

MINUTES OF THE BADDOW & GALLEYWOOD U3A AGM

Wednesday 12 September 2018 at 14.15

Held at Great Baddow United Reformed Church

Note: Most surnames have been removed from this version of the minutes for privacy reasons

PRESENT: 8 committee members, 67 other members and 4 (non-voting) guests.

1. Meeting Opening

Ron opened the meeting by welcoming visitors and thanking them for attending. He added, for the meeting to be quorate, that a certain number of members must be present. He confirmed that there were sufficient.

Ron read out the names of those who had submitted apologies for absence, and asked if there were any others. Apologies were received from 20 members.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 8 February 2017

Ron pointed out that copies of the minutes were on people's seats.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Chairman's Report

As you will be aware I have acted as your chairman, following the retirement of the elected chairman, Roy, at the end of June and will stand down after the appointment of a new chairman following this AGM. During the year I have also attended several Eastern Branch Meetings and reported matters back to committee.

It is with sadness that during this last term we have lost two prominent members of the U3A – one was Ian Pitwood who was fairly new to the committee, but was an active member of the U3A and the other was Alan Sheahan who was a past chairman – on a couple of occasions I believe and is still missed in the organisation. He had a very good understanding of the U3A and I certainly used him as sounding block. Our thoughts go to their families.

Tony was appointed as Treasurer, in his absence, at the last AGM. I say in his absence because he was on holiday at the time. Shortly after returning he became ill and was unable to continue in the post. I understand that he has recovered now and I am sure we all wish him well. As a result Hugh was persuaded to return and was co-opted onto the committee as Treasurer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hugh for all the hard work that he has undertaken in trying to get the accounts in order and I hope you will appreciate this when he makes his report.

Your committee should not be a passive organisation sitting in the background, it needs to be pro-active and make things happen and in this context your committee has achieved one or two things, during this term in office, which I would like to mention:-

Audio. *I think you can agree that we have improved the audio level in this church and in the end at no cost to the U3A. In the process we considered moving our meeting place to another venue, partly because of the audio but partly because of the parking restrictions. We came to the conclusion that this was still the best venue.*

Chairman's Report (cont'd)

Data Protection Regulations. *There was new legislation imposed on us starting in May this year under the name of General Data Protection Regulation. The Data Protection Act has been in force for a number of years and the main difference now, from our point of view, is that we now have to have everyone's consent to hold their personal information. No written consent-no membership or so it seems.*

Subscriptions. *There is quite a lot of work involved in collecting the subscriptions. Some members pay by standing order and that is a great help, but it is restricted in that only the member can change the amount payable and we have had ex-members who were still paying using this method. Again a lot of work for the Membership Secretary to change or stop the payment being made. Most of you, who use electricity or gas, pay by direct debit and a number of U3A's are now turning to this method for collecting their subscriptions. Having considered this, the committee decided to defer any change for the time being.*

Garden Party. *This, by any standards, was a success. One of the problems with the U3A organisation is that the majority of members join because of a particular interest group and as such do not meet other members of the U3A. Organising a social occasion such as the garden party brings members together which is part of the ethos of the U3A. Unfortunately local venues are limited and restricted in size.*

We were concerned in committee that sometimes when a member is unwell nobody knows about it, and therefore no support of any sort is offered. As a consequence we have recently introduced the post of Welfare Officer to coordinate this.

Lastly on behalf of you all I must thank the committee for the work that they have carried out in the last 18 months or so, and wish the new committee a productive and successful year.

I would also like to thank Sue for undertaking the duties as Minute Secretary, not an easy job under the circumstances and to Roger for setting out and putting away the chairs and tables every month, also to Val & Doreen who have now retired and to Sue who has taken over to provide you all with tea and biscuits and to Maggie for producing the Newsletter on a regular basis – how about you all making a new resolution to contribute an article to help Maggie. On this point Maggie says please send any article about their group or other U3A matters by early October, by email.

Lastly a thank you to all the Co-ordinators and the rest of the members who have actively participated in the U3A and by doing so have kept our U3A alive.

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts

Hugh presented the accounts for the year ending 31 December 2017, highlighting the operating surplus of £1,100 and a current account credit balance of over £9,000. He proposed that the accounts be accepted.

Agreed - Linda. Seconded - Annick.

Hugh pointed out that U3A National Office suggests individual U3As hold funds equivalent to 6 months' expenditure in hand. We hold much more than that and it is increasing. As last year's expenditure had been lower than anticipated, Hugh proposed a reduction in subscription rate from £12 to £9 which we should be able to hold for 3 years. This of course assumes unforeseen events permitting. (Affiliate members would pay £6 rather than £9).

