

THE CRANLEIGH AND DISTRICT U3A

Minutes of the Twenty Third Annual General Meeting held at Cranleigh Arts Centre on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Present: Committee - Veronica Barnard (Chair), Don Henderson, Martin Hayton, Hilary Ball, Maggie Atkins, Caroline Todman and 67 members.

Apologies for Absence: Veronica Adnitt, Jane Barker, Gwneth and Anthony Brearley, Rosemary Burt, Edwina Burton, Bob Callard, Geoffrey Calvert, William Calvert, Alan and Gill Carr, Anthony and Penny Coles, Elaine Collier, Gill Ford, Theresa Hart, Angela Hardman, David and Rosemary Hickman, Meriel Hunt, Felicity Isaac, Sue Kariuki, Linda Koniotes, Caroline Lucas, Chrissy Mann, Belinda Martin, Barry and Sandy Mursell, Jill Palmer, Barbara Pearce, Cynthia Plewman, Jean Quallington, Diana Richardson, Hilary Roberts, Helen Rollo, Patrick and Anne Scully, Jean Smith, Sally and Malcolm Terson, Pauline Thakore, Clare Topham, Margaret and Roger Townsend, Russel Warburton, Barbara White, Peter Williams.

Chairman Veronica Barnard opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

1 Minutes of Meeting held on 28 October 2020

Veronica said that all members had been sent the Minutes of the meeting called on 28 October 2020. Veronica explained that that meeting was not a valid AGM, because there was no quorum. In accordance with Charity Commission advice, the Committee had met after that meeting to carry out the usual business of the inquorate AGM. The Committee felt, however, that it was right to ask this meeting to approve the minutes of the 28 October 2020 meeting.

The minutes of the 28 October 2020 meeting were approved unanimously.

2 Chairman's Report for the period 1 September 2020 - 31 August 2021.

The Chairman said that a year ago we had our AGM via Zoom – a totally new experience, so it was lovely to be here at the Arts Centre and to have so many members able to join us.

Covid had certainly had far reaching effects on all of us and this had reflected, slightly, on our membership, currently at 868 from 960 last year. No doubt many people were still feeling cautious about mixing with other people indoors, but Veronica was confident that our numbers would increase as we adapted to the new normal.

We had quite a number of new members this year, despite being unable to have our traditional Open Day for the second year running. We did however, have a stand, with our new u3a banner proudly waving, at two Cranleigh events - Cranleigh Bounces Back and Cranleigh Carnival - and these events had generated considerable interest, particularly from new residents to the area.

All our groups were now meeting, albeit some in new, temporary venues, as the Village Hall will not be available until, probably, February 2022. We had a variety of new groups and were always happy to consider others. We really had a diverse selection, with 60 groups.

Some members of the Committee had worked incredibly hard this year to have the Beacon System up and running. After some initial mixed feelings, Veronica believed that the majority of members and Group Leaders now see the benefits of Beacon.

Since March 2020, some long standing Group Leaders had decided to step down, often after many years of running their groups. In the majority of cases new leaders have stepped up to take the groups forward. Veronica thanked all the retiring and the new leaders for everything they did.

Veronica said that, at the end of 2020, Jenny Marty, our long serving Secretary, had stepped down from that role. Jenny was much missed and Veronica thanked Jenny for all her work.

We were currently looking for two more members to join the Committee. If any member felt this was something they might consider, please speak to any member of the Committee.

Summing up, Veronica said that after the trials and tribulations of the past 18 months, it was now time to move on and get back to doing what the u3a is best at: learning, doing, enjoying and being with friends.

3 Statement of Accounts for the Year Ending 31 August 2021

(A copy of the Accounts had been circulated to members by email and further copies were available at the meeting.)

Treasurer Martin Hayton began by thanking Roy Glasper for, once again, acting as Examiner for the Accounts. Roy's expertise and advice had been of enormous benefit to Martin.

