

EMEYF Charitable Committee Minutes – 20 December 2013, via Skype

Present: Esther Köhring, Mieke van Opheusden, Paul Sladen
Apologies: Benjamin Jarman

*"It is dark, and sharp cold. but it is a cold that makes me feel
all clear and surrounded by clearness.
Cold and dark and silent."*

ChC 2013/01 Welcoming new Trustees

We welcome Esther Köhring, Mieke van Opheusden, and briefly Leo Vincent as Trustees. We thank and release Benjamin Jarman, Matt Loffman, Ali Ghanem, Rachel Miller (née Bryers) & Leo Vincent. It has been unique to see an overlap of so many former clerks of EMEYF serving as Trustees at the same time.

ChC 2013/02 Annual Meeting 2013

We note that Esther Köhring, Mieke van Opheusden, Leo Vincent and Paul Sladen were able to meet informally during 30 November–1 December 2013 as part of EMEYF's Annual Meeting 2013, in Brussels, and undertake some administrative functions relating to the Charity. Timetabling commitments precluded a dedicated Trustees meeting as had been intended. Subsequently we hereby note CC 2013/22 which records and accepts Leo Vincent's decision to step-down as Clerk to EMEYF following Annual Meeting, Clerk of Communications Committee, and latterly as a Trustee of the Charitable Committee. We will update the Charitable Registration to reflect the current trustees which are Esther Köhring, Mieke van Opheusden and Paul Sladen.

ChC 2013/03 Constitution

We note the minutes received from Spring Gathering 2013 [minute SG2013/10] and Communication Committee [minute CC2013/25] recommending us to "make any changes required to the constitution to bring it up to date with present charitable registration requirements", and will also address the required minimum and maximum level of trustees in any changes. We will aim to remove or replace the requirement for Trustees to be drawn from members of Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) which is focused on the United Kingdom. This wording had been updated in the original Constitution to follow a name-change from Young Friends Central Committee to YFGM and a longer-term solution will be sought. We will aim to find a wording that covers EMEYF's scope across the European and Middle East region and allows officers who have already been appointed to the EMEYF Communication Committee to also serve as a Trustee on the Charitable Committee. We will report back to Spring Gathering 2014 with our achievements and progress.

ChC 2013/04 Charitable Committee Treasurer

We agree to appoint Paul Sladen as treasurer to the Charitable Committee, continuing to replace Benjamin Jarman. We note for the record that Benjamin Jarman moved house during 2013 and when updating the signatories will include Ben's present and former addresses for completeness.

ChC 2013/05 Co-operative Mandate

The Co-operative Bank plc shall continue as our bankers, in accordance with our original application. We agree to execute the resolutions listed in Section 3a of The Cooperative Bank's Change of Account Signatories Mandate form. We authorise that the account signatory shall be changed from Benjamin Jarman to Paul Sladen.

ChC 2013/06 Next meeting

We will arrange to meet in the first months of 2014, in order to discuss matters arising and will attempt to co-locate EMEYF Charitable Committee Trustees' Meetings with those of Communication Committee.

Signed in and on behalf trustees,

/s/ Paul Sladen

References to previous minutes from Spring Gathering and Communications Committee

SG 2013/10 Charity Commission Registration

We have received the following minute from CC:

***CC05/2013 UK Charitable Committee of EMEYF.** We realise the benefits of being a charity however we are mindful that the structure that has been created around our charity status is confusing and drains our energy. Being a charity should offer us opportunities rather than become a focus for our time together. We are led to the recommendation that EMEYF UK Charity Committee should remain autonomous. We do not wish to become a sub-section of another Quaker organisation as this is directly against the idea of EMEYF which is to offer a community for young adults exploring and living in a intentional Quaker community - no matter how dispersed it is. We need to make no secret of some of the issues that have been experienced in the last few years of EMEYF. And we should all take equal responsibility for this. It is important to see the trustees as an integral part of EMEYF; making sure we uphold them in their role as they uphold EMEYF. We are thankful for the work that the trustees have done which has provided us with a legal platform in the UK from which we have been able to raise*

funds that have allowed our community to flourish.

However the proximity of the trustees to EMEYF, the communication between committees and the complicated structure of our organisations are a source of tension and uncomfortableness. We are reminded in Quaker Faith and Practice (UK) to live our lives with simplicity. Our structures must reflect the testimony of simplicity which underpins our place in the world. We need to come up with a structure that works for us; based in our spiritual lives rather than a tick-box exercise. Any structure we chose will need to be managed if it is to grow sustainable. Our structure should be a skeleton which allows the body of EMEYF to move; and we should be prepared to look after that skeleton if we are not to fall.

Having researched at the Charity Commission in the UK we have discovered that trustees do not have to be based in the UK. This has been an issue for us; searching for UK based people to become trustees. We will need to revise our constitution to allow for the this. We are aware that Communications Committee act the role of trustees in the day to day management of EMEYF. CC make decisions around finance, employment of the secretary, structure and other business decisions. It leads then to the conclusions that the Communications Committee (minus the Secretary who is employed) could become the trustees of EMEYF.

Communications Committee recommends that the roles of Elders, Clerk(s), UK Treasurer, and Gatherings Coordinator also take on the role of trustees, where possible. Annual Meeting could nominate further trustees if required; these extra trustees would also become part of Communications Committee. We recommend changing the constitution to allow for this.

We are grateful for the discernment of the Communications Committee and accept their recommendations. We ask them to take the necessary actions and report back at Annual Meeting 2013.

CC 2013/22 Clerk.

We have heard from Leo Vincent about his decision to step down as Clerk of EMEYF. We thank Leo for the work he has done for EMEYF and the time he spent with us in this period of transition of EMEYF. We hope to be able to appoint a clerk or a clerking team at Spring Gathering 2014. We see that the role can be difficult and we need to continue looking for ways to support each other in our roles.

CC 2013/25 Trustees and Constitution

Following up with the minute from Spring Gathering 2013 (SG2013/10), we were asked to try to appoint new trustees for the Charitable Committee from within Communications Committee going forward. We appoint Esther Köhring and Mieke van Opheusden as new trustees, and agree to release Benjamin Jarman, Matt Loffman, Ali Ghanem & Rachel Miller (née Bryers), and thank them for their long service. EMEYF's Trustees are now: Paul Sladen, Esther Köhring and Mieke van Opheusden. We ask the new trustees to make any changes required to the constitution to bring it up to date with present charitable registration requirements and report about this at Spring Gathering. In particular, the minimum and maximum trustees to be appointed, and to remove the stated requirement for Trustees coming from the Communications Committee to be members of Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) in the United Kingdom. This section of the Constitution had already had to be amended previously to follow the name change of Young Friends Central Committee (YFCC) to YFGM.