

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held 8th March 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 8th February meeting

The minutes of this meeting were approved with no amendments.

Agenda Item 2(ii): Review of Action Log 5th March

The Treasurer pointed out, in reference to the action from 11th January, that he had a few issues he wished to raise with the bank and was intending to cover them all in a single call to the bank.

It was agreed that the secretary would table the discussion on the use of reserves within one of the monthly committee meetings, rather than holding a separate meeting [*subsequently timetabled for the May 10th meeting*].

Agenda Item 3: Monthly Updates from Committee Members

Treasurer's Update

The following matters were agreed:

2. Previous surpluses on group activities

The committee agreed the further movement of £7,074 into the Groups' retained reserves, leaving the current reserves position as shown in the table at the bottom of page 9.

3. Book sales at monthly meetings

The Committee agreed to this proposal, provided both the Friends of Crawley Hospital and the RUGs were willing.

Action: Communications Coordinator to consult with the RUGs at the next meeting of the Events Sub-Committee

4. Refund

The committee approved the refund.

Group Coordinator's Update

Since issuing his report the Group Coordinator had been informed that the new Crafts Group was now a regular monthly event, led by Yvonne Light and held in her home. Details would be included on the Groups section of the website.

Agenda Item 4: Review of latest Committee Calendar

The Committee confirmed their agreement to the proposed agenda for the April 12th meeting.

For the 10th May meeting the Treasurer stated that there was no need for the Gift Aid sign-off to be an agenda item, so asked that that be removed.

An item on the use of the reserves (see above under Agenda Item 2(ii)) and also one reporting on progress made to date on the website update would be added to the May meeting agenda.

Reports from Sub-Committees

Agenda Item 5: Reports from the 21st February Events Sub-Committee

The committee approved these, and noted that the Communications Coordinator was still waiting for the Council to confirm the use of the bandstand on the 23rd June midsummer Eve's Celebration [*Council confirmation received subsequently on March 14th*].

Non-Standing Items for Discussion

Agenda Item 6: Group Leaders meeting 13th March

The secretary explained that there had been no comments from Group Leaders on the agenda, nor requests for any additional items. She had received only three apologies.

It was agreed the final agenda should be as the draft, subject to a slight change in the wording for agenda item 2 on the new EDI Policy and its implications for the Complaints and Disciplinary policies.

The Groups Coordinator would contact Stephen Bloy at the Friary to ask him to arrange the chairs in a horseshoe formation, and to provide a microphone.

Agenda Item 7: Process & Timetable for Setting the 2023/24 Fees

There was unanimous agreement that Option 2, the assumption of a fee "no change" position, should be adopted, along with the timetable for that option.

Action: Secretary to arrange the Members meeting during the period 19th to 30th June.

Agenda Item 8: Update of the Financial Policy

A few Committee members had put forward suggested amendments to these policies, but the Treasurer commented that some of these were really procedural matters rather than policies. It was accepted that there had been some confusion between the two, and that a Committee Procedures document should at some stage be produced.

It was agreed that the following changes would be made:

- i) Making it clear at the start of the policy that any decisions made by the Committee concerning the operational implementation of this policy are recorded in a separate document entitled "Financial Policy – Committee delegated decision schedule".
- ii) To remove paragraph 7.2, referring to members on benefits receiving reductions in fees. This had been taken from the Third Age Trust policy template and it was not clear exactly which state benefits it referred to, and, as yet, we had not considered how we would operate such a policy.
- iii) On 10.1 on reserves, to add e.g. in front of Covid to "...national emergency (e.g. Covid) so that national emergencies other than covid could be covered.

- iv) On Investments, adding in a new paragraph after 11.4, stating that all individual investments must be approved by the Committee. The previous 11.5 then becomes 11.6.

Action: Treasurer to make agreed changes and then arrange for the updated policy, and also the Financial Policy Committee delegated decision schedule, to replace the previous versions on the web.

Action: Secretary to add Committee Procedures as an agenda item for a future meeting

Agenda Item 9: Accessibility Policy

The policy was approved and will be placed on the website. The Accessibility Coordinator will now proceed with developing guidelines on how we adhere to the policy in practice.

Agenda Item 10: Update of Safeguarding Policy

This was approved, subject to the “Introduction” section being removed from the actual policy document, and will be placed on the web. A general statement, based on the brief talk the Chair plans to deliver to Group Leaders under item 2 (concerning EDI and other policies with implications for members’ conduct and how the committee will deal with any misconduct) will instead be drafted and placed on the web.

Action: Chair to draft statement for web

Agenda Item 11: Data Protection and Privacy Policies update

The Data Protection policy was agreed, subject to amending the “Third Age Trust national office” to just the “Third Age Trust, and any feedback from Max Woodward to whom the whole agenda item had been sent for his comments.

On the Privacy policy, further information was required reflecting what we actually do with the various data, particularly the financial information received. We also need to agree how long data on ex members is kept for. Max Woodward’s feedback may raise additional questions.

The Treasurer confirmed that he did not hold u3a members’ bank account details on a permanent basis. Members submitting expense claims and who wish to be refunded by a bank transfer enter their bank account details onto their expense claim forms. These forms are retained for audit purposes until the end of the current financial year plus a further twelve months and then destroyed.

Action: Secretary to amend policies as described and recirculate before the next meeting for final approval. Once approved they will be placed on the website.

On the actions to ensure compliance it was recognised that these would take a while to complete, and that some might change over time in line with increased knowledge of the Beacon system (see below) and any changes to other systems.

Action: Secretary to remove “mental health conditions” from action number 19 and report monthly on progress made on the actions to ensure compliance until all are completed.

Agenda Item 12: Beacon Access and Privileges

Committee members had not had chance to absorb all the information included here and a proper discussion would need to take place at the next meeting on April 12th. Meanwhile, the proposed principles for updating Beacon roles and Privileges were provisionally agreed and the Secretary would proceed with the work outlined on communicating with Committee members and Support role holders on access rights.

Action: Secretary to bring to the April 12th meeting a definitive set of proposed Beacon Access roles, each mapped to the relevant Committee and Support role.

It was asked what progress had been made in setting up the IT Support Team. No volunteers from amongst the membership had come forward as a result of the request in the February newsletter. The Secretary stated that John Walton, with whom she had liaised when preparing this agenda item, had wide experience of systems and she was keen for him to be involved. The Treasurer said that he had thought Ann Sole could lead an investigation into using PayPal to collect fees.

Agenda Item 13: Process for appointment of new external examiner of accounts

This was approved.

Agenda Item 14: New publicity leaflet

The Communications Coordinator briefly explained the changes she had made since the version displayed at the last meeting. These were approved. The leaflet will now be issued.

Agenda Item 15: Any other business

None.

The meeting closed at 18:05