

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held 11th October

St Pauls Canteen

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

Standing Items

Agenda Item 2(i): Minutes of the 13th September meeting

The minutes were approved with the following corrections:

- **Title** that “September 2023” be added after “13th”
- **Agenda Item 6** “Groups Register” to be corrected to “Groups Directory”
- **Agenda Item 7** The date of the Open day Working Group (WG) final meeting to be corrected from 21st October to 21st September

Agenda Item 2(ii): Minutes of the 4th October meeting

1. The minutes were approved subject to the following being added to the Minutes for **Agenda Item 2: Selling Items at Coffee Mornings and Monthly Meetings for Charity:**

An exception will be made for the sale by Monique Tovey-Mansfield of knitted animals to raise funds for St Catherine’s Hospice as:

- (i) *This sale is a “one-off”*
- (ii) *The makers of the goods for sale had themselves provided the materials themselves and spent considerable time making the goods.*

The Treasurer would report this back to Monique.

Agenda Item 2(ii): Matters Arising: Membership Support

1. A discussion then took place as to whether the policy was too restrictive and off putting to Members, and whether it needed to be amended to allow consideration of verbal complaints instead of requiring them in writing. There was a consensus for considering that change and reviewing the Policy after the AGM.
2. The Chair reported that the Membership Support had expressed her opinion that the Committee was discriminating against older members in that it had decided that the next edition of Third Age Matters (TAM), for which we had to send the distribution list to the Third Age Trust very soon, would not be sent to those 2022/23 members who had not yet renewed their membership for 2023/24. This was because the more elderly and/or longstanding members were likelier than other members to have been prevented from renewing because of health or caring responsibilities, or through finding the instructions difficult to understand.
3. The Committee agreed that this was a good point and so that all non-renewing members would still receive the next copy of TAM.
4. The Treasurer stated that when he and the Members Coordinator came to prepare the report (timetabled for *the 13th December Committee meeting*) on the 2023/24 Renewal Process they would

ask the Membership Support to submit in writing the aspects of the process which she believed should have been undertaken differently.

Agenda Item 2(iii): Review of Action Log as at 8th October

On Short Mat Bowls (9th August) it was stated that the Monday afternoon group had now 7 members and the Wednesday lunchtime one 12 or 13. The fees were still £2 per session. It was agreed that the Chair would speak to the Group Leader very soon about charging a higher subscription per session and that he would report back to the next Committee meeting (8th November) on the steps he and the GL had agreed upon to improve the financial position.

Action: Chair to report back to the next meeting on the GL's proposals to improve the financial position.

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

Members Coordinator

The Members Coordinator reported that approximately half of the new members who joined at the June celebration event had not joined any groups to date.

The latest Membership Renewal Statistics were given:

Overall: 561 Paid Members (compared with 562 assumed for the budget).
 This includes 49 new members joining since 1st Sept 2023
 49 Members from 22/23 who have not yet renewed

The longest serving member by joining date – Myrtle Taylor (1/9/1995)

14 Members have been members for over 20 years

Members from last year who have not renewed so far:

54 members have not renewed from last year and are shown on the system as Resigned or Deceased. This includes 9 members who have passed away.

Within the 54 Members who did not rejoin 8 had less than a year's membership (5 coming from Celebration Day). Potentially more within the 49 still to review.

Financial Statistics

13 refunds will need to be made to:

- 3 Ex-members who paid
- 5 New members, who automatically paid for TAM, when it was free.
- 5 Others who overpaid, paying the wrong Fee level.

Of the 561 paid members, 67% renewed by Cheque and 33% by Bacs.

Some concern was expressed on the fact that five who had joined on the Midsummer Eve's Celebration day on 23rd June had failed to renew.

It was agreed that we needed to make more contact with new members during their first few months, for example making a point of inviting them to the next coffee morning or to restart the policy of holding smaller and more frequent meetings with recent new members. It was also felt that it might be better to hold the Celebration Event in early June or even May so that new members recruited would have more of the summer term remaining in which to join Groups.

The Secretary would note both these points on the Trustees Calendar for when we discuss (on 13th December) the timings of the key actions and events for 2024.

Non-Standing Items for Discussion

Agenda Item 4: Approval of the 2022/23 Financial Outturn Reports and Final 2022/23 Accounts

The final 2022/23 accounts approved and signed subject to the Independent Examination.

Agenda Item 5: AGM: Update and Draft 2022/23 Annual Report

1. On the AGM agenda it was agreed that:

- (i) Under [2. Tributes](#) only those deceased members who had played an important role in the organisation, such as Mary Russell, would be mentioned by name
- (ii) Under [10 Awards and Prizes](#). The following would be acknowledged (by an honourable mention):
 - Any members resigning at end 2022/23 who had at one time been Committee members (e.g. Mary Mayne)
 - Members of 20 years or more standing

Action: Secretary to bring lists for (i) and (ii) plus any awards proposed by Group Leaders, to the 8th November meeting for final approval.

