**SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS NOT ACCEPTED FOR CONFERENCE 2023**

**Question 1**

Withdrawn by the sender.

**Question 2**

**The process of reading, dissemination and discussion of AA literature leads to greater understanding of alcoholism and improves understanding in carrying AA's primary message via AA's structure. Both the service and structure handbooks of AA contain a wealth of information, but this is presented in a dense and an unattractive and sometimes, confusing format. What is Conference's view on commissioning outside book designers to make the handbooks more visually inviting to a wider cross section of AA membership, thereby encouraging greater participation at all service levels.**

TOR No. 8 GSO are already undertaking work on the Structure and Service Handbooks and it also overlaps with Conference 2019, Committee 2, Question 1.

**Question 3**

**Would the fellowship consider listing meetings on the World Service approved Meeting Finder app?**

TOR No. 9 & 12 TOR 9 - The Committee felt there to be a likely breach of group autonomy, as it is for each group to decide whether or not, they wish their meeting details to be put on the World Service approved Meeting Finder app, regardless of how useful, or otherwise, the App may appear.

TOR 12 - The question is rather vague. There are a lot of unknowns. There is also a question of timing, as this question unfortunately, comes at a time when the AA GB website is in the process of being completely overhauled and until it has been completed, we don’t know what the new website will have to offer, particularly, in terms of the new AA GB Meeting Finder.

The Committee would like to suggest that the question is resubmitted next year.

**Question 6**

**Would Conference share its experience and make recommendation as to returning to using an A4 ring binder format for future editions of the *AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain* and the *AA Service Handbook for Great Britain***

TOR No. 12 The Committee considered this question carefully, but decided that it would not be of wide interest to the Fellowship. Where a group or intergroup prefers to have individual guidelines in a ring binder, it can print the relevant pages off from the PDF version which is available and refer to them that way. The easy availability of both handbooks does mean that individual members of the Fellowship can have comprehensive copies of the relevant guidelines, within context.

**Question 7**

**Would conference please review “Now that you’re an ELO” pamphlet?**

TOR No. 6 & 8 Due to the lack of background material giving reasons for it being proposed. It has been passed onto the literature sub-committee for consideration.

**Question 10**

**Q1. Format used for the Directory is the same as it was for the hard copy of the version.  This does not work well online. Request a user-friendly data base directory with a Search field. Far simpler and easy to use and data change is quick.  Also tighter security.**

**Q2. Request adding a field to the” Intergroup/Region Officer Registration Form”. That field being “Rotation Date”.  It could be additional to the date in the signature box.  This information to be shown in the Confidential Directory as the last line after the address or alongside in the unused portion of the page.  This would prove extremely useful when a) needing to make contact with that member b) Obvious when the position is vacant .c) The rotating officers does not need to inform the guardian of the directory to remove them.**

TOR No. 6 & 12 The question was poorly worded in that it does not take the proper form for a question. The committee also felt this question to be quite unclear and lacked sufficient background. For example, which directory is the questioner referring to?

**Question 12**

**Would Conference consider the viability of having our Anniversary event every 5 or 10 years rather than 25 years and make a recommendation to the Board.**

TOR No. 6 & 12 The Committee found the background to be leading and biased, leaving little room for the Fellowship to "*consider" for itself*- it was felt to be weighted in favour of the desired outcome of the Questioner.  Should this question be resubmitted next year, perhaps the background could be presented in a more balanced way, thus enabling a more informed Fellowship-wide debate

There was also, insufficient background, *pertinent to the question,* which is needed for proper *consideration of the viability of having an anniversary event every 5 or 10 years ....* In particular, the financial aspect was not mentioned at all, which plays a huge part in deliberating the viability of holding such an event on a more regular basis.  The question was, as you acknowledged, ahead of its time, as the 75th report isn't to be presented until Conference 2023.  This made it impossible for the Fellowship to be given ample, pertinent, information in time for debate and feedback to take place before Conference e,g *"Was the 75th 'self-supporting?'*

As pointed out above, the submission wasn't impartial; it was written in such a way, that it concluded with a statement, rather than a question.  It states, *'Nationally, the 75th Committee recommends Conference (which in truth, means the Questioner is telling, not asking, the Fellowship*......

The background answered the question, in that, it already contained *the* *recommendation -* "that Conference ask the Board to propose......"

