

MINUTES OF THE BADDOW & GALLEYWOOD U3A AGM

Wednesday 11 September 2019 at 14.15

Held at Great Baddow United Reformed Church

The AGM commenced at 14.27 following Maurice's presentation to open the main meeting.

PRESENT: Committee members - Di Angel, Hugh Armstrong, Chris Boden, Wendy Burns, Maurice Crockard (chair), Alan Cullen, Tony Hollingsworth, Sue Wells, 74 other members and 0 (non-voting) guests.

1. Meeting Opening

Maurice opened the meeting by welcoming visitors and thanking them for attending.

Maurice stated that 15 members had submitted apologies for absence, and said that the names would be listed in the minutes: Brian and Kath, Katie, Yvonne, Debbie, Stella, Pat, Doreen, Annick, Linda, Sue and Tony, Maggie, Margaret, Loretta.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 12 September 2018

These minutes had been sent to members via Mailchimp but it was noted that there were no copies on seats in the hall. As a result Maurice asked members to contact him following the meeting if they found any errors in the minutes.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Chairman's Report

In September last year, you may recall that a number of hard-working members of Committee, the Treasurer No. 2 Account and the Minutes Secretary decided that it was time to stand down after many years of loyal service between them. I am extremely grateful to Ron, Norma, Martine, John, Gill and Sue for giving generously of their time and helping make the handover to a relatively inexperienced committee go smoothly. Ron deserves special praise for having steered us through a tricky period of constitutional change. (We send him our best wishes in his continuing recovery at home.) At the first meeting of the new committee in September, I was elected Chairman and have tried hard to continue the good work of those who have served before me.

In addition to my appointment, we have greatly benefitted from the commitment and hard work of our new Committee members. Alan Cullen kindly accepted the role of Vice Chairman (and additionally became our Joint Webmaster), Debbie Collins agreed to become Business and Minutes Secretary and Chris Boden took over as Treasurer. Thankfully Loretta Riddel agreed to continue in the time-consuming role of Membership Secretary,

We are indebted to Hugh Armstrong, who agreed to remain on the Committee and has been invaluable in guiding our two new Treasurers through the accounts (and the delights of Excel). Sue Wells has added to her portfolio – in addition to managing our catering, she has also become our Social Events Secretary. In this role she has proposed a number of events which unfortunately met with low responses from our members but organised a very successful coach trip to the Palace Theatre. Sue is also our Welfare Secretary, both phoning and sending cards and flowers to members who are in poor health. She can only do this if she is made aware of a member's ill-health, so please continue to keep her informed. Sue is also our designated Accessibility Officer.

Pauline & Tony Hollingsworth joined the committee when it looked as if we might not have the minimum number stated in our Constitution. Pauline subsequently had to resign on health grounds, but we are grateful to Tony for continuing in this capacity. The co-option of Wendy Burns has allowed us to fully utilise her enthusiasm and excellent organisational skills – Wendy has now become our Co-ordinator of Interest Groups (taking over recently from Di Angel) and also the Treasurer of the No. 2 Account. Di Angel, one of the founders of our U3A, has continued to serve us well as Speaker Secretary as well as her stint as CIG during the year.

We owe Hugh Armstrong a huge debt of gratitude, both for putting our accounts in order and also for sorting out our Gift Aid arrangements with HMRC. This has already made, and will continue to make, a sizeable contribution to our bank balance Hugh also acts as our Central Equipment Officer and stores the equipment.

Various committee members have attended Eastern Region meetings to discover what other local U3As are doing, form new contacts and hear from National Office. In addition we have also attended workshops organised by the National Office of the U3A dealing with Volunteering, Running a U3A and Finances. Reports back on these meetings are distributed to the rest of the committee for information and discussion.

There are many of you who, although not on the committee, continue to make a notable difference to our organisation through your volunteering. The Interest Group Co-ordinators (IGCs) are an integral part of our organisation. For many, especially those who don't wish to, or can't, attend our monthly general meetings, they are our main communication channel and a vital cog in our working mechanism, allowing you as members to pursue activities where you can share your knowledge, enthusiasm and especially enjoyment.

I'm sure you'll agree that Maggie does a wonderful job managing to produce our quarterly newsletter with the help of a number of regular contributors and occasional new one. Anyone can send Maggie an article and share your ideas/thoughts/impressions with the rest of our 460 members. Linda fields our website queries and directs them to the most appropriate responder. Roger makes sure that the halls are suitably laid out for our main meetings, at which a number of you have come forward to provide the teas and coffees. John has kindly continued in the role of Auditor of our Accounts. Our "greeters" are here at the monthly meetings to chat with new members and help them settle in, but this is a job that I hope you will all try to undertake – if you see someone new, just say Hello and make them feel welcome. To all these volunteer helpers, who enable us to function effectively, I extend sincere thanks, both personally and on behalf of the committee and wider membership.

We have tried some innovations during the year – my monthly meeting introduction is now displayed as a series of slides to help those whose hearing may be in decline; this is also shown as a rolling slideshow before the meeting starts (and put on our website for those unable to attend)); we have a closed facebook group to share information with those who might be ill or on holiday; we have re-introduced "greeters" (or "welcomers") to help new members settle in and understand more about our organisation; we have obtained discounted tickets for the National Garden Show. Your feedback on many of these ideas has been appreciated and we will continue to refine them and try out further new ideas. We may not be able to please all the members all the time, but we're certainly willing to keep trying.