2. The Committee agreed to purchase a new microphone (two if the Friary was not to replace their own microphone which had gone missing).

Action: Group Coordinator to ascertain the specification for the new microphone.

The Secretary would be disseminating another version of the Annual Report shortly once she had included a few extra pieces of information..

Action: Trustees to submit comments by end Friday October 27th

Agenda Item 6: Third Age Trust AGM 18th October

The Committee agreed that the Crawley u3a would be voting “No” to both of the resolutions.

Action: Chair to vote “No” to both resolutions and report on the outcomes to the 8th November meeting.

Agenda Item 7: Final Report on the 8th September Open Afternoon

The Committee approved this report and its placement on the web subject to the following additions:

- (i) The Comments submitted by the Access Coordinator in her e-mail of 28th September;
- (ii) That there should have been a list of tasks stipulating what needed to be done on the day, as this would have ensured the equipment items brought by the Treasurer were used and would have sped up at the setting up of the hall.
- (iii) The Group Leaders (GLs) had no previous sight of the map showing the table layout (to avoid complaints about their positioning). As the person with the map did not arrive until after most of the Group Leaders this meant that time which could have been spent setting up the equipment was lost. It was suggested that in future they could be informed of their table number, and the numbers or Group labels placed on tables, so that GLs could spot which table was there in advance of the map being made public.

See also [Agenda Item 9 \(i\)](#) below 1st bullet point

Action: Communications Coordinator to add these comments and place the report on the web For Trustees page

Agenda Item 8: New Members Meeting

The Committee approved this report and its placement on the web subject to the following additions:

- (i) That 65 new members (including those who joined at the June Celebration Event) were invited of which 32 attended
- (ii) The attendance of Ann and Stewart Sole to be acknowledged; their help was invaluable;
- (iii) The set up of the room should have been agreed in advance.

Agenda Item 9: 2nd October Group Leaders Meeting: Minutes and Actions

In response to the Secretary's queries on the potential actions arising from the minutes the following were confirmed:

(i) Agenda Item 2: Discussion on 8th September Open Day

- The Treasurer and Members Coordinator would, at future Open Days, operate a system in which new members could be allocated temporary membership numbers and cards, enabling them to join Groups at the event;
- Subject to getting a Trustee focused on IT the Treasurer and Members Coordinator would be looking at a renewal process for 2024/25 in which members who are confident with systems are asked to update their details on Beacon themselves.

(ii) Agenda Item 3 Finance Matters (c) Group Subscriptions

The Committee agreed there was no need to display the individual Group subscriptions publicly

(iii) Agenda Item 3 Finance Matters (d) Taking Fees by Debit/Credit card

The Treasurer agreed that whilst offering the ability for members to pay membership fees and Group subscriptions by debit/credit card was not an immediate priority, he would start to investigate the practicalities so that he was fully prepared when the time comes to do so.

(iv) Agenda Item 4 Group Leaders Handbook

The Secretary would place the Draft GL Handbook on the web GLs page, with the newly approved Finance section and other existing sections, replacing the current Procedures & Reference Guide.

(v) Agenda Item 6: Group Resilience

Action: Chair to pass to Trustees the comments he had received from a prospective new GL on things to consider when setting up a new Group

(vi) Agenda Item 7(iii): Phone numbers on the website

Action: Chair to ask George Redgrave if he still has a u3a mobile phone.]

Action: The post AGM 2023 Groups Coordinator to ask GLs their views on using a centralised phone number once in post

Action: Secretary to look into GDPR implications of GLs operating WhatsApp communication systems within their group.

Agenda Item 10: Events for the Remainder of 2023

On the 30th October Coffee Morning the following actions were agreed:

Action: Groups Coordinator to let the Friary know that round tables would be required for members to sit around, and long tables for the books and jigsaws and Monique Tovey-Mansfield's sale items.

Action: Chair to agree with the Communications Coordinator the wording of the Beacon e-mail to be sent to all members emphasising the attendance of new members and those members interested in volunteering.

Action: Members Coordinator to e-mail new members who missed the 19th Sept New Members meeting to specifically invite them to the Coffee Morning

On the 8th December Christmas Party the Members Coordinator said that Isabel Baker, and possibly Jean Elmer, would be meeting with her to assist her in planning the party. The Communications Coordinator promised she would also send her the planning notes she possesses from last year's event.

Agenda Item 11: Draft Committee Procedures

Action: Trustees to send comments on these to the Secretary by end Friday 27th October so she could bring the final version back to the 8th November meeting for approval.

Agenda Item 12: Draft Agenda for the next two meetings

These were agreed

Agenda Item 12: AOB

The Members Coordinator announced she would be away on the 24th to 27th October.

Membership Support would be away from the 24th October to 28th November and the 13th to 21st December.

The meeting finished at 18:05