**Question 14**

**Would the fellowship share its experience and make recommendations on:**

* **declining outside contributions under Tradition 7 and**
* **accountability for acting contrary to, and not in accordance with, Tradition 7**

**at each level of the service structure?**

TOR No. 5 The committee recognized that while the question itself is quite general, the background refers to a specific issue that was already discussed at Conference 2022

**Question 16**

**Would the Fellowship create ‘Desirable Qualifications’ for the role of the Non-Alcoholic Trustee (NAT) within our service structure in their role as ‘the public face of Alcoholics Anonymous’ and as advisors in their field of expertise, with reference to, but not limited to, the following points:**

**~appropriateness of NATs voting on Fellowship issues (such as suggested changes to literature, suggested procedures at AA meetings).**

**~ Appropriateness of a NAT holding the position of Chair of a sub-committee; setting agendas etc.**

TOR No. 7 The committee felt that this question was already covered in the AAGB Structure Handbook. For example, on page 116 of 2022 version of this handbook. In addition, since many of the desirable qualities for alcoholic trustees are quite general (e.g. leadership), the committee felt that these could apply to non-alcoholic trustees also.

**Question 17**

**Would The Fellowship share experience and make recommendations when voting is not an appropriate way to represent the group conscience at any and all levels in the service structure. For example, the 2022 AA GB Conference in the Saturday evening Plenary Session between 9-10pm set the agenda as Open Forum - Non Voting Session whereas the participants included all the Conference Delegates, all of whom had been voted in by their Regions and therefore given the power to represent their Region's group conscience and the power to vote.**

TOR No. 10 & 12 This question was quite unclear and would need further clarification to be suitable for conference. For example, what exactly is the questioner proposing? Is the proposal that voting be permitted at the plenary session? There is already a mechanism for putting forward a resolution at conference (outlined on p.105 of the 2022 AAGB Structure Handbook). Is the questioner suggesting that this procedure ought to be amended?

**Question 18**

**Should AA consider giving up its charity status to become a Not for Profit organization?**

TOR No. 10 The committee felt that this question was based on misinformation. For example, a not-for-profit organization is not necessarily more transparent than a charity, since charities are also accountable to the Charities Commission in the UK. In addition, the committee also felt that some of the background was factually incorrect because AA could in theory operate in many activities described in the background, subject to the memoranda of the charity (if such activities were aligned with our Traditions of course).

**Question 19**

**Would conference discuss and make recommendations as appropriate on ways in which the General Service Board might improve its communications with the fellowship, in particular with regards to its day-to-day functioning and decision-making and in so doing strengthen its accountability to both conference and the wider fellowship.**

TOR No. 10 Considered part of the background material to be misleading. For example, some of the Concepts are incorrectly quoted. However, there were several other questions submitted pertaining to issues raised in this question and as a result have been put forward in composite form whilst maintaining the ‘spirit’ of the question. We do hope that you are able to see the merit in our doing this.

**Question 20**

**Would conference discuss whether the AA 75th convention at Leeds Arena met its remit of being self-supporting.**

TOR No. 8 12 **TOR 8,** because the finances of the 75th Convention haven't yet been published and will be included in the Honorary Treasurer's report to Conference 2023 and **TOR 12**, because the committee felt that it isn't a question that could be discussed by the Fellowship as a whole, as the finances of the 75th haven't yet been published.

**Question 21**

**Would conference discuss and make recommendations as appropriate on requesting that the General Service Board publish a full and complete list of the job roles and annual salaries for all paid roles that exist in the UK service structure i.e. paid roles on the General Service Board, paid roles at the General Service Offices in York, London, Glasgow etc. and any other paid roles whether full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary or casual created by the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Limited from time to time.**

TOR No. 10 & 12 The committee considered the question and note that the publishing of such information may potentially lead to identification of staff members. There is information in the Document Library of the AAGB website pertaining to roles at GSO and would refer the questioner to this.

**Question 22**

**Would conference discuss, review and make recommendations as appropriate on the conditions under which the General Service Office might remove a group from the national meeting finder maintained on** [**https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/**](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/)

TOR No. 5 This has already been asked within the last 3 years, 2022 Committee 6 question 2.

**Question 23**

**Would Conference revisit the question of support, at all levels, for those members with hearing deterioration or loss?**

**This matter was previously discussed by Committee One at Conference 2016 and it was proposed that a table top tent card be produced and distributed to all groups and that various further updates to existing literature be made. The table top card was duly produced and sent out to groups. My contention is that this card is not fit for purpose.**

TOR No. 8 & 12 Terms of reference 12 as lacking impartiality. In the background material we felt the main contention was the opinion that the table top card produced by conference was not fit for purpose and the committee acknowledge the value of these comments and as such have under Terms of Reference 8, referred the submission to the Literature Committee for review.

