

# Minutes of the Committee Meeting held Tuesday 20th September 2022 at 4pm

## Saint Paul's Northgate

**Attending:** George Redgrave, Margaret Lloyd (also minute taker), Graham Friday, Peter Beckley, Sue Parker, Ann Sole, Stewart Sole, Jacqui Mercer

### Standing Items

#### **Agenda Item 1 Apologies for absence**

Jim McGough sends his apologies; he is undergoing surgery. Jacqui Mercer was in attendance in her capacity as standing in for the membership secretaries from now until they return at the end of October.

#### **Agenda Item 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022 were approved with no amendments.

#### **Agenda Item 3 Matters Arising**

##### **3.2 Update on u3a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tree Planting 21<sup>st</sup> September**

The arrangements for this were briefly discussed. Sue Parker stated that because the Crawley Borough Council (CBC) had taken so long to confirm the tree planting could go ahead she had not been able to send an e-mail to members until Friday 16th September confirming the date and time. It was unfortunate that this short notice meant that Maureen Wicks was unable to attend in her capacity as President, and that other u3a members who would have liked to attend could not be there because of prior commitments.

It was hoped that a representative from CBC would attend the event. Given that the tree had been donated by a u3a Gardening Group member it was assumed that CBC had incurred no costs itself so would not be passing any share onto Crawley u3a.

#### **Agenda Item 4 u3a Trust and Network matters**

##### **4.1 Report back from WSN meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

George explained that the WSN minutes were mistaken in describing him as a newly appointed Chairman. There was an interesting discussion at the meeting on the Third Age Trust, which was felt to provide poor value for money and not sufficiently in touch with u3a organisations' concerns and needs.

##### **4.2 Report back from SUN Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> September**

Margaret stated that Jim's brief report on the meeting suggested that the future need for, and role of, SUN was unclear.

#### **Agenda Item 5 Secretary's Update**

##### **5.1 Eastbourne Theatre Trip Incident**

George stated that there was no way this accident could have been foreseen in advance, and Margaret said that public transport authorities were responsible for reducing risks on their premises.

## 5.2 Progress on approval of the new constitution

Margaret reported that the Charity Commission still had not responded on the changes to Part 1 submitted on June 12<sup>th</sup>, despite more than 30 working days (the Commission's stated response time) having elapsed. She would contact them by phone.

**Action:** Margaret to contact the Charity Commission.

## 5.3 Preparation for the AGM

Margaret had sent Ann the three documents (Notice and agenda for the AGM, the minutes from the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021 AGM, and the Nominations form) which were to be sent out with each 2022/23 membership card, prior to the Soles going on holiday. Ann was copying them.

Margaret explained she had not had time to produce the draft Annual Report but would do so soon and send it round to Committee members for comment.

Ann stated that the entertainment planned by Simon Hurdman and John Hilder did not appear to have been advertised yet.

**Actions:** (1) Margaret to produce Annual Report and disseminate it for comment pre formal approval on 1<sup>st</sup> November  
(2) Margaret to place the documents mentioned in the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph on the AGM webpage, and Sue to mention them in her October newsletter  
(3) Sue to refer to the planned entertainment in her October newsletter.

## Agenda Item 6 Treasurer's Update

### 6.2 Number of Payment Approvers on Mandate

Graham said with Valerie's departure that left only himself (setting payments up) with Jim and Stewart approving the payments. During the weeks Stewart was on holiday he would be dependent upon Jim approving payments reasonably quickly. There was a discussion on whether other Trustees should be added, but giving the forthcoming changes to the Committee at the AGM it was felt that it would be better to muddle through and add new people to the mandate after the AGM.

