

EAST CHESHIRE AREA QUAKER MEETING - HEALTH AND SAFETY & PREMISES MAINTENANCE POLICIES & SCHEDULES

Report by East Cheshire Area Meeting (ECAM) Trustees to Area Meeting for Business 7.9.19

Introduction and Summary

This report covers the updating of our policies and schedules for both Health and Safety and annual premises inspections. It asks Area Meeting to discern whether to approve the proposed updated Health and Safety Policies and Health and Safety Schedule.

Background

The Area Meeting adopted its current Health and Safety policy over ten years ago. Local Meetings (LMs) have put in place health and safety practices and risk assessments. LMs have also been carrying out annual returns to Trustees on the state of their premises, which include both health and safety practices/issues and more general property maintenance aspects.

Nationally, there have been updates and developments in Health and Safety practice, and also there were some issues for LMs in using the annual premises inspection forms, particularly those LMs that hire rather than own premises. So ECAM Trustees have reviewed and produced draft updates for all our current documents, and have consulted on these with representatives from all our Local Meetings.

Updated Draft Policies, Schedule and Supporting Documents

We have now produced three sets of draft Health and Safety Policy. One is a draft Health and Safety policy for Area Meeting itself, to cover Health and Safety policies and practices when gathering as Area Meeting and all its constituent sub-meetings such as Elders and Overseers, Nominations, Trustees and so on.

Secondly, we have produced a revised draft Health and Safety policy and schedule for Local Meetings that have their own premises. The Policy document states the overall aims and who is responsible, whereas the schedule covers the practical aspects that a LM needs to address in its practices, such as fire safety; electrical safety; safe working etc.

Thirdly, we have produced a revised draft Health and Safety policy and schedule for Local Meetings that hire premises.

We have also revised the Risk Assessment forms that each LM carries out both for its regular Meetings/use of Premises and also for special events. We have introduced a form to help LMs to develop their good practice when paid or volunteers are in effect undertaking lone working. And we have revised the Annual Premises Inspection form that all LMS carry out, producing different versions for LMs with or without their own premises.

The documents as a whole aim to ensure that all sections of Area Meeting know what good practice they are seeking to maintain, and who takes responsibility for what. Also that the annual returns enable Trustees to keep an overview of this, and that Local Meetings or other AM groups can flag up any difficulties. We are streamlining the process by continuing to combine both health and safety and

more general property maintenance reviews in an annual premises Inspection return that LMs do for Trustees.

The consultation that Trustees held with Local Meeting representatives has been very helpful, and the Local Meeting representatives' comments have been incorporated in the attached documents.

For Area Meeting Discernment

We therefore ask Area Meeting to discern whether to adopt the following attached documents:

- ECAM Health and Safety Policy for Area Meeting and its constituent sub-groups
- ECAM Health and Safety Policy for Local Meetings with Premises
- ECAM Health and Safety Policy for Local Meetings without Premises
- ECAM Health and Safety Schedule

If AM agrees these documents, we suggest that AM asks Trustees to review these documents for any proposed updates every five years, unless external or internal factors suggest that earlier revisions should be undertaken.

We ask Area Meeting to note that Trustees have also revised the Local Meeting Risk Assessment form, introduced a form for Lone Working, and revised the Annual Premises Inspection report. These documents are not attached but are available on request from Gill Alcock. We hope that Area Meeting will be content that these documents are reviewed or tweaked as and when by Trustees, and formally reviewed every five years.

NEXT STEPS

Trustees have already agreed with Local Meeting representatives that they will update their Risk Assessments using the new form and, if helpful, a Lone Worker form, and complete their Annual Premises Inspection Return 2019 by the end of September 2019 and return this to Trustees.

If Area Meeting is happy to adopt the revised documents, then Area Meeting should authorise the AM Clerks to sign the ECAM Health and Safety Policy for Area Meeting and its Constituent Subgroups.

AM should also ask Local Meetings to consider the appropriate ECAM Health and Safety Policy documents for their Meeting at their next Business Meeting, with the aim that they adopt, complete and sign this and return it to Trustees as soon as possible, and certainly by the end of 2019.

Gill Alcock & Gavin Mendham for ECAM Trustees.