Martin highlighted for the meeting the key points from the Accounts. Because Membership subscriptions had been waived for 2020/21, our only income this year had been £3 interest on our Deposit Account. Because we were unable to pursue all our normal activities for most of the year, however, our Expenditure also was much reduced.

Our main expenses were the annual subscription to the Third age Trust (£3,325) and Administration (£4,852). Because of Covid restrictions, some of our Administration costs were higher than normal this year, but they should return to normal levels in 2021/22. Martin mentioned, in particular, higher printing and postage - as a result of more frequent Newsletters to keep members informed, Zoom fees - for the 2020 AGM, and Committee and Group meetings, payment for Third Age Matters magazine - normally covered by subscriptions, and our first licence fee for Beacon - £819, but, noted that, although this would be a recurring expense, in future years this should be offset by savings in printing and postage costs.

As a result of the "subscription holiday" last year, our annual deficit was £8,416. This reduced our reserves to £28,254, but this was still above our target level of reserves of the order of £17000/£18,000.

We had, therefore, been able to maintain our 2021/22 membership subscription at the reduced level of £16 per person (plus £3 for TAM). Martin noted that in 2016, we had reduced our membership subscription from £20 per person to £18 per person, and in 2019 further reduced the membership subscription, from £18 per person to £16 per person.

We expected a further deficit in 2021/22, estimated of the order of £5,000, and we also expected that we would need to increase subscriptions in 2022/23.

Finally, Martin noted that, now that we were using Beacon, replacing the various Excel spreadsheets, this provided much greater security and transparency, as well as allowing book-keeping tasks to be shared by more than one person.

Martin invited any questions.

Derek Bonham asked whether the Beacon fee reduced if the number of members increased. Martin said the fee was fixed at £1 per member, whatever the number of members.

The Statement of Accounts was approved unanimously.

4 Election of Officers

The eight members of the Management Committee were willing to stand for re-election, namely:

Veronica Barnard (Chairman), Don Henderson (Secretary), Martin Hayton (Treasurer), Hilary Ball (Membership Secretary), Angela Hardman (Group Leader Co-ordinator), Maggie Atkins (Outings Manager), Barbara White (Newsletter Editor) and Caroline Todman (Publicity Officer).

The members of the Management Committee were re-elected unanimously.

5 Examiner for the Accounts

The meeting unanimously approved the appointment of Roy Glasper as Examiner for the Accounts.

6 Amendments to the Constitution as set out in the Notice of the Meeting

Don Henderson said that the proposed amendments to our constitution were required for two purposes.

First, as a result of the experience of the Covid pandemic, to allow the Committee to call General Meetings allowing attendance and voting virtually i.e. by electronic means. Usually, there would still be an in-person meeting as today, but with members able to attend and vote electronically, in addition to this in-person meeting.

In exceptional circumstances, if in the reasonable opinion of the Committee it was not possible to hold an effective meeting, either in person, or in a combination of in-person and by electronic means, the Committee may call a meeting by electronic means only.

Committee meetings or sub-committee meetings may also be held electronically, if the Committee or sub-committee so decide.

Secondly, our current constitution provided that, for a General Meeting, the quorum was the lesser of 20% of our members, or 50 members. There was no mechanism to deal with the situation where a General Meeting is called, but there is no quorum.

The new clauses provide that if, within 30 minutes of the time set for the meeting, or if during a meeting, a quorum ceased to be present, then the meeting is adjourned to a time and place determined by the Committee. The Committee must re-convene the meeting giving at least seven clear days' notice. If no quorum is present at the re-convened meeting within fifteen minutes of the time specified, the members present constitute a quorum.

Don said that, in accordance with the terms under which we were affiliated to The U3A Trust, the Trust had approved the changes proposed.

The meeting unanimously approved the amendments to our constitution set out in the Schedule to the Notice of the meeting.

(A copy of the Notice is attached to these minutes.)

7 Any Other Business

There being no other business, Chairman Veronica Barnard thanked everyone for coming and declared the meeting closed.

Don Henderson

Secretary

21 October 2021

