

2023/24 Fees Meeting 30th June 2023: Points for Next Year

Review of Meeting

(a) What went well?

- 1) Reasonable attendance of 35 (including RUGs) plus 7 Trustees so 42 in total (many members are on holiday at this time of year)
- 2) Most Group Leaders (GLs) either attended or sent apologies
- 3) Lasted 75 minutes, about right
- 4) Received a reasonable number of questions, enough to be interesting but not too many so that people become bored and frustrated
- 5) No challenge to the proposed 2023/24 Budget (as opposed to the fees), a contrast to the situation for the 2022/23 budget. This could have been because we included the latest budget monitoring and expected spend position for the current year, against which the proposed 2023/24 expenditure looked realistic and sensible.
- 6) No counterproposals
- 7) Result of all votes clear and incontestable
- 8) No complaints over not receiving paperwork, or paperwork being inadequate
- 9) Seemed to be none of the complaints made at previous meetings such as AGMs over some members not being able to hear (but then attendance was not nearly as high as at AGMs etc)

(b) What did not go well?

- 1) Planning for the meeting should have started earlier. Because we did not start thinking about it until the 14th June Committee meeting the Treasurer and Secretary then had rather a rush to get the invitation and documentation ready in time for the non-email members to receive it no later than a week before the meeting date.
- 2) A few of the questions asked by members seemed to be asked just for the sake of it and some of the other members were visibly irritated. There is not much the Committee can do about this.
- 3) The RUGS ran out of milk before everybody was served (although probably the fault of the Secretary who did advise them that only around 30 people would be attending, instead of 43 (but not clear why more could not be purchased from M&S or some other nearby shop). The admin leader of the RUGS, Isabel Baker, was away.
- 4) Although a copy of the minutes was sent to all who attended, and placed on the website, by July 2nd, with a statement in the July Newsletter (issued 3rd July), no email was sent to all members with e-mail stating the outcome of the meeting until 17th July.

(c) What could we do differently next year?

- 1) On (b) 1) Secretary to ensure the preparation time is factored into the 2023/24 Committee timetable
- 2) If possible, set the date of the meeting (and hence committee approval of the various budget & fee papers) so the advance paperwork can be sent to non-email members with the June/July so saving on postage.
- 3) Exclude proposals on Group fees and cover at a GL meeting instead. We currently hold two of these a year (Sept/Oct and March/April) and so we would extend to three a year, one each term, which could also have other advantages (e.g. holding general discussion on dealing with falls in membership etc).

Arguments against this are:

- Paragraph 10 of the 2022 Constitution states "the membership and **group fees** proposed by the Committee for the forthcoming membership year must be approved by a majority vote of the Crawley u3a members attending a meeting to be held at least one month before the start of the membership year to which the proposals relate" so would need to amend the constitution at the 2023 AGM.
- It could be argued that this fee impacts on all members participating in indoor groups and so this is the appropriate forum to approve them and non-GLs may have valid additional points to make.

One possibility could be consulting with GLs on the group fees in advance at a GLs meeting and then seeking final approval at the members fees meeting (on the basis that GLs will have had all their questions dealt with at the GL meeting and that they will appreciate being consulted beforehand).

- 4) Exclude proposals on expenses reimbursement on the basis such decisions should be left to the Committee (no member could reasonably argue against adopting the HRMC car usage rate, Treasurer could produce workings to support printing costs if challenged).
- 5) Consider how we might feed in the views of those members who gave their apologies, especially as we did ask them for whether they support the proposals or not (for this meeting about 10% of the 151 members sending apologies gave their views, which were wholly supportive, but this might not be the case another year).

On the other hand, the constitution does state "a majority vote of the Crawley u3a members **attending** a meeting".

For information: Cost of meeting (c£120, or c22p per member overall)

- Hire of Friary Hall 2.5 hours @ £30ph = £75
- Stationery and Postage for non-email members 40 @ 1.00 = £40 (hope that the number of such members reduces for 2023/24)
- Refreshments £5 (estimate, monthly Friary meetings c£10)

Secretary 19th July 2023