



Chester U3A
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held by Video Conference
on Wednesday 27th May 2020 at 12:15.

Present:

Jenny Carley	Chair	Ben John	Vice Chair
Gary Nye	Treasurer	Sue Foy	Speaker secretary
Liz Flanagan	Social secretary	Joyce Carrington	Communication (JCn)
Andrew Cross	IT & Beacon	Jeff Howard	Membership Secretary
Alison Betts	Committee Member		

1. Apologies for absence:

Kay Lunt	Groups secretary	Graham Proctor	Committee Member
Bob Davies	Business Secretary		

2. Minutes of meeting (29th April)

The minutes of the meeting were reviewed, approved & initialed by JC.

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere.

JCn requested clarification regarding the situation where group members had paid hall fees but due to Covid-19 could not meet. GN said holding a credit against future fees was best but if a group member insisted on a refund he could organise that. He would include the relevant information from group hall rents in the annual report.

4. GDPR

A letter clarifying the policy regarding member to member sharing of email addresses as part of group activities has been received from National Office. The decision is that neither 'legitimate interest' nor 'Privacy policy' can be used by U3A Chester to allow sharing of email addresses between members. Group coordinators must use Bcc to send out emails to their members. If group members wish to share email addresses to aid group activities they must agree to do so as a group of friends outside the responsibility of Chester U3A. This will be emphasised to group coordinators & the website will be updated accordingly.

Action: JC,AC

5. Chairman's Report.

- a) The monthly news sheet is being emailed to all members who have email addresses on Beacon.
- b) A short document entitled 'The Trust's Development Plan' was circulated prior to the meeting. JC reported that a Deeside & Wirral Network meeting via Zoom was scheduled for that afternoon (27th May) if any committee member wished to attend. The development plan would be discussed & a Trustee would be taking questions.
- c) JC reported that the U3A Day is still scheduled for 1st October.

Action: All

6. Business Secretary

No report.

7. Finance.

GN distributed the current report of receipts & payments for 2019-20 prior to the meeting. A significant annual surplus is projected at present to be in excess of £3000 as the unforeseen circumstance of Covid-19 had reduced costs for hall bookings etc. There was discussion around possible purchase of Zoom licenses for groups however that would not be suitable. Groups finance their own meetings. It was suggested that any group could use multiple free Zoom 40-minute sessions perhaps with a break between. GN stated that he is now a trainer on Zoom for the U3A Trust & would be happy to organise a training session for Chester members. JC to include that in her next newsletter. **Action: GN,JC**

8. Social.

LF reported that there was £3000 in the social fund against trips that cannot go ahead as planned due to the Covid-19 restrictions. There is no prospect of being able to reschedule the outings or organise coach travel for the foreseeable future so the money should be refunded. LF is to contact those to whom money is owed & obtain their bank details. GN will then make the necessary payments. LF notified the committee that she wishes to stand down as Social Secretary at the next AGM, she will continue to support the social committee.

Action: GN,LF

9. Membership.

Renewal Process

JH reported there are 1109 members currently. There have been no requests from new members. Prior to the meeting JH had circulated a timetable & proposed communications for members regarding the renewal of membership for 20/21. AC expressed the view that there should be more emphasis *that there will* be the opportunity to renew online & by post as usual rather than there is no opportunity for members to renew in person. Whilst every member must have contact details on Beacon there are approximately 105 members who do not have an email address registered. A postal renewal pack was suggested for those members, however that would involve some expense & administrative work. Group coordinators will be asked to ensure all their group members are able to renew. Those without email who do not belong to a group have been contacted in the past & almost all said they had contact with a member who kept them informed. Renewal information to be included in the July news sheet. GN requested that the option for joint membership should also be included at that time. GN will update Beacon for members requesting joint memberships. Postal applications should be seen as a last resort due to cost and administration time. BJ left the meeting.

Action JH

Renewal Fee.

Prior to the meeting GN and JC had each issued short documents setting out their opposing views on whether or not to reduce the membership renewal fee by £2 to £10 as a one-off for the year 20/21. GN felt the projected surplus of £3000+ warranted the reduction. JC pointed out that previous changes had caused confusion plus the fixed costs to National Office will not be reduced as they are set by the maximum membership number as at April 2020. JC stated that Chester renewal fees are amongst the lowest yet provided more for members than many others. SF pointed out that Tuesday & Thursday meetings are still available to members but on-line rather than in a hall. Also that this is set to continue in the current circumstance & provides better value for members who have not attended in person previously.

JC reported that she had received an email from GP stating that he wished to vote to keep the fee at £12. GN acknowledged the issue of the fixed fee to National Office & possible confusion but felt the surplus justified a rebate for 1 year only. JC felt the surplus may well be necessary to help counteract cost increases due to Covid-19 & that the members were being well supported with facilities to stay in touch such as on-line Tuesday & Thursday meetings & zoom coffee mornings. AC felt a reduction was justified. JC asked those present to vote.

In favour of a £10 renewal fee were:- GN, AC, JH

Those in favour of keeping the £12 fee were:- JC, GP, SF, JcN, AB

JC stated that the decision to keep the renewal fee at £12 for 2020/21 had been carried by a

majority vote of 5 to 3.

Action: JH,JC,GN

10. Communication

JCn reported that all information including news is available on the Chester U3A website. SF expressed the view that more should be posted to the closed group Facebook page. Nothing has been sent. JCn is not receiving anything to add. SF uncertain as to whether comments received are being posted but she has no access authority to check. AC reported that only when prompted is anything received for addition to the website & even then there is very little to add even though many groups are still active. JC to encourage more groups to provide updates & feedback in the newsletter.

Action JC

11. Tuesday & Thursday Monthly Meetings.

SF has been sending emails to members detailing links to talks available in place of Thursday meetings & has had good feedback. SF reported that 287 (so far) members had accessed last month's Tuesday meeting so far. SF felt this gave members good value for money & provided a service to the disabled & house-bound. SF suggested there was a possibility of joining with another U3As to commission more expensive speakers & share the costs. JC believed Heswall were interested. SF felt there were more opportunities & technologies which should be explored for the future. JCn was concerned for those unable or unwilling to use technology.

Action: SF

12. Beacon Upgrade.

GN reported there was no further information regarding the pilot for upgrade to the new release of Beacon. September was the earliest possible implementation date.

Action: GN

13. Beacon & Website.

AC submitted a written report prior to the meeting. AC reported there was little information regarding current group activity. JC reported that BJ had been contacting groups. JCn asked that group coordinators provided new information. AC suggested there should be information regarding alternatives to Zoom such as meetJitsi.

14. Dates for the Diary

The next meeting is scheduled for 24th June by Zoom conference call @ 11:30am

Action: All

15. Close

Meeting closed at 13:50

Summary of decisions.

Any sharing of member's email addresses can only be with their consent.

Monies held against social events that could not take place will be refunded.

Zoom training would be offered to members.

Monthly meeting talks will continue to be available on-line to members.

All information & news will be made available on the website.

GN to continue participation in new Beacon pilot.

Membership renewal process to be finalised.

Membership joining & renewal fees to stay unchanged.