### 6.3 Approval for treatment of items in the Final 2021/22 Accounts

Graham distributed a copy of the draft final accounts for 2021/22, which differed from the management accounts circulated at the Volunteers' meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> September in that they incorporated accruals and prepayments. He wished to bring the Committee's attention to the following:

**i) Treatment of £427.20 surplus on Trips and Events for 21/22.** This surplus arises from the receipts exceeding the actual costs of trips, either because the actual costs were lower than anticipated when budgeting for the trip, or because attendance was higher than anticipated. Most of the figure relates to the Gardening Group trips. This surplus will be treated as a creditor, as the money belongs to those members who went on the trips. He has already produced a schedule analysing this balanced down to individual members to support the production of the formal accounts. Technically the money should be refunded to each member, though from the operational viewpoint it is easier to deduct it from the cost of future trips. The relevant Group Leaders are to be consulted as to which option they prefer.

Graham reported that, despite his request some months ago that Group Leaders pass their costings of any trip to him before fixing the costs to be charged per member, he was yet to see a single trip costing. He had also told them that he preferred all debit and credit balances to be cleared before the year-end.

In addition, there were still balances from several O&A groups which had been accumulating on the balance sheet for a number of years and brought forward as "creditors" on the balance sheet. He would check with the

Group Leaders whether they have any records of how these balances broke down amongst individual members, but felt that this was unlikely.

To formalise this issue Graham would add the following wording into the Financial Policy.

“Any financial surplus remains the individual property of the Members who contributed to the costs of the trip and should either be refunded to them at the end of the Trip or applied for their benefit to the costs of a future trip they go on.”

**Action:** Graham to amend the Financial Policy and inform the relevant Group Leader of the outcomes of this item and (ii) below.

- ii) **Treatment of £1,151.74 surplus on Trips and Events brought forward into 21/22.** This surplus has arisen for the same reason as that for 21/22 but represents the balance accumulated over at least the last five years pre the start of 2021/22. Unless Group Leaders still have the detailed schedules showing who went on each trip over this period it would be impossible to identify the amounts relating to individual members (many of whom may no longer be members). Hence it is suggested that this balance be written off to general reserves. The Committee approved this treatment.

## **Agenda Item 7 Group Leaders Coordinator Update**

### **7.1 Update on Groups and Group Leaders (GLs)**

Peter Beckley announced the following:

- Sue Pay has stood down as GL for Out and About 2. One member has offered to help but does not want to be a GL. Two ex-GLs, Harry and Winifred Waterworth will help with the trips. Phil Light is willing to act as a point of contact but not as GL.
- Topical Discussion 2 has closed due to insufficient members (they only had 6 members, two of whom are currently unwell).
- There is still no GL for RUG once Jean Elmer stands down at the AGM. Sue Mearns has offered to do the teas, but not the associated administration.
- Folk Music, Quiz 2 and Painting and Drawing have all significantly increased their membership numbers.
- Elena Thorne is keen to start a Canasta and Rummikub group.

#### **PS 21<sup>st</sup> September**

- Isabel Baker is willing to take on the admin part of the RUG role, if Sue Mearns does the teas element.
- Isabel will not be able to lead Out and About 5 for a while as she is to have a knee operation. She will consult group members about covering for her.

There was a question as to whether there was an appetite for group meetings to take place at the weekends, which might be of benefit to members who live alone and/or had no relatives nearby. Other u3as ran groups such as Sunday Lunches.

**Action:** Sue to do a feature in a future newsletter asking whether there was any interest in this type of group.

## **Agenda Item 8 Membership Secretaries' Update**

Ann announced that membership currently stood at 597, but this figure assumes that all members who had not yet responded to the current year's membership renewal notification would in fact be renewing.

There were a lot of envelopes to stuff with 2022/23 membership cards and AGM documents and Ann was hoping that Committee members would come along to her house this Thursday afternoon to help.

## **Agenda Item 9 Communication Co-Ordinator's Update**

Sue would be sending out the next newsletter, to be disseminated by e-mail only, on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. She hoped to present the final Communications Strategy at the next Committee meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November; she had only to incorporate references to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy.

