

U3A Cranleigh & District Area

Minutes of the Twenty Second Virtual Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 28 October 2020

Present: Forty-four members joined the meeting via Zoom or telephone.

Since the quorum is 50, no votes were able to be taken. The Minutes of the 2019 AGM, the Statement of Accounts for September 2019-August 2020, and the Election of Officers for September 2020-August 2021 were all approved in a subsequent meeting held by the Committee (as required by the Charity Commission in the case of inquorate AGMs).

Apologies for Absence: Liz Atkinson, Jill Buckley, Edwina Burton, Marilyn Duncan, Geoff Edwards, John Greenwood, Tony Hodge, Belinda Martin, Susan Martin, Mike Payne, Ann & Tony Riches, Dorothy Shearman.

Chairman Veronica Barnard opened the meeting by welcoming everyone participating.

She noted that all members had been sent the Minutes of last year's AGM, and gave her Annual Report for the period 1 September 2019 - 31 August 2020.

Chairman's Report

Veronica Barnard said that this had been a very strange year for everyone, the U3A being no exception and had definitely been a year of two halves. Due to the exceptional circumstances she proposed to talk about the situation up to today, rather than stop at August 31st.

There were 960 Members, and 60 different interest groups. September 2019 started with two new groups, *Beginners Spanish* and *Coarse Fishing*, both were well supported, followed in January 2020 by *Spanish Conversation*, *Chess* and *Active Adventurers*.

Then, in March, everything stopped as Coronavirus held us in its grip. She paid tribute here to the many Group Leaders who had kept in touch with their members, either by phone or with Zoom meetings and, in particular, Derek Bonham who had kept us all entertained with his quiz throughout, via the Newsletter and to his members online. The following Group Leaders who had recently stepped down after many years of leadership were thanked - Geoff Edwards of *Wednesday Short Walks*, Giovanni Fontebasso with *Wine Appreciation*, Don Groves with *Investment & Money Matters*, Betty Seeley with *Flower Arranging* and Linda Cook with *Scrabble*. In most cases we had been fortunate, in these troubled times, to have found new leaders for the groups.

She knew how hard it was at the beginning, to not see family and friends, to struggle to get groceries both physically and with home deliveries. We were lucky that the weather was kind to us almost from the start of lockdown which made it all a little more bearable. Things eased somewhat when the garden centres and less essential shops were able to re-open, and we were able to see other people, albeit outdoors. It was good to catch up.

The Committee made the decision that, as no groups had been able to meet since 23rd March, and there was no clear idea when things might resume, all existing members would be given free membership for 2020-2021. The new Handbook was printed and delivered knowing that it might be a while before it was able to be used.

With further easing and much optimism Angela Hardman, Group Leader Co-ordinator, began the mammoth task of drawing up the various risk assessments that would be needed for our groups to resume, safely and legally. At that time, October was being envisaged as a start point but then came the Government's "Rule of Six" and the majority were put on hold once more. The following information, having been received from the U3A Trust, had been sent to Group Leaders the previous week: the *Walking Groups* could go ahead following government guidelines and the Ramblers' Covid Risk Assessment, with numbers restricted to allow social distancing. *Coarse Fishing* was a small group and by the nature of the sport, socially distanced themselves; *Table Tennis* and *Badminton* had resumed with members in "bubbles" of six. The Arts Centre was due to re-open in November and the *Arts and Crafts* and *Painting and Drawing* groups intended to resume with a trial run of six members. Face coverings had to be worn for the duration of any stay in the Centre and no refreshments would be available.

With the new governmental "Tiers" of restrictions in place, thoughts of the majority of groups resuming were looking further away. She realized how frustrating it was and the Committee were also members who were eager to resume their activities, but we needed to ensure that our U3A was both safe and following the U3A Trust and government rulings.

The Chairman drew attention to *Trust U3A* learning via Zoom, which, although not a replacement for real time groups, did offer a wide variety of interest areas, some 54 at the current time, and was being offered to U3A members for just £4.00 per year.

She said she knew it was hard, and families were concerned as to whether they would be able to see one another over Christmas, now only 8 weeks away. But she was sure that we would get through this, and life would get back to some form of normal if everyone played their part. She was sure that all members were looking forward to seeing their U3A friends again.

Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31 August 2020

(A copy of the Accounts had been circulated to all members previously)

Treasurer Martin Hayton presented the Accounts on screen. He pointed out that obviously Income had markedly shrunk, for two reasons. Firstly, because Subscriptions had been reduced to £16 and correspondingly Gift Aid receipts were less. Secondly, because all activities ceased with the lockdown in March, and so income from group activities, and income from Outings was much less than in the previous year.

There had been similar reductions in Expenditure, because Hall Hire had of course stopped at the end of March, and no expenses were incurred for Outings or group activities once the lockdown commenced. The annual Members' Subscription to the Third Age Trust had been paid, as usual.

As a result, the year had ended up with a surplus of £1,974, despite last year an overall deficit having been planned for.

Reserves now stood at £36,690, still much higher than our target figure of £17,000-£18,000. He was therefore confident that we would be able to survive the 2020/21 year with no income as we were in a healthy financial position.

There was one question from member Derek Bonham who asked whether our U3A had had to pay for the hire of any venues that were not able to be used after the end of March 2020. The Treasurer replied that not one of our hirers had asked for such fees to be paid.

Election of the Management Committee

All 9 members of the Management Committee were willing to stand for re-election: Veronica Barnard (Chairman); Jenny Marty (Secretary); Martin Hayton (Treasurer); Hilary Ball (Membership Secretary); Angela Hardman (Group Leader Coordinator); Maggie Atkins (Outings Leader); Barbara White (Newsletter Editor); Caroline Todman (Publicity) and Don Henderson.

Any Other Business

Chairman Veronica Barnard thanked Brian Birchall, who had retired from the Committee in January, for his service to the Committee and U3A over the years.

Treasurer Martin Hayton thanked Roy Glasper for auditing the Accounts again.

Member Roger Green proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee for all their hard work to keep the U3A going during the Covid-19 crisis, and especially to Group Leader Coordinator Angela Hardman for all her efforts and help to enable the Walking Groups to resume.

Member Stephen Dennison asked the Group Leader Coordinator whether she would keep the ability of groups to re-start under constant review if government advice changed in the future; she assured him that this was done on an ongoing weekly basis, always following the latest advice from the U3A Trust which itself was based on governmental guidelines and updated regularly as required. He also wondered whether U3A groups could be considered as "educational" and therefore allowed to continue as schools were. Angela Hardman responded that the U3A Trust clearly stated that there should be NO exceptions to the "Rule of Six" except for outside sport and exercise, such as the Walking Groups. As soon as the guidelines changed, then our U3A would change.

There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked all for attending via Zoom or telephone in these unusual circumstances and wished everyone well.

Jennifer Marty

Hon. Secretary

October 29 2020

U3A Cranleigh & District Area

ADDENDUM to the Minutes of the Twenty Second Virtual Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 28 October 2020

Present : All nine Committee Members

This meeting was held due to the Virtual AGM being inquorate. In order to comply with the Charity Commission regulations regarding Covid-19, this separate meeting was held and attended by the full Committee.

The Minutes of the 2019 AGM were approved unanimously.

The Statement of Accounts for 2019-20 was approved unanimously.

The Election of Officers for the year 2020-2021 was approved unanimously.

Jennifer Marty

Hon. Secretary

October 28 2020