Agreed - Gill. Seconded - Andrew.

6. Appointment of Examiner for the Accounts

Hugh proposed John as examiner for the 2018 accounts.

Agreed - Di. Seconded - Marjorie.

7. To Consider Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

Ron introduced the item and explained that 3 proposed amendments to the constitution now required members' approval.

(a) Clause 3. Charitable Purposes

The object clause needed to be amended as requested by the Charity Commission:-

Current clause (as in the constitution dated September 2017)

The Objects of the U3A are:-

[i] to advance the education of the public and in particular the education of middle aged and older people who are not in full time gainful employment, in Great Baddow and Galleywood and its surrounding locality.

[ii] the provision of facilities for leisure time and recreational activities with the object of improving the conditions of life for the above persons in the interests of their social welfare.

In this constitution "people in their Third Age" has the meaning set out above.

If the U3A is registered as a charity in England and Wales, the charitable purposes of The U3A may only be altered with the prior consent of the Charity Commission.

New Clause

The advancement of education and in particular the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work, by all means including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.

PROPOSAL - to replace the current clause with the new clause.

No objections raised.

(b) Clause 7.iii

The current clause reads:-

The Officers are the Chairman, not more than two Vice-Chairmen, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Officers shall, by virtue of holding their office, be members of the Executive Committee. An individual may only serve in one Officer role at a time.

PROPOSAL - that Officers include the Membership Secretary who would be in post for no more than 3 years.

No objections raised.

(c) Clause 11.iii

The current clause reads:-

The funds of The U3A shall be paid into such accounts as the Executive Committee may open in the name of The U3A. All transactions on such accounts shall be carried out in accordance with the terms of that account as agreed with the account provider and approved and accepted by the Executive Committee from time to time. Only members of the Executive Committee authorised by the Executive Committee to do so may arrange and authorise any transaction on any of The U3A's accounts and dual authorisation shall normally be required for all transactions.

Ron outlined the rationale and benefits of having a single signatory for authorising cheques.

PROPOSAL - to delete '*...and dual authorisation shall normally be required for all transactions*'.

Comments and questions from the floor:-

- One member voiced objection to the proposal, saying that 2 signatories are essential.
- Two committee members explained the awkwardness of having dual signatures.
- What does the U3A National Office recommend? Ron answered - 2 signatures.

Hugh explained the "bureaucratic nonsense" of needing 2 signatures, i.e. the first person signs blank cheques, and a second signature follows. He defended the current arrangement where Maurice examines bank statements, and is required to raise any concerns with the chairman.

To Consider Proposed Amendments to the Constitution (cont'd)

(c) Clause 11.iii (cont'd)

- A member pointed out that banks don't always check signatures on cheques.
- From her own experience, a member voiced support for the concept of a single signatory.

Ron invited votes in support of the proposal in question:-

Votes in favour - 54 (38 + 8 committee members present + 8 received in advance).

Against - 20 (18 present + 2 received in advance).

Abstentions - 4

[Not announced but the resolution was passed as at least 50 votes for the proposal were achieved].

Belatedly, Ron invited votes in support of amending constitution Clauses 3 & 7.iii (see page 3):-

Votes in favour - 55 (37 + 8 committee members present + 10 received in advance).

Against - not determined.

Abstentions - not determined.

[Not announced but the resolution was passed as at least 50 votes for the proposal were achieved].

8. To consider any motions received

None received.

9. Election of a Committee for 2018-19

Ron explained that a new committee needed to be formed at this meeting, and listed the current committee members who were willing to stand for re-election:- Di, Maurice and Loretta. He added that Hugh, currently a co-opted committee member, is willing to be elected. Ron then invited votes for accepting these 4 individuals.

Votes in favour - 15

Against - not determined but no objections raised.

Ron listed those who had been proposed and seconded for election to the new committee as Chris, Debbie, Alan, Pauline & Tony and Sue, and invited votes for accepting all 10 individuals *en bloc*.

Votes in favour - unanimous.

Ron stated that the new committee would meet on Monday 17 September to allocate officers and other roles. (A debate ensued regarding the date of that meeting, resulting in the need to agree a suitable date outside of this AGM). Ron added that he and Sue (previous minute secretary) would facilitate that meeting until a new chairman was appointed.

Ron offered to email some written notes to all new committee members in preparation for their first meeting.

10. Any other business

There was none.

11. Date of Next AGM

September 2019 (exact date to be determined).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.00pm.

Signed as a true record.....(Chairman)

Date.....