Minutes of the Committee Meeting held 10th May 2023 at 4pm

Saint Paul's Northgate

Attending: Chair (Jim McGough), Secretary (Margaret Lloyd); Treasurer (Graham Friday), Communications Coordinator (Sue Parker), Peter Beckley (Groups Coordinator), Members Coordinator (Jacqui Mercer), and Access Coordinator (Janet Newson).

Standing Items

Agenda Item 1: Apologies for absence

None

Agenda Item 2(i): Minutes of the 12th April meeting

Approved with no amendments.

Agenda Item 2(ii): Text for Group Leaders on Charitable Objects

The text was agreed, but reservations were expressed around what it was expected to achieve, in that if we were expecting Group Leaders (GLs) to identify the learning element of each activity then this would be seen as yet another of those bureaucratic burdens which discourage members from becoming GLs, and if we were not expecting GLs to do anything then what was the point of it?

The Chair and Secretary argued that learning and personal development were supposed to be essential components of all u3a activities, and that members are made aware of this when they join by means of the Principles of the u3a Movement and the Members Code of Conduct. Hence we should remind GLs of this, though it is not expected that they document in any way the learning components of activities.

It was agreed that the text should not be shown on the Web Risk Assessment sub-page, or on any other webpage page, but that it should be included within the next, expanded, edition of the Group Leaders' Procedures Guide (to become the Group leaders Handbook).

Action: Secretary to add to list of items to go into the Group Leaders Handbook

Action: Comms Coordinator to incorporate a short piece into the June Newsletter reminding all members that they welcome to attend meetings of the Committee as an observer.

Agenda Item 2(iii): Review of Action Log

On item 11 on the colour printing allowance it was pointed out that a consensus had NOT been reached that the cost of home colour printing was around 8p. The Treasurer said the unit cost can vary considerably depending upon the printer and cartridge type. He confirmed that he would refund actual costs where they were higher than 8p per side, if he received details on the cost of the cartridge and the extent to which it was used for u3a purposes.

Action: Treasurer to seek Stuart Sole's help in linking the u3a printer to the Members' Coordinator laptop.

Agenda Item 3: Monthly Updates from the Third Age Trust and Committee Members

On the Third Age Trust it was noted that a zoom event "Conversation with the CEO, Sam Mauger" was scheduled for the next day, May 11th, at 14:00. The Chair and Secretary were intending to book a place [subsequently moved to 26th June 14:00].

The <u>Chair</u> stated that he had been informed by the GL of French that their member numbers appeared to have stabilised for now and that they had decided to continue as usual for the rest of this term and take stock in the autumn once enrolment for the 2023/24 year was confirmed.

An additional point for the Groups Coordinator report was that the manager of St Paul's had asked all organisations using the premises whether they wished to advertise themselves on the new rolling screen installed in the welcome hall, at a cost of £5.00 per month. The Committee agreed we should take up this opportunity.

Report from Sub-Committees

Agenda Item 4: Report from Out and About (O&A) Phase 1 Working Group Meeting 25th April

The Treasurer reported that the consensus had been that the existing O&A groups (1, 4, 6 and 7) were operating well and that to impose any changes, other than providing additional support to help co-ordination when required, would be counterproductive.

Although O&A Group 2 members had not, unlike those of O&A Group 5, paid group fees for 2022/23, some of them were still keen to be absorbed into other groups in the way planned for O&A Group 5 members.

Another meeting of this Phase 1 Leadership Issues Working Group not felt to be necessary. The actions listed were approved and would be followed up, apart from the action around the launching of new "Focussed Interest" groups which would be further considered by the Committee when looking at the development of new groups generally.

A working group with a slightly different composition (including Maggie Berrill and Liz Tenant) would now be formed for Phase 2, looking at the Management and Operation of Trips (see 8th February committee meeting papers, Agenda Item 6, for the list of tasks for Phase 2).

