

Minutes of Meeting for Sufferings 4 October 2014

MfS 2014 10 01 Opening Worship

During our opening worship we have heard read section 10.11 of *Quaker faith & practice*, and we have remembered former members of this meeting who have recently died.

MfS 2014 10 02 Apologies

We receive apologies from Cambridgeshire AM and Gloucestershire AM, which have not been able to send a representative on this occasion.

MfS 2014 10 03 Minutes

The minutes of our meeting held on 6 September 2014 have been signed.

MfS 2014 10 04 Adoption of agenda

We have reflected on issues to be considered during our meeting and have agreed the agenda.

MfS 2014 10 05 Minutes received not taken elsewhere

a) From Area Meetings

1 Ipswich & Diss AM regarding discernment at Meeting for Sufferings

We receive minute 32/14 of Ipswich and Diss AM regarding discernment of Meeting for Sufferings. This is relevant to our consideration later today.

2 Devon AM regarding sustainability

We receive minute 57/2014 of Devon AM held on 13 September regarding the 'Courage to Save the Planet' initiative. We note this initiative, and representatives may wish to share information about it with Friends locally.

b) From Central Committees and other bodies

1 Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee

We receive minute QPSWCC 14/82 regarding Quaker Values in Education. We welcome the establishment of a Quaker Life Network cluster to support interested Friends, and note the statement drawn up during a threshing conference held at Woodbrooke in August. Representatives are encouraged to take it to their Meetings, for consideration locally.

2 Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee

We receive minute QPSWCC 14/83 regarding the final report from the Minute 36 (Canterbury) Commitment Group.

We ask BYM Trustees to work with the BYM Sustainability Group to resolve questions of resourcing and the division of responsibilities in relation to the 'Recommendations for Action' (minute MfS 2014 06 11 and minute 31 of Yearly Meeting 2014 refer).

We forward this minute to BYM Trustees and BYM Sustainability Group.

MfS 2014 10 06 Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group

Anne Ullathorne has spoken to a written report from Meeting for Sufferings Arrangements Group (MfS 2014 10 04a). We have also received paper MfS 2014 10 04 b, conveying the results of the online survey of representatives and alternates.

We have also heard briefly of the time that those Friends have spent arranging and attending regional gatherings around the country, and of the value of these to all those Friends attending.

MfS 2014 10 07 Meeting for Sufferings Support Group

Kate Green has spoken to a written report from Meeting for Sufferings Support Group (paper MfS 2014 10 05). We thank them for their service and particularly their welcoming of newcomers.

MfS 2014 10 08 Membership and appointments

a) Membership of Meeting for Sufferings

Since our last meeting we have received the following nominations and requests for release for Meeting for Sufferings until the rise of Yearly Meeting 2015:

Nominated:

Brighouse West Yorks AM Alternate: Ailie Kerrane

North Wales AM Alternate: Helen Still

Release requests received:

Bournemouth Coastal AM Alternate: Catrina Humpherson

Brighouse West Yorks AM Alternate: Hilary Browne

Central Yorkshire AM Alternate: Roy Love

North London AM Alternate: Krishna Ramamurthy

We appoint the Friends named and thank the Friends released for their service.

Visitors invited to represent area meetings/committees in the absence of appointed representative and alternate:

QWRC: Judith Thurgood

Sussex West AM: Chris Bemrose

York AM: Sarah Allen

Other visitors:

Anne van Staveren - Media Relations Officer

Tara Craig – The Friend

b) Meeting for Sufferings Clerks

Committee on Clerks brings forward the names of the following Friends to serve from 1 January – 31 December 2015:

Clerk: Ethel Livermore (1st renomination)

Assistant clerk: Anne Ullathorne (1st renomination)

We appoint the Friends named.

c) Central Nominations Committee

brings forward the names of the following Friends for service as indicated:

Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

Nominated on behalf of Yearly Meeting to serve in the interim from 1 January 2015 until Yearly Meeting 2015 to fill a vacancy:

Tim Southall, Bristol AM

Listed Informal Groups Review Group

To serve from October 2014 for the duration of the review which is expected to be for 3 years:

Joycelin Dawes, North London AM

Martin Schweiger, Leeds AM

Jennifer Kavanagh, London West AM

BYM Sustainability Group

To serve from October 2014:

To the end of 2015

Rachel Berger, West Wiltshire & East Somerset AM

Gill Westcott, Devon AM

To the end of 2016

Lis Burch, Oxford & Swindon AM

Sam Robinson, Sheffield & Balby AM

To the end of 2017

Frances Voelcker, North Wales AM

Martina Weitsch, North West London AM

Meeting for Sufferings Handbook Group

To serve from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2017:

Joy Croft, Norfolk & Waveney AM

Revision of the Book of Discipline: Review Preparation Group

To serve from November 2014 to 31 December 2017.

