

Burton-on-Trent u3a Committee meeting

Held at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday 5th September 2023 at Priory Centre, Stretton, Burton-on-Trent.

Present: Mike Payne (Chair)/ Neil Davenport (V Chair)/ Rosemary Marsden (Secretary)/ Michael Bartlett (Interest groups coordinator) / Valerie Bentinck / Beverley Bhaskare / Bimal Jangra (Newsletter) / Jane Kent (Beacon) / Glynis Lewis / Hugh Rodger (Accessibility) / Christine Davenport (Comms) / Lynne Wilson

Apologies: Kathy Hines/ Linda Walker

Welcome Mike Payne welcomed everyone.

Approval of amended minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2023. Proposed by BJ seconded by M P Payne. All agreed

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st August 2023 were accepted as a true record subject to the amendment raised by BJ regarding the incorrect reporting of the computer group which the secretary will correct, approved by MP.

1. Matters arising

The date of the coordinators meeting has been changed to 14th September from 15th September 2023. M B has organized the room at Priory Centre and emailed all group leaders concerned. All coordinators have been made aware of the change.

2. Chairs Report

The chairman advised that he had dealt with all the routine matters pertaining to the u3a group and apologized for late materials to the committee. He reported that normally he attends the coffee mornings to meet new members but has only been able to attend one this month.

The chairman advised Barry Appleby had resigned as events organiser due to ill health. In the interim MB had stepped in to cover the recent 'Talk and Tea' event. A replacement for Barry will be required.

The chairman has two large cardboard boxes of DVD recordings for German Language and Shakespeare studies which he has no storage room for. Various ideas were forwarded by the committee regarding the offer of storage, in case these could be used in future.

Action: HR to try and follow up a contact.

Action: MB/ CD will explore the possibility of finding a group leader for beginners German.

Chairman had had comments re the inadequacy of Warrington's Coaches. This was discussed in relation to physical comfort and accessibility space around seats. MP advised that he had found the seats short on leg room, others also had varying issues. MP felt members may be willing to pay a little more for a comfortable trip on longer journeys.

Action Diane Brewster to be asked to look into other coach companies.

The u3a national AGM is in Milton Keynes and is online on 18th October 2023, MP will attend online unless anyone else from committee wants to attend.

3 Secretary Report tabled

There are two 'official' Facebook accounts for u3a: "Keeping in touch" and "Fit for the future" worth a look at. Moderators are setting up zones for committee roles which might prove useful.

4. Treasurers Report tabled

MP commented that the Treasurers report seemed in order, with nothing unexpected. BJ queried why the sum column was expressed by Delta, a term perhaps unfamiliar to some. Suggested that English wording used in future.

5. Membership report tabled

Membership continues to grow within our branch.

6. Interest group report tabled

Included in the report from MB was a list of the average attendance for each interest group, a paper copy was distributed to the committee members present. The figures for some groups were queried as unexpectedly low in comparison to perceived attendance although averages are not fully representative of data. RM reported that the figures for Bowls are for TWO groups, not one so an average for both is misleading.

Regarding the forthcoming coordinators' meeting Michael reported that he will distribute an agenda and have an open forum for Q and A. Rosemary suggested that questions are invited from member attendees ahead of the meeting to expediate progress.

7. Accessibility report

The current policy was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting for them to read.

HR noted that the current accessibility policy dated May 2022 is pragmatic and is a voluntary, not legal set of guidelines for u3a groups. Local policy can be developed from the feedback from coordinators rather than an 'inspection' type of role to venues where activities take place. HR sees his role as a resource in supporting group leaders in managing adjustments for disability issues as they arise in individual members. RM suggested that HR might be involved in providing information about general accessibility for members to events e.g., Talk & Tea, Christmas Party etc. Discussion took place regarding the parameters of 'duty of care' regarding accessibility issues at some events, e.g., group leaders who run groups from their own homes. Financial implications might be involved if a 'home' group must be relocated to a different venue, or we might even lose a group. JK to give HR access to coordinators via Beacon.

Action: Accessibility policy to be reviewed in September 2024

8. Events

As noted above, BA is unwell and has handed the Events file and ticket monies to MB who, as interest groups coordinator, is unable to also take on the Events role. RM said Mary Corbett, the previous Events coordinator had offered to help but it was felt that the committee should be able to manage. GL / RM offered to buy raffle prizes. CD noted that events are organised up to March 2024, but an events organiser must be found. BB and VB offered to take up the role as a joint position and will attend the next coffee morning to sell tickets for Christmas events. MP will write them a job description.

Action MP

CD also advised that a list of potential speakers is available on the u3a website, and that future events post March 2024 should be being considered / booked before too long. Regarding events venues for large meetings, Riverside Church is increasingly costly, and it might be worth looking for an alternative. CD noted that the Town Hall is advertising the availability of an event room.

Action BB /VB to commence the joint role of Events organisation.

Action VB will contact Town Hall for costs etc. and monitor ticket sales for the Christmas Party, if slow then contact groups via MB to promote sales.

9. Beacon

Nothing to report other than training sessions for Beacon are available next year.

10. GDPR

ND reported that some technical issues between Beacon and Absolute Webmail are now resolved.

11. Communications

Nothing to report.

12.Publicity/Newsletter

BJ stated that the Autumn newsletter had been distributed to all members online and posted to those not accessing computers by BB. Price has gone up, 50 newsletters are 'spare' and will be taken to coffee morning next week. The poster to advertise Burton u3a is designed and the committee discussed size, numbers and costing. It was agreed 100 posters of A4 size are ordered from SoloPress at a cost of £21.54.

Approved by CD / RM

Action BJ

BB thought that A5 is preferable for some notice boards. BJ to check on how many A5 posters are in store before ordering new. A group leader of the Art group wants to modify the A5 poster to include group leaders telephone number. This was felt not to be appropriate and would require committee approval at least.

Any Other Business

Request for funding for 1st Aid kit for short walks. A necessity as MP giving up the role of coordinator, he has previously used his own kit. Cost around £20 unanimously agreed.

Feedback from recent 'Talk & Tea at Riverside Church on independent travel. 87 attended and the event went well. However, one attendee contacted RM and reported some difficulties in hearing speakers although she was seated at the back of the hall, and it was her first attendance following difficult personal circumstances. Committee members also reported that the overhead projector screen had some issues with light and position. The committee agreed via discussion that attending a large event as a new member was daunting for some.

The meeting closed at 11:36 approximately and members thanked for their attendance.

Next meeting- Tuesday 3rd October at 9:30 at the Priory Centre Stretton DE13 0HE