approximately 4-6 people attending – gradually this has crept up to around 6 – 9 attenders on most Sunday mornings. Although we did drop the use of masks at one point, with the increasing numbers of cases in the South West we have gone back to wearing them, and, trying to observe social distancing, we have restarted refreshments after meeting. In September we felt able to restart our soup lunches which have had an attendance of 8 – 9 people each month so far. Zoom meetings have not really been an option as so few people have the necessary internet availability although we did have one or two during the lockdown with limited attendance. We have not felt we could justify the expense of having the equipment in the meeting house for blended meetings.

- **Spiceland**

Spiceland Meeting for Worship continues in its blended form but now we find that the numbers in the Meeting House generally exceed those joining by zoom. Our average joint attendance is approximately 13. Recently we have welcomed Friends from further afield who are holidaying in the South West.

Our Health and Safety Officer commends that we continue to wear face masks and keep the windows and doors open and therefore we have increased the number of blankets available!

We were open as part of English Heritage week in September and also under the Quiet Garden scheme in October.

- **Taunton**

Meeting for Worship takes place in person each Sunday morning, with numbers limited to observe social distancing and with guidance from the Meeting's health and safety officer. Separate Meetings using zoom are available on two Sundays a month with blended Meetings on the fourth and fifth Sundays. Since face-to-face Meetings have restarted attendance on zoom has diminished, but twice-monthly evening meetings have also recommenced and those using zoom welcome the blended meetings, which give a real sense of community. Monthly Meetings for learning have also resumed.

- **Wellington**

While it has been a quiet year for Wellington Meeting House members, Green Days have been meeting with their clients five days a week, every week. After Covid restrictions lifted Meetings restarted in May, but with limited numbers, though these are beginning to rise as we all seek to return to the normality of worshipping together in silence. Work on the heating is progressing.

20.62 SAFEGUARDING AND THE NEW MODEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: CURRENT SITUATION AND IMPLICATIONS

A Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice, for which Trustees have responsibility, is already in place for this AM. It is due for review next year, which is timely in view

of the recent receipt of a new Model Policy and Procedures - with multiple Appendices – from BYM.

Margaret Stenhouse has reported on these documents.

We have considered the relevant documentation, which was circulated in advance of the meeting. After thoughtful discussion - and with new information concerning its forthcoming revision expected from the BYM Safeguarding Officer (Mark Mitchell) – we agree to wait until this has been received and discussed before making any firm recommendations to Area Meeting about its acceptance.

However, the Area Meeting needs to be well informed about what we will be required to accept in the future. To do this will necessitate all LMs to have awareness of these documents in order to know and appreciate the implications. This cannot wait. We ask the Policy and Communications sub-group to identify ways in which this awareness might spread through the AM and to consult with the AM clerks and the AM Business Team about it.

20.63 REVIEW OF CURRENT AREA MEETING POLICIES

All AM policies are due for review this year. We ask the Policy and Communications sub-group to meet before the end of the year to assess any changes that may be required in the light of circumstances in general and any which may now be needed as a consequence of restrictions encountered through the effects of the pandemic. We also ask the sub-group to produce a minute which would then be sent to all Trustees before any recommendations are placed before the AM.

20.64 TRUSTEE TRAINING

No face-to-face training has been possible this year, as Woodbrooke's facilities have been closed. There have been some opportunities on line.

We note that Margaret Stenhouse will be able to take part in some form of Safeguarding training in December this year.

20.65 AREA MEETING'S CURRENT SYSTEM OF APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Recruitment of new Trustees is an on going concern. There had also been a query as to the AM's system of appointment for Trustees. The clerk has established that the current system – where Local Meetings nominations committees find a name, which is then offered directly to Area Meeting – may need to change. AM Nominations Committee is not involved in this process at present.

Trustees consider that the process of bringing forward names of Trustees to AM should arise within the AM Nominations Committee rather than through the present process and make this recommendation to the AM Business Team.

20.66 TARA FOR 2020 – Minute of record

The Trustees Annual Report and Accounts for this Area Meeting have been completed and despatched to the relevant bodies.

20.67 FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT FULL MEETING

a) Future work allocation

b) Held-over items:

- Recommendations regarding any policy changes
- Preparation of the TARA
- Report of any agreed change to the system of appointment of Trustees
- Terms of Reference regarding the appointment of Clerk to Trustees

- Report of any outcome of a meeting to establish a need to report a possible serious historical incident
- Future system of holding Trustees' meetings – using zoom or in-person.

20.68 FAREWELLS

The clerk thanked her fellow Trustees for their help and support throughout her term of service, which ends on 31st December 2021.

The AM clerks and Trustees thanked the clerk for her service.

20.69 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged.

Margaret Stocks (clerk)

9th November 2021

Circulation list for Trustees' Minutes: Trustees, WSAQM Business Team, LM Clerks, TMHMC, AM Website, QSC Link Friend, Local Development Worker