## Risk assessment for use by Meetings considering the attendance of a ‘person of concern’ at a different Meeting or Quaker event

Where a Local or Area Meeting knows that a member of their meeting who is of concern and wishes to attend a different Meeting or Quaker event then the meeting needs to consider if they are able to support the person’s attendance. An Area Meeting or a Regional Meeting is a Quaker event, as is a family day.

We expect that the Area or Local Meeting will address two **key questions in making a decision**:

*(1) What level of risk does the applicant present to others present at the other Meeting or Quaker event and*

*(2) Is this risk manageable or not?*

**Risk Matrix**

**At the other Meeting or Quaker event please consider:**

## how much and what type of contact might there be with children, young people and vulnerable adults during Meeting for worship and before and after it, or during sessions, outside sessions (including evenings and meal times)?

## what type and level of formal supervision, oversight and support will be available from the person’s meeting (Local or Area)?

## Are there Friends from the local or area meeting offering formal supervision, oversight and support confident that they can do the role?

## What support exists for these Friends?

**It might help to consider any explanation provided by the applicant for the offence.**

* How much honesty was there in declaring past issues to appropriate members of the meeting? And how forthcoming was the person with additional information when requested?
* Do they take care not to divulge the information inappropriately?
* When were the concerns
* What was the type of concern?
* How long have they been attending meeting?
* Have they become a member?
* If so, did they divulge (appropriately) during the application process?
* Is there an existing contract of behaviour between the person and the meeting?
* When was it last reviewed?
* Have they kept to it?
* What does the probation officer/social worker (or other official) say to their proposed attendance at the other Meeting or Quaker event? You should record their opinion in writing.

**Supporting information**What evidence is there for **positive changes** in the person’s life that demonstrate a reduced risk of inappropriate behaviour

**Protecting the Society of Friends**

Although the primary responsibility is undoubtedly to protect vulnerable individuals from harm the reputation of the Society as a ‘safe place for all’ must also be considered:

## What would be the public perception of the behaviours, if they became known, and what effect that that would have on the reputation of the Society of Friends?

## Are the people from the local or area meeting offering formal supervision, oversight and support confident that they can do the role?

## Are there risks to the applicant themselves and their wellbeing if they attend this event?

## If they attend the event, what guidance/instruction needs to be made about their accommodation choices? Other choices?

**Consensus Decision Making Tool**

The way that decisions are recorded by the Quaker Business Method may not be helpful in these circumstances. Knowledge of differing strengths of feeling would be helpfully recorded.

Although consensus is not the same as the Quaker Business Method, there are aspects of this consensus decision making tool that can be usefully followed:

**Consensus**: a decision that everyone can live with

The aim is to get commitment to a group decision.

When a group reaches a consensus this means that all members agree to support the group’s decision. Members may not completely agree with the decision or action but they do agree to support it both within and outside the group. *We don’t all have to agree that it is the best decision but we have to agree that we can live with it.*

**0-to-5** is a decision making tool that allows people to indicate support for a decision and air reservations at the same time e.g. what has to change for you to support the decision. It allows us to gauge the strength of decision making too.

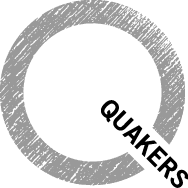
**Question:** *can you support the decision to recommend the applicant attends this event?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| NO:  I am **against** this decision. Identify what might need to change for you to reconsider your response. | NO:  I have  **serious concerns** that have not been addressed. Identify ‘what has to change’ to support the decision. | NO:  I still have **some unaddressed concerns.** Identify ‘what has to change’ to support the decision. | YES:  consent with major **reservations**. ‘I’m not in total agreement but I can live with it’ | YES:  consent with some **reservations**. ‘I think that it is a good decision’ | YES:  **full consent** or support |

## Risk assessment for use by Meetings considering

## the attendance of a ‘person of concern’ at a different

## Meeting or Quaker event

**Can you support the decision to recommend the applicant attends**

**the other Meeting or the Quaker event?**

## Name of applicant ……………………...................................................................

## Name, date and venue of the event: *…………………………………………………*

Or

Venue and timing of the Meeting for Worship …………………………………………

## Date of current contract between ……………………............................................, the meeting and person (please attach a copy).

## For each person who is part of the decision-making, the following information should be provided:

## Name ……………................................................................................................

## Role....……………....................e.g. Safeguarding co-ordinator, AM Trustee etc

## Non-Quaker safeguarding expertise ……………………………..........................

## Opinion (0-5), with an explanation for what concerns need to be addressed if a 0, 1 or 2.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

If the recommendation is that they may attend the event, then what instructions and restrictions would the meeting wish to place on their involvement and participation?

How will these boundaries be monitored by Friends from the original local meeting? (Perhaps with support from the Area Meeting?). Name the Friends who will be offering this.

Has the applicant agreed to these boundaries?

Have the supporting Friends agreed to support the applicant, monitor the boundaries and report any transgressions?

The result should be shared with the Area Meeting safeguarding co-ordinator and the safeguarding officer/co-ordinator for the event or meeting. For Yearly Meeting and other national Quaker events, this means the BYM safeguarding adviser, Gill Sewell. The paperwork should be filed with other safeguarding paperwork about the applicant and kept indefinitely.

Gill Sewell, Ministry and Outreach Officer

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