

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held 11th January 2023 at 4pm

Saint Paul's Northgate

Attending: Chair (Jim McGough), Secretary (Margaret Lloyd); Treasurer (Graham Friday), Communications Coordinator (Sue Parker), Group Leaders' Coordinator (Peter Beckley), Members Coordinator (Jacqui Mercer), and Access Coordinator (Janet Newson). Prospective Events Coordinator (Carol Allen) as guest.

The Chair welcomed Carol Allen to the meeting.

Standing Items

Agenda Item 1: Apologies for absence

None.

Agenda Item 2(i): Minutes 15th December meeting

It was pointed out, with reference to Agenda Item 6 Communication Coordinator's update, that stamps with pictures, as opposed to those with only the late Queen's head and without bar-codes, do not become invalid after 31st January. Otherwise the minutes were approved with no amendments.

Agenda Item 2(ii): Review of Action Log

The Chair went through the outstanding items. Matters arising included:

- **Action 22nd Nov 3.1 (b/fwd from 26th July 11(i))** Assessing how many members regularly read u3a e-mails, as opposed to just stating on their membership forms that they possess access to e-mail. This would be placed on the list of potential agenda items for future meetings (shown on the Committee & GL meetings tab in the 2023 Outline Calendar).
- **Action 22nd Nov 3.1 (b/fwd from 26th July 11(i))** If and when demand for printed copies of the newsletters is assessed, Treasurer to assess the cost of using an external printing form. Again, to be placed on the list of potential agenda items for future meetings (see item immediately above).

Agenda Item 3: Updates from Committee Members

Actions arising from these are:

(i) From Secretary's Update:

Action: Secretary/Comms Coordinator to ensure that members are notified, via the Crawley website and newsletter, of the various learning activities run by the Third Age Trust.

(ii) Treasurer's Update:

Action: Treasurer to make a formal complaint to the bank about Phil Light receiving an e-mail concerning a signatory change he initiated in December 2021, when he in fact was removed from the bank mandate some time ago.

It was agreed that the 3 members from O&A groups 2 should receive refunds for the group fees they had previously paid.

No refunds to be made yet to any of the 36 members from O&A 5 who had paid group fees, as some at least of these members are being offered places in other O&A groups.

Members of the Singing for Fun group, who suffered a cancelled session in December arising from the snow preventing the music equipment being brought into St Pauls, should have their prepaid £2 group fee set off against their fees for the current term.

(iii) From Members Coordinators and Access Coordinator

Both these updates featured problems arising from lack of knowledge within Crawley u3a around Beacon. It was agreed that an IT support team should be set up, focussing on all the systems used (Beacon, SiteBuilder and replacement, e-mail synchronising etc) and with the objective of sharing and improving knowledge of these systems and ensuring replacements for the Beacon and Web support roles for when the current incumbents step down or are on holiday.

There was also a desire to harness Ann Sole's Beacon expertise.

The Access Coordinator volunteered to draft terms of reference and an article for the next newsletter requesting volunteers.

Action: Access Coordinator to an article for the next newsletter requesting volunteers.

Agenda Item 4: Review of latest Committee Calendar

The February coffee morning would take place at the Friary on Tuesday 21st February at 10:30 – 12:00 (booking required for 10:00 – 12:30). An earlier date for the June/July meeting to be suggested.

The New Members Clinics organised by Ann Sole are taking place on the 1st Thursday of each month in the St Paul's lobby between 11:00 and 12:00. The January one was held on 5th January and the next one will be on the February 2nd.

The Access Communicator volunteered to stand in for Ann Sole whilst Ann was away for the three March to May meetings and will meet with Ann Sole about this shortly.

Non-Standing Items for Discussion

Agenda Item 5: Final Report on Christmas Party.

The Communications Coordinator was thanked for this. It would be very useful when planning the 2023 party.