**Question 27**

**Would conference discuss and make recommendations as appropriate on ways in which the General Service Board might improve its communications with the fellowship, in particular with regards to its day-to-day functioning and decision-making and in so doing strengthen its accountability to both conference and the wider fellowship.**

TOR No. 10 Considered part of the background material to be misleading. For example, some of the Concepts are incorrectly quoted. However, there were several other questions submitted pertaining to issues raised in this question and as a result have been put forward in composite form whilst maintaining the ‘spirit’ of the question. We do hope that you are able to see the merit in our doing this.

**Question 28**

**Would Conference consider asking the Electronic Sub Committee to provide a search facility for the Conference Section of the website.**

TOR No. 5 This topic was covered at Conference 2022, Committee 2, Question 2 and refer you to the recommendations of that Committee.

**Question 29**

**Review guidelines for Election of Conference Chair, Structure Manual pages 101/102**

TOR No. 12 This is a fair question, but it is somewhat complex.  The committee debated whether it was suitable to send out to the Fellowship as is, or would it be better discussed by the Conference Delegates themselves, given that some will have had experience of attending Conference as an Alternate and could therefore, a more informed discussion could be had at the Conference plenary session.  The Committee voted that the question go to the plenary session at Conference for discussion.

**Question 30**

**Would conference discuss whether the AA 75th convention at Leeds Arena met its remit of being self-supporting.**

TOR No. 8 & 12 TOR 8, because the finances of the 75th Convention haven't yet been published and will be included in the Honorary Treasurer's report to Conference 2023 and TOR 12, because the committee felt that it isn't a question that could be discussed by the Fellowship as a whole, as the finances of the 75th haven't yet been published.

**Question 31**

**Would conference discuss and make recommendations as appropriate on requesting that the General Service Board publish a full and complete list of the job roles and annual salaries for all paid roles that exist in the UK service structure i.e. paid roles on the General Service Board, paid roles at the General Service Offices in York, London, Glasgow etc. and any other paid roles whether full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary or casual created by the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Limited from time to time.**

TOR No. 10 & 12 That the publishing of such information may potentially lead to identification of staff members. There is information in the Document Library of the AAGB website pertaining to roles at GSO and would refer you to this.

**Question 32**

**Would conference discuss, review and make recommendations as appropriate on the circumstances under which the General Service Office might remove a group from the meeting finder maintained on** [**https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/**](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/)

TOR No. 5 This has already been asked within the last 3 years, Conference 2022 Committee 6, question 2.

**Question 34**

**Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience, and make recommendations on how online groups can collect Tradition 7 contributions whilst also being mindful of our spiritual tradition of anonymity, as well as ensuring no affiliation with outside organisations.**

TOR No. 6 The committee may have considered this question with background and more information, however as none was provided it was not possible for this to proceed further.

**Question 35**

**Does Conference have a concern that an increasing number of AA service roles are fulfilled by members of CER based outside Britain, and would Conference consider if it is still appropriate for the Continental European Region (English speaking Europe) to be a part of the UK service structure?**

TOR No. 10 & 11 The committee consider that the background of the question makes a lot of assumptions. CER are part of the UK Service structure because they choose to be and they have the autonomy to decide whichever part of structure to be in. This is not for conference to decide.

**Question 36**

**Would Conference direct the General Service Board to bring back *The AA Service Manual Combined with the Twelve Concepts for World Service* (AA Service Manual) to the literature sold by GSO.**

TOR No. 12 The committee considered the question as presented however note that this documentation is available to obtain from AAWS, its not logistically feasible to stock this in limited space at GSO.

**Question 37**

**Would Conference consider opening a discussion on whether or not the method of electing conference delegates could be improved.**

**In particular it may be worth considering reverting to something like the situation for fourteen years before Regions were created i.e. individual delegates be elected by Intergoups rather than a bloc of six by Regions.**

**It would be quite feasible to keep to approximately the same number of delegates if a majority of larger intergoups were allocated one delegate and the remaining paired into neighbouring intergoups to share a delegate.**

**The advantages would seem to include:**

1. **The delegates would be much more likely to be well known to large numbers of individuals and groups.**
2. **The delegates would inevitably have a much better grasp of the views, attitudes, experience, and problems of their ‘constituency’.**
3. **It would ease the travelling problems of delegates and help to bring much closer involvement of groups in Conference discussion -and it is the Groups who are at the top of our service structure**
4. **It would be much easier for delegates to discharge their responsibility to act and vote according to the dictates of their own conscience if they are not part of a Regional ‘block’ of delegates with the inevitable pressure to conform to the majority.**

**N.B. a) This question is asking Conference to start a discussion, not to vote for any change this year.**

 **b) The question suggests one viable alternative. A full discussion may present others**

 **c) If and when any change is adopted it would be advisable to run it for a five-year trail period. If no improvements arise, the previous system can easily be reinstated.**

TOR No. 10 The Committee considered that the question contained assertions and propositions which cannot be supported. It would not be much easier for delegates to vote according to the dictates of their own conscience in the proposed system. Nor is there pressure to conform to the majority in the current system. Further, the question is weighted heavily in favour of a proposed change, despite the points a) b) and c) at the end.

**Question 38**

**Would Conference conduct a full review of the remit and Terms of Reference of The Conference Steering Committee (CSC). Such a review to include, but not be restricted to, the following issues.**

1.**Should the CSC Terms of Reference be decided by the full Conference rather than by the CSC alone?**

Currently the Terms of Reference are decided by the CSC alone, at their first meeting after the preceding Conference. This gives enormous and unqualified authority to the CSC to determine what issues shall and shall not be debated in Conference, and thus what determines the whole future of AA in GB.

**2.Are there alternatives to rejecting questions? Alternatives could include, but not be limited to, referring the issue to a trustee committee, referring the issue to a subcommittee, programming the topic as a Sharing Session at Conference i.e. where views can be debated without the pressure of having to reach a decision.**

Any question submitted to Conference represents a genuine concern, which may be held by a substantial part of the Fellowship. Rejecting a question can be demoralising for those submitting it, and regular rejection of issues can lead to a lack of faith in the system. Referral to a part of the Fellowship structure for further discussion would engender faith in the system and enable debate to flourish – a process which may well solve at least some the issues which are raised but currently rejected by the CSC.

(It is noted that referral to the GSB or a sub-committee is a current option, but the idea proposed here is to use that option much more instead of rejecting for other reasons.)

1. **Subject to the answer to 2 above, should some or all of the following reasons for rejecting questions be removed from the CSC Terms of Reference:**

**ToR 7) ....covered by existing Conference approved literature.**

This is somewhat illogical as the question may be suggesting a change which would then result in the necessity to change the literature. Everything except the Steps, Traditions and Warranties can be changed by a Conference decision.

(The questioner has experienced proposing a possible change to a procedure only to have the question rejected on the grounds that the Structure Handbook described the current procedure!)

**ToR 9) ......Conference upholds the autonomy of Groups and Intergroups and Regions ......**

This is also illogical. Nothing that Conference decides could possibly affect “the autonomy of....”, as Conference cannot direct the Fellowship. It can only make recommendations which any part of the Fellowship is quite free to accept or ignore.

This reason for rejection can be used by the CSC to reject q question just because they may not like the possible answer. This again puts the CSC in the position of wielding unqualified authority.

**ToR 10) .......submission is based on an assertion or proposition which it considers to be false.**

The danger of this is that, once again, this gives the opinion of the CSC, an undue influence.

**ToR 11) .......considered to be contrary to the Traditions.**

Similarly to 9) and 10) above, whether or not a matter is contrary to Traditions is usually a matter of opinion and the question should be judged by Conference, not just the CSC

**4. Should the question of whether or not the Trustee members of the committee have a vote be decided by Conference rather than the CSC alone**

As for several of the above issues, the question here is how much unqualified authority is delegated to the CSC rather than being exercised by the full Conference

TOR No. 12 The Committee gave careful consideration to the question. It concluded that there were logistical problems with the detailed consideration of Terms of Reference at Conference itself, in the manner which the question suggests. However, the Committee agreed to have a comprehensive discussion of the Terms of Reference at its final meeting, and to report upon that discussion at Conference. That discussion would take into account the specific points which are made in this question.

**Question 42**

**Conference notes that the AA GB Website name has been changed to Alcoholics Anonymous - Great Britain and English-Speaking Continental Europe.**

**Does Conference agree that this should not have been done without the approval of Conference?**

**Furthermore, Conference seeks clarification from the General Service Board as to whether this was a decision taken by the full Board or was an Executive or GSO decision.**

TOR No. 12 Consideration of the question would not be productive as the change of name constituted a factual correction. The name of the website was changed to state the correct name of the charity.

