

## **The Association of Talking Friends**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021 via Zoom**

#### **2021/01 Welcome and worship**

We began our meeting today with a period of worship.

#### **2021/02 Present and prevented**

The following Friends were present: Cathy Khurana (convenor) , Alan Johnson, Nick Tulley, Hilary Johnson, Sue Thompson, Gillian Bryan (treasurer), Eleanor Tew, Clare Hamon, Howard Cheeseman, Diana Lampen.

And those prevented: Joy Croft, Charles Axford, Barbara Forbes.

#### **2021/03 Matters arising from AGM 2020**

- Roles of committee members and trustees:

The suggestion to combine committee members and trustees to be all trustees was explored at the Talking Friends committee meeting in January 2021 and the following minute records the decision to remain as we are:

i) role of trustees and committee members: minutes 03.20 (April AGM), 13.20 (July), 2020/20 (Oct) refer.

The link to 'Essential information for trustees' was sent to committee members. We have considered the matter of combining trustees and committee members to be all trustees. It has raised some questions about our constitution/governing document. However, we feel that our current processes are working effectively and it seems right to continue as a group of three trustees appointed by CEQ and volunteer committee members.

Cathy has since been looking at the constitution of the ATF and has begun a revision, which will be discussed by the committee for presentation at the AGM in 2022.

#### **2021/04 Presentation of the Trustees Annual Report to the Association**

The report has been circulated by email. We accept the report which is filed. We thank sue Thompson for preparing this report on behalf of the trustees.

Cathy will forward the report to Alistair Fuller, our Quaker Recognised Body link at Friends House.

## **2021/05 Accounts for 2020**

Gillian presented the accounts for 2020, which are filed.

At the end of 2020 we are £1600 in credit. We currently have 20 subscribers. We thank Gillian for her work as treasurer.

Cathy will forward the accounts to Alistair Fuller, our Quaker recognised Body link at Friends House.

## **2021/06 Committee matters**

Cathy Khurana was appointed as a trustee in June, and has taken over the role of convenor from October 2020.

Sue Thompson's service as a trustee finishes in September. We thank Sue for her service.

We are still trying to find committee members, and would welcome new voices on the committee. Our constitution also requires that at least one committee member has a visual impairment. Committee members can volunteer their service, no nominations process is needed. We look forward to hearing expressions of interest.

Cathy agrees to write a short piece for The Friend and Quake! To encourage Friends to volunteer as committee members, and to raise awareness of the existence of Talking Friends, which may encourage new subscribers too.

## **2021/07 Talking Friend and the coronavirus pandemic**

The impact of the coronavirus on normal service was immediate and dramatic. When Friends House closed in March 2020, our system for transfer and distribution became impossible.

At our AGM last year we recorded alternative ways in which subscribers might access recordings and other possibilities for the committee to explore. Since then we have managed to put in place a few alternatives:

The Friend provided internet access, available to those with suitable software;

We entered into a contract with Talking Newspaper Services for access via a telephone. This service will continue until July 2021.

More recently, since March 2021, we have been able to resume a memory stick service with the help of Birmingham Talking Newspapers Association. This

was offered to us free on a temporary basis until Friends House reopens and we can resume normal service. Several subscribers have expressed relief and thanks for being able to use memory sticks again. We record our grateful thanks to Danny Collman from Birmingham Talking Newspapers Association (BTNA) for offering this service. At our Talking Friends committee meeting in March, we agreed to send a donation to BTNA.

The committee will discuss these matters and possible developments and preferences of subscribers at our next meeting.

### **2021/08 Any Other Business**

Alan reported that a subscriber has requested the book of the 2019 Swarthmore Lecture and a volunteer reader is undertaking this recording.

Eleanor suggested we might consider using the RNIB Newsagent service. It does require subscribers to have a computer so may be an option rather than a replacement service. The TF committee will consider this further.

### **2020/09 Date of Annual General meeting in 2022**

This will be held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022, starting at 10.30am. There will be a means of joining electronically.

Cathy Khurana

Convenor, Association of Talking Friends