During the year, we have also purchased some new equipment, in particular a new table tennis table and this new data projector. The table tennis group members have also clubbed together to buy a further table tennis table, following the transferral of one of the tables belonging to Meadgate Church to an alternative location. We are grateful to Meadgate Church for helping to fund this purchase. The table has become an asset of our U3A.

I would like to encourage the formation of more new interest groups, but this is dependent on your ideas, skills and enthusiasms. If there is a group that you think we could or should be running, please share your ideas with Wendy or myself. If you are able to volunteer to be the co-ordinator, that would be even better. We have created guideline notes to help anyone thinking of becoming a group co-ordinator who is unsure what the role entails.

It is sad but inevitable in an age group such as ours that we will lose members during the year. This year John Westwood, Rosemary Hill and Vera Perry are notable among those that we will miss from our general meetings and Interest Groups. Our thoughts are with their families and friends.

Your committee have tried to be both pro-active and responsive this year. Amongst the matters that we have deliberated over, acted on and, where appropriate, incorporated into our portfolio of documentation and active guidance, are :-

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). *New legislation was imposed on all EU organisations in May 2018, compelling us to be clear what personal data we process,*

obtain consent for processing certain categories of this data and inform people of their rights. During the year, largely guided by Alan Cullen, we set up a small sub-committee to draft and refine versions of our Privacy Policy and Data Protection Policy. Alan also organised training for our IGC's to ensure, through discussion, that these are appropriate and understandable to help ensure a broader spread of knowledge and responsibility.

Membership Forms & Subscriptions. There is quite a lot of work involved in collecting members' data and subscriptions. The form must adhere to our GDPR policies and inform members of their rights and obligations. Some members pay by standing order and that is a great help, but only the member can change the amount payable. Due to our reduction in annual fees this year, this has necessitated extra work refunding money to those who didn't manage to change the amount payable.

Beacon Membership System. The National Office have been putting their weight behind an on-line membership and accounting system, known as Beacon. Alan has undertaken an investigation into how the system works, how well it performs, what efficiencies it might offer us and, most importantly, the impact it might have on you, our members who would have to use it. Alan's report was subsequently discussed and the decision taken not to proceed at this point in time.

Learning Not Lonely. This major report was issued by National Office during the year and many of you will have read it. It has influenced us in trying to make our U3A a more inclusive and welcoming place for people to meet and enjoy their learning experience. If you know of anyone who may be lonely, please take the initiative and invite (or bring) them along – it might just change their life.

Risk Assessment and Incident Reporting. We have started to look at this area and it will feature on the agenda for our next meeting with the IGCs. We hope this will help to ensure the safety of members attending both general and interest group meetings.

Meetings between Committee and IGCs. These are held twice a year to allow both sides to share ideas and knowledge both between groups and with the main membership for the benefit of all. This year our meetings have included training and discussion sessions on Data Protection and updating group web pages.

Guidance Notes for Interest Group Co-ordinators. A small sub-committee was created to draft guidelines for IGCs. After a few meetings this document was approved by committee and now forms part of the welcome package provided to new Co-ordinators. We will also be distributing these notes to existing co-ordinators and discussing them at our next IGC/Committee meeting

In addition to these activities we have also completed many regular tasks which help to ensure that we are running a legal, safe, licensed and compliant charity.

Lastly, well nearly lastly, on behalf of you all I must thank the committee for all the work that they have carried out in the past 12 months. It is perhaps a testimony to our harmony as a team that all the committee are willing to serve for a further term and I'm sure we will all have another enjoyable, productive and successful year.

Lastly a huge thank you to all the Interest Group Co-ordinators and you, our members, who have been actively involved in our U3A and by doing so have helped to keep it thriving, stimulating and hopefully fun.

There were no questions.

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts

Chris thanked Hugh Armstrong for his support, and Gill and Wendy Burns for their work on the No. 2 account.

Copies of the accounts, including a commentary, had been left on seats in the hall. Chris reported that the major change during the year had been the reduction in the membership fee, made possible by the margin in the previous year and the high level of reserves. The membership fee will remain at £9 for 2020 and possibly beyond. This reduction had

unfortunately resulted in the need for refunds to those members who paid by standing order but had not updated their payment instructions.

Question: Have there been any more capital proposals?

Answer: None received to date, and any received will be considered by the committee.

Question: Why does it appear that there was no Gift Aid last year?

Answer: Gift Aid has been received in both the last two years, as shown in the accounts under the Income heading. Hence the figure shown in Assets under "Gift Aid Recoverable" was correctly shown as zero.

Observation: Speakers at the monthly meetings are getting more expensive.

Motion: The accounts for 2018 are accepted.

Proposed: Martine. Seconded: Allen. No objections.

6. Re-Appointment of Examiner for the Accounts

Motion: To thank John as examiner of the 2018 accounts and to re-appoint him for the 2019 accounts.

Proposed: Maurice Crockard. Seconded: Sue Wells. No objections.

7. To consider any motions received

None received.

8. Election of Executive Committee for 2019-2020

The existing committee have offered themselves for re-election and there were no new nominations. There were no objections to the existing committee members continuing.

Maurice explained that the roles of officers will be agreed by the committee at the next meeting, to be held on 7 October 2019.

9. Any other business

There was none.

10. Date of Next AGM

Maurice said that the next AGM may be held earlier than September 2020 to reduce the delay in approving the accounts.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 14.58.

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

Date.....