**Question 47**

**Would the Fellowship explore and share its experience on how members of the LGBTQIA+ communities can better be attracted to and made welcome in the Fellowship; and can these be distilled to update the LBGT Voices pamphlet?**

TOR No. 5 This question overlapped considerably with question 1 from committee 3 of Conference 2022, which addressed the question of making our language and literature more inclusive to non-binary and gender-fluid members in a broader sense than in the proposed question

**Question 48**

**Will the Fellowship review its 2019 decision on the use of digital voting equipment during Conference?**

TOR No. 5 Deals with an issue which had been considered by Conference in the previous three years. The Committee had already decided that ‘previous three years’ would include 2019, since there was no Conference in 2020. The question makes it clear that it involves reconsideration of a question discussed in 2019.

**Question 49**

**In view of the significant lack of service positions filled at Intergroup and Region and progressive shortfall of Conference Delegates, weakening the Fellowship’s ability to**

1. **carry out its primary purpose,**
2. **the proper functioning of Conference**

**would the Fellowship share its Experience Strength and Hope on what can be done to arrest and reverse this decline?**

TOR No. 5 Deals with issues which had been considered by Conference in the previous three years. In particular, the issues involved overlap those which were considered by Committee 3 Question 2 in 2021.

In addition, the Committee was concerned that the figures relating to regional delegates to Conference gave a misleading impression as figures for 2022 reflected the immediate post-Covid period.

**Question 53**

**Is the number of people continuing to attend online AA meetings only rather than face to face having a negative impact on the numbers attending face to face meetings? Are we seeing a decline in success rates because of this?**

TOR No. 5 & 12 The Committee decided not to accept the question because it considered that it dealt with matters which had been extensively discussed at Conference 2021 and hence within the last three years (see Committee 6 Question 3).

In addition, the question was felt to be unanswerable as the terms concerned were a subjective matter e g ‘success rate’.

**Question 56**

**Would Conference discuss the benefit of a collection of Public Information materials, accessible via a shared easy access online source.**

**Public Information, carrying the message of AA externally, activity would be much easier for liaison officers by having a ready set of AA materials**:

1. such as flyer templates, artwork, posters and images, and digital posters, letter headers, digital e mails that the fellowship could optionally use or amend
2. such as shared examples of previous PI initiatives

**A single dedicated platform, with easy access for liaison officers**, for shared information, would facilitate PI activity.

TOR No. 8 This was already being dealt with by the General Service Board, in so far as it was such materials were not already available to serving officers. The PI materials do already exist in the file store and the document library. In addition, the need for ready access to the documents in question will be integrated into the new website.

**Question 59**

**Would Conference instruct the General Service Board to create a Trustee led Equality and Diversity sub committee to drive forward the recommendations of 2022 Committee 6 question 1 to help promote inclusivity.**

TOR No. 8 The Committee did not accept this question for Conference but referred it to the General Service Board. A working group had already been set up to deal with the issues arising.

**Question 62**

**Would conference consider changing the chapter titled 'To Wives' in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous to 'To Partners'.**

TOR No. 12 It is asking for something which is impossible. The Fellowship is not able to alter the contents of the Big Book as it is protected by copyright which we do not own.

**Question 63**

**Would conference consider the safeguarding implications that exist when members chose to open a new A.A group meeting without any suitable supervision or guidance? With reference to safeguarding implications I refer to ensuring the safety and overall wellbeing of the newcomer for example, when they attend their first A.A meeting. As it stands presently the only necessary action is for members to locate a premises and open a new meeting and if desired inform structure that they exist for publication within the where to find by filling out the pink slip and also inform the local intergroup for insurance coverage if desired. Would conference consider what possible safety measures could be put in place to address these concerns.**

TOR No. 6 Did not accept this question for Conference, noting that no background material was supplied. In addition, we felt that the topic of safeguarding had been considered fully and in detail at successive Conferences.

**Question 64**

**Could Conference share experience and make recommendations as to how best the Fellowship can embrace and integrate online meetings into the service structure in the aftermath of the pandemic and associated lockdowns?**

TOR No. 5 The Committee did not accept this question as it covered ground which had been discussed by Conference within the last three years. The role of online meetings and their integration within the structure of the Fellowship received detailed discussion in 2021 (see Committee 6 Question 3).

**Question 66**

**Why, when it seems like the holy grail of the Fellowship and the good Doctor himself, is AA not having any opinions regarding the findings of the American Medical profession in 2018, that Alcoholism is now proven to be a physical medical disease and we don't have the enzymes to cope with the Acetone in alcohol therefore creating the physical craving?**

TOR No. 11 The Committee did not accept this question as it considered that it constituted a medical assertion. It was an opinion on an outside issue and consideration by Conference would be contrary to Tradition Ten.