Agenda Item 6: Proposed Financial Arrangements for opening out Crawley u3a Groups to other u3as

This was discussed. The Treasurer stated that he was proposing that there be two mechanisms for members from other u3as to join Crawley u3a groups:

- (i) To become a full Associate member, paying the same annual membership fee as Crawley members (after deducting the cost of TAM which they pay through via their "main" u3a) and entitled to attendance at events for all members and to join Groups on the same basis as Crawley members (i.e. on a permanent basis, subject to continued payment of membership and group membership/attendance fees). This route is the only one which exists now.
- (ii) To join as a Guest Member those groups with vacancies, paying only the group membership/attendance fees paid by the Crawley members of those groups. This Guest Membership could only be renewed for the following year only if there were still vacant places once all Crawley members who wished to had joined. Guest Members would not be entitled to enjoy the benefits open to all Crawley members such as attendance at the monthly Friary meetings or receipt of the newsletter (they could of course still read it on the web).

It was pointed out that there was no way in which the number of Crawley u3a members participating in groups of other u3as could be determined (other than asking the neighbouring u3as which was not felt to be a conducive to good relationships and unlikely to yield responses).

When and if Crawley u3a brings in a policy allowing members of neighbouring u3as to join on the basis described under (ii) above we would disseminate this policy to other u3as and it could be the case that they would be willing to offer our members similar arrangements, possibly paving the way to further collaboration.

The committee agreed that, as this policy would represent a fundamental policy change, it required approval from Group Leaders and hence would be placed on the agenda for the 13th March GL meeting.

Action: Treasurer to redraft policy and circulate it to other Committee members for approval

Agenda Item 7: Review of Out and About Groups Structure and Operating Arrangements

The following points were agreed:

- (i) The maximum number of leaders/administrators within any one group, indoor (excluding those based in members' homes) or outdoor, qualifying for free group membership would be three. This did not mean that all groups would be expected to appoint as many as three, although we do encourage them to have two, for succession reasons and to provide cover in case of sudden absence. This would take effect in 2023/24. This would be communicated to the GLs at their 13th March meeting and included in the next update of the Financial Policy.
- (ii) To create an Out and About Groups Coordinator role, to support the Groups Coordinator in liaising with the O&A groups. This role could also work with the Seasonal Outings Organiser to align the process of planning and delivery for these trips.

Action: Groups Coordinator to draft a Role Description for this Out and About Groups Coordinator role

- (iii) The arrangements of the various O&A Groups required documentation and harmonisation, to assist potential leaders and thus encourage more volunteers and to ensure the sharing of ideas and experience for outings. A working party would be set up, comprising the Groups Coordinator, other Committee member(s) and O&A Group leaders, to produce an O&A group template, and to finalise the Group Coordinator's draft O&A GL role description. This Working Group would also look at issues around the operation of waiting lists, and the allocation of any spare places on outings.

Action: Treasurer and Secretary to draft Terms of Reference for this group

- (iv) It was agreed that trips involving nights away, and which were judged to be holidays rather than study trips, should not be treated as falling within Crawley u3a's activities as they did not align with Crawley u3a's charity objects. Hence deposits for such trips should not in future go through Crawley u3a's bank account or financial accounts.
- (v) That GLs should be made aware of the need for all Group activities to satisfy the u3a's charity object, with GLs able to explain how their activities contributed towards members' learning and personal development.

Both (iv) and (v) above would be communicated to the GLs at their 13th March meeting and included in the next update of the Financial Policy.

Agenda Item 8: Policy on the Determination and Collection of Indoor Group Fees

There were several issues to consider here, to the extent that a separate meeting was required to discuss them all. This would need to take place within the next month if the outcomes were to be discussed at the 13th March GL meeting.

Action: Secretary to arrange a separate meeting to discuss this to take place before the next general Committee meeting on 8th February.

Agenda Item 9: Disciplinary Policy and updated Complaints Policy

No points raised.

Agenda Item 10: Crawley u3a website

The Communications and Secretary were thanked for the work they had put into this. The Treasurer remarked he had been impressed by the graphs.

Action: Committee Members requested to submit any comments they had on the proposals to the Communications Coordinator and Secretary by end January 18th.

Agenda Item 11: Committee Aims for 2023

The Chair explained that since drafting this he had realised that the aims outlined in the paper drafted by the Secretary “1st Look Committee Aims for the next 12 months” (22nd November meeting, Agenda Item 16) were very similar to those adopted by the Third Age Trust and so he would use that as a way forward.

Action: Committee Members who have not already done so to submit to the Chair their own aims, and those which they think the Committee as a whole should adopt.

Agenda Item 12: AOB

None

The meeting closed at 18:00