Lesley Richards, Worcestershire & Shropshire AM to serve as clerk

Gerald Hewitson, North Wales AM

Jeremy Greenwood, Ipswich & Diss AM

Jane Harries, South Wales AM

Sally Nicholls, Oxford & Swindon AM

Rhiannon Grant, Leeds AM

Andrew Williams, South East Scotland AM

Sheila Houldin, Wirral & Chester AM

Harry Albright, Leicester AM

Adwoa Bittle, East Scotland AM

Nick Perks, York AM

Friends World Committee for Consultations

To serve from 1 January 2015.

To the end of 2015

Alick Munro, Kingston & Wandsworth AM

Barbara Windle, York AM

To the end of 2016

Anne Bennett, Lincolnshire AM

To the end of 2017

Lee Taylor, Luton & Leighton AM

Ann Floyd, Chilterns AM

The Retreat

To serve from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2017

John Miles (clerk), Gloucestershire AM (3rd term)

Rosemary Furzer, Hampshire & Islands AM (2nd term)

Derrick Whitehouse, Northamptonshire AM (2nd term)

David Harries, South Wales AM (2nd term)

Lisa Shend'ge, North West London AM (2nd term)

We appoint the Friends named.

MfS 2014 10 09 Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees report

Jennifer Barraclough, clerk of BYM Trustees, reported verbally on the Trustees' meeting held on 3 October 2014.

We have heard that Trustees are considering registration with the Electoral Commission further to the Transparency of Lobbying, non-Party Campaigning Groups and Trade Union Administration Act 2014. Trustees wish to ask Meeting for Sufferings to offer guidance on the underlying matters of principle and their relative importance, before making a decision on these. A briefing paper will be circulated before our December meeting.

We have also heard from our BYM Treasurer that while the finances are stable, contributions from individual Friends and Meetings are significantly down this year.

MfS 2014 10 10 BYM Sustainability Group: terms of reference

Further to minute MfS 2014 09 14 we have again considered draft terms of reference for the BYM Sustainability Group. We agree these as amended in the meeting.

We offer the group our support as they take on this new role, while reminding ourselves that we are all responsible for implementing the recommendations in the report of the Minute 36 Group.

MfS 2014 10 11 Dates of Meeting for Sufferings 2016

We agree to meet on the following dates in 2016:

6 February

2 April

2 July

1 October

3 December

MfS 2014 10 12 Dates of Yearly Meeting 2017

Further to minute S/11/02/8 which agreed a three-yearly pattern for the dates of Yearly Meeting, we have heard from Chris Skidmore that Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee recommends Yearly Meeting 2017 be held 29th July – 5th August, at the University of Warwick. We agree to this.

MfS 2014 10 13 Meeting for Sufferings – working effectively

We have spent much of our meeting reflecting on the role and nature of Meeting for Sufferings. We have been helped by a spoken introduction from Anne Ullathorne and a background paper (MfS 2014 10 06). We have met together in small groups to consider three questions:

- What are we doing well?
- What could we be doing differently?
- What should we be doing that we are not doing now?

And we have had time in open plenary worship to reflect together.

It has been good to make the space on our agenda to have time for sharing and reflection together.

We are clear that we need to be a prophetic and visionary body. We need to allow time for God to speak within our meetings and for us to hear 'what the Spirit requires of us now'.

We need to make the time to be able to hear of and express our passion. Today we heard particularly about the sustainability of the world and the current bombings in Iraq.

How can we take the rushing and mighty wind of the Spirit back to our meetings?

We know that sometimes it can feel that things move slowly, but recognise that sometimes taking concerns back to Area Meetings can strengthen them.

Working with others can also strengthen our role in making a change.

We ask our Arrangements Group to consider the issues and suggestions that have been made during the meeting to see what changes could be made to our ways of working.