

## Annual Conference for Treasurers 2017

held at Friends' House, 13 May 2017

Notes by Ian Watson

I attended this conference as a member of its Arrangements Committee and as one of the participants (hence at no cost to CAQM!). The conference exceeded my expectations, perhaps because these had been too low! There were about 70 people present, plus BYM staff members. A couple of AMs had as many as six participants, and the majority with two, and some, such as CAQM with just one.

There were four parts to the conference:

1. Opening presentation about BYM Trustees' Report presented by Peter Ullathorne (BYM Treasurer) and Helen Drewery (Head of Witness & Worship, BYM)
2. First Workshop: I attended "Collation & Examination of AM Accounts" – led by Ursula Fuller, Clerk to QSC
3. Second Workshop: I attended "Record Keeping & Security" led by Lisa McQuillan, deputy BYM Records Manager.
4. Updates from Quaker Stewardship Committee, within which I did one of the presentations, and so I am not going to comment on this further, other than to note that in future QSC will be organising both treasurers' and trustees' conferences. There will no longer be a separate arrangements committee for treasurers' conferences.

### 1. BYM Trustees Report

The larger part of this presentation was by Helen Drewery explaining the work being done by BYM. Peter Ullathorne only gave a minimal amount of financial information. One point was that the current target for giving from the LMs/AMs is £225 per member. I thought Carlisle LM's contribution to BYM had been fairly generous, but it works out at about £190 per member! Peter mentioned the Hospitality Company (which is also responsible for Swarthmore Hall). Last year it made a surplus of £0.8M. It is a beacon of good practice with respect to employment conditions and much else.

Helen Drewery's presentation was in two parts, representing work from two different budgets: the legacies budget of £3.7M over a number of years, and the work from contributions is aimed at £3.0M a year.

#### 1a Legacies Budget.

- Peace Education in Schools. The aim is to get peace as part of the school curriculum. There is a good brochure explaining in more details what this entails. So far they are working with Oasis schools, which has about 50 schools; and also with Coventry Cathedral.
- Vibrancy in Meetings. There are four locally based workers. Wendy Hampton is the one based in the North West of England. (I teased Paul Parker about this: apparently Cumberland is not in the NW of England!). This is a joint project with Woodbrooke, and a lot of effort is going into evaluating how effectual the scheme is. It has now been running for 6 months.

### 1b Contributions Budget

- Economics and Sustainability are enmeshed. There are to be a series of six booklets entitled “The New Economy” and two of these have already been published.
- Outreach. New ways are being explored, including
  - The use of suites of graphic images.
  - A presence at the Hay-on-Wye Book Festival, including talks by three Quaker writers
- The Faith in Action 2016 leaflets

### 2. First Workshop: “Collation & Examination of AM Accounts”

A lot of time was spent on the differences between ‘Receipts & Payments’ accounts and ‘Accruals’ accounts, particularly since the new accounting standard FRS102 comes into accounts for reports for 2016.

The most significant practical difference between the two methods:

- In R&P accounts a valuation of property is not necessary, although QSC asks for insurance values. [Also a balance sheet is not required: just a statement of assets and liabilities].
- In accruals accounts valuation of properties is required: this can be either:
  1. The historic cost used prior to 2016, including nil value. However if a property is improved, then the cost of the improvement has to be included, and updated as in 2
  2. A valuation by a surveyor, and this has to be updated every five years.

Charities with less than £250,000 will not be classed as “Large Charities” and can use R&P Accounting, even if they have used Accruals accounts in previous years. I suggest that CAQM should change to using Receipts & Payments accounts.

### 3. Second Workshop: “Record Keeping & Security”

Lisa McQuillan used the term “Records Custodian” rather than “Archivist”. The reason for this is that the Records Custodian has responsibility for records currently in use, not just ones from the past.

The main part of the workshop considered the use of a “Retention Schedule”, an example of which is shown on page 3. It is recommended that all AMs should draw up such a schedule. Warwickshire AM has done this, and a copy will be supplied. Participants in the workshop noted that it would be useful to have a column specifying who is responsible for taking action, e.g. for destroying records once they are no longer needed. It is noted that some retention periods are legally defined; some are best practice; while others are for the AM to decide for itself.

A Retention Schedule is another task to add to the CAQM Trustees’ Task List!