Sue said she was thinking of incorporating a “scamwatch” section into the Crawley u3a website, listing all the scams in operation. She also planned to show the accessibility details for each meeting location (see agenda item 15).

## Reports from Sub-Committees

### Agenda Item 10 Future Organisational Structure

Margaret reported that she and Jim had deferred any work on this until after the Volunteers’ meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> September, in case the proposed structure encountered opposition. In the event the volunteers expressed no objections. Sue has recently submitted some draft role descriptions for the Communications sub-committee which Margaret and Jim would review shortly. They also planned to speak with Jean Elmer to learn more about the RUG role.

*17:25 George left the meeting and Graham took over as Chair.*

## Non-Standing Items for Discussion

### Agenda Item 11 Review of the Open Afternoon 9<sup>th</sup> September

The committee agreed that this event had been very successful, and that Sue’s observations were very comprehensive except that they omitted an acknowledgement of her achievement in getting a letter published in the Crawley Observer publicising the event.

Other points worth including are:

- The ease with which local Facebook community groups can be used to publicise an event, so next time we should try to use more of these (only Pound Hill and Furnace Green were covered this time)
- Other organisations attracting members from a similar demographic such as the Women’s Institute and Probus could be alerted in advance
- Post somebody outside the Friary to attract them into the building.

**Action:** Sue to include the above points in her report, which should be placed on the website for future reference.

### Agenda Item 12 Volunteers’ Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> September

#### 12.1 Approval of draft minutes

The committee approved the draft minutes, but Margaret explained that she had given the attendees until September 27<sup>th</sup> to respond with comments so if anything of significance was changed or added she would recirculate them again. So far, she had received comments from one person. The identity of the those asking some of the questions was still not clear.

**Action:** Margaret to make any necessary changes to the minutes and recirculate if necessary

#### 12.2 Post Event Review

The two RUGs, Dorothy and Stewart LeHuray had apparently enjoyed serving the tea and were keen to do the same at the next Volunteers’ meeting, planned for January. Margaret would set up a Future Meeting Schedule, to be placed after that for the main Committee Meetings.

**Action:** Margaret to amend Review and place on the web for future reference.

### **Agenda Item 13 Third Age Trust AGM and Annual Report**

Margaret explained that the Third Age Trust had sent out the final details on the above AGM, to be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> October. This included details on voter registration (Crawley u3a has 3 votes, and has been registered), attendance at the meeting in person (there were a very limited number of places available and since these were being allocated on a first serve, first come basis there would very likely be none left now) and virtually.

Also included within the package of AGM material were the Annual Report, including the Financial Statements, and the amended resolutions to the crucial motion on subscription increases; 53 amendments had been received and reduced to 19. The Committee was required to select which of these it would be voting for. It was agreed that this decision would be left to George, Jim, and Margaret (as Graham is a TAT Finance Board member he cannot be involved).

**Action:** Margaret to co-ordinate with George and Jim on which resolution(s) to vote for.

### **Agenda Item 14 Progress on Final Accounts for 2021/22**

Graham explained that he needed to smarten up the presentation of the schedules distributed when discussing agenda item 6.3 and to add notes, so that they conformed with the Charity Commission requirements. Then they would be signed by the Chair and himself and passed to the Examiner of the Accounts.

The Committee endorsed the accounts, subject to these actions taking place.

**Action:** Margaret to check that the presentation and notes were in line with the Charity Commission requirements

### **Agenda Item 15 Development of EDI, Accessibility and Related Policies**

Margaret explained briefly the approach she and Jim were taking with regard to the EDI and Accessibility policies, that is, including those parts only of the Third Age Trust sample policies which could reasonably be implemented in time for the AGM. This approach was agreed by the Committee.

**Action** Jim and Margaret to continue their work on these with the aim of bringing the final policies to the 1<sup>st</sup> November Committee meeting to approve.

*The meeting ended at 17:50*

**Date of next meeting** Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 4pm St Pauls