Action: Ensure all actions agreed by the Phase 1 WG are completed

Action: Committee to decide who should lead the O&A Phase 2 Working Group.

Non-Standing Items for Discussion

Agenda Item 5: 2023/24 Financial Year: Budget & Fee Levels (2nd of 3 reports)

The Committee approved the content and presentation of the 2023/24 budget with only the following concerns raised:

(i) The cost of Quickbooks, which seemed high compared to the revenue it was currently used to collect. The Treasurer explained that:

 a) Although he uses spreadsheets to do much of the accounting work using Quickbooks is the only way he can format the invoices and access the internet to send them out.

 b) The finance module within Beacon is only suitable for u3as for which one membership fee covered everything, it does not allow for the separate charging of group fees. The Third Age Trust does have plans to look at developing Beacon so that it can do this in future.

 c) It should be possible to find a way of producing and distributing invoices using a combination and Microsoft and Beacon and if we can do this we can save the cost of Quickbooks. Work started on this when Phil Light was Treasurer, and the current Treasurer will be asking the members who were working on this if they are willing to restart this project.

 For now the full year Quickbooks' cost should be included in the 2023/24 budget. The cost is charged on a monthly basis and can be cancelled easily if no longer required.

(ii) The lack of an hour rate for the Baptist Church on Annex 3, venue hire. This is because Crawley u3a has no official rental agreement with the Baptist Church over the use of a room for the Mah-jong group. The informal arrangement is that we pay £1 per person for each meeting.

The committee agreed Decision 1.

On Decision 2 and the strategies identified to move towards financial sustainability it was agreed that the wording of the 2nd one, on identifying and optimising all sources of income, would be amended to make it clear that this included looking at charging for some member events (such as the Christmas party) currently free of charge.

On decision 3 it was agreed that the discussion on whether or not to print membership cards be deferred until the 2023/24 renewal process is discussed.

Agenda Item 6: Update of Beacon Access Privileges and progress on GDPR compliance

The secretary agreed that, to avoid confusion, a clearer table would be produced, showing how current Trustee and Support roles mapped to Beacon roles.

The Access Coordinator said that members had to removed individually from any groups in which they were included once they were no longer current otherwise the group would continue to include them.

The Secretary stated that the number of members within each poll included members who were no longer current.

The Committee agreed to all the proposals relating to Beacon. On GDR compliance it was agreed that we should aim to move to a position in which no member's personal e-mail address was shown on the web, by making more use of the special "Contact" name facility.

Agenda Item 7: Copyright and Licences

All proposed actions were approved.

Agenda Item 8: Progress on Crawley u3a website update and improvement

The Comms Coordinator spoke briefly about the improvements made since January.

Since the paper was sent out the Access Coordinator has made a few suggestions on further improvements, which will be acted upon.

It was noted that many other u3a SiteBuilder websites had not yet been fully updated since the November 2022 problems, and still included links which do not work.

Agenda Item 9: Access Location Guide

The Committee agreed this was a very useful document. It was suggested that a Venue sub-page be set up on the website with photos of each venue from the outside, and that upon clicking on a venue name the detailed information listed here would appear for that venue..

Action (i): Access Coordinator to add the Holy Trinity venue and also, for each venue, to state whether there is access to wi-fi or not (and how to obtain the password).

Action (ii): Communications Coordinator to collect pictures of the venues and set up the venue sub-page

Agenda Item 10: Group Development and Management

The Chair briefly explained his thinking behind his proposal to set up a sub-committee, though it was agreed it would be preferable to use the term Working Group (as was done for the O&A group) as this sounded less bureaucratic and emphasised its fixed-term nature.

Action (i): Communications Coordinator to include an article in the June Newsletter asking for volunteers.

Action (ii): Chair to approach particular GLs he believed could make valuable contributions.

Agenda Item 11: Proposed Agendas for next two meetings

These were approved, subject to moving one of the items listed under the June meeting to the July one.

The meeting closed at 17:57

My only observation is in regard to: