

Minutes of Croxley Green U3A Executive Committee Meeting – Wednesday, 24 April 2019

Present: Paul Wray (Chairman), Giles Dubuis (Vice Chairman), Nick Smyth (Treasurer), Chris Jones (Secretary), Daphne Stratton (Membership Secretary), Pete Coulson (Webmaster), Mary Coulson (Speaker Secretary), Gerry Clark (Interest Group Co-ordinator), Jenny Moseley ((Committee Member), Netti Smallbone (Committee Member), Mavis Bennett (Committee Member).

1/ Apologies for absence:

Received from Irene Dubuis.

2/ Minutes:

- a) Reviewing recent meetings, including Christmas, it was agreed to take up Chris's offer of compiling a Quiz of one hour's duration for next Christmas.

ACTION: Chris

- b) It was agreed that a maximum £50 should be spent on prizes for the Christmas raffle, in order to enable a larger donation from the sales to the Peace Hospice. Tickets are to be sold at the November monthly meeting.
- c) Daphne said the AGM was attended by 78 people.

3/ Matters arising not covered elsewhere

Paul said he did not plan any further action on a doctor's request for our members to participate in a survey on bladder and bowel problems in the elderly.

4/ Secretary's report

- a) Chris said the Annual Return had been completed by himself, Paul and Nick. Nick had emailed it to TAT and paid the required sum of £1,120, representing the membership subscription of £3.50 for 320 members, the maximum number of paid-up members during the previous 12 months.
- b) All Committee members had been re-elected at the AGM, apart from Sue Kinvig, who is standing down, her place being taken by Gerry Clark, whose election was also approved.

5/ Treasurer's report

Finance including:

a) Treasurer's Report

Bank balances at 23rd April 2019 are as follows:

Main Account holds £6,502.34 - includes:

Income:

- £35 Book Club
- 21 membership fees

Expenditure:

- Fee for speakers February and March (£60, £50).
- Hall hire – St Oswalds (Jan to Mar)
- Hall hire – St Oswalds (Gardening))
- British Legion Hall (Local History) J to J (£90, £90)
- £1,120 Subs to Third Age Trust

Group Account holds £860.69 comprising Local History group account £0.50p; Theatre Group £243.57 and Gardening group account £616.62.

Income:

- £1,755 (39 members theatre – Come From Away)
- £975 (Gardening – Ramsters Garden)

Expenditure:

- Gardening – £495 Desi's Coaches
- Theatre - £1,365 (Tickets), £430 Reynolds coaches.

Nick said TSB forms had been ordered to remove Sue Kinvig and substitute Gerry Clark as signatories to authorise payments. He had also ordered forms to enable telephone banking by the four Committee members involved.

Nick noted that he hadn't received an invoice from TAT for the direct mail magazines sent by the Trust. It was agreed that Chris should contact TAT to ask for the invoice

ACTION: Chris

6/ Membership Secretary's report

Daphne said 270 people had renewed their membership, but 50 had not. She had contacted them, 31 by email and 19 by letter; three of the letter recipients had replied and 12 others had replied by email. They offered various reasons for leaving, but one couple's reply had caused some concern. They complained that the monthly meeting they had attended, with a talk on the Grand Union Canal, had been spoiled by people's phones ringing and constant chatter by some members of the audience. They were also disappointed that the one Interest Group they had wanted to join was full and they'd found communication on this issue was poor.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed that if Gerry ascertained there were any vacancies in Groups, she would pass the information to Pete, who would place it on the website.

ACTION: Gerry/Pete

Daphne reported that there were 10 new members.

7/ Interest Groups

Giles informed the meeting of his inquiries regarding our policy on non-members attending meetings before deciding whether to join the U3A. On contacting TAT, the Trust had advised that insurance underwriters would be concerned about the possible implications of non-members attending meetings.

Paul said Group Leaders needed to monitor their Group to check whether they included any non-members.

After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that prospective members should be allowed a visit to one monthly meeting and one visit to each of two Interest Groups. However, Daphne said the chief concern that had been raised with her involved members who found their desired Interest Group had no vacancies. It was suggested that Daphne and Gerry should liaise on this issue.

ACTION:Daphne/Gerry

8/ Speaker Secretary's report

Mary said Speakers were booked until next May. She suggested that Paul might give a brief synopsis at the monthly meetings of the subject of the Speaker following the current one. Paul said he would be happy to do that. Paul was opposed to having an hour-long talk at the AGM; he said this year's meeting had been very short, but the next AGM might not be. Jenny said she had been at a Three Rivers Pensioners' Forum which had featured a talk on locally-produced gin, followed by free sampling. There was a consensus that such a talk might prove a tonic.

9/ Monthly meetings

Several Committee members agreed with Mary that people talking during the Speaker's address could become very annoying. It was suggested that reminders might be given to accord proper respect to the Speaker.

10/ Communications

Nick said the Loop system had been installed and was working well. Paul said the sound system was also working well. Pete said replacement batteries were needed from time to time and felt that rechargeable batteries had their limitations. Pete was authorised to buy the "best" batteries whenever they were needed.

ACTION: Pete

11/ Newsletter Editor's report

No report because Irene absent, unwell.

12/ Webmaster's report

Pete said there was nothing new to report.

13/ Any other business:

- a) While Paul was rather puzzled that he was being asked for his observations on the AGM, Nick thought spirits might be elevated by a glass of wine or soft drinks at the next annual meeting, perhaps with crisps and nibbles, the cost to come out of the kitty. This was thought to be a good idea.
- b) Nick reminded the Committee that some people had expressed difficulty in seeing the screen in the Church hall at monthly meetings. He said it had been suggested to him that the U3A might use the screen which was halfway back on the middle of the stage. It was decided this should be tried next time.
- c) On the question of bar code scanners, Nick said he and Daphne had been to see the Membership Secretary of St Albans U3A, an organisation with 1200 members, which employed such a system. Nick estimated that the cost of the system, a one-off charge, would be about £1250, which would include a laptop and two scanners. He said it would achieve considerable savings and efficiencies in the long term and reduce Daphne's workload. There was unanimous approval for the idea and it was agreed to make further contact with St Albans.
- d) It was decided that a New Members' meeting, scheduled for May, was not necessary.
- e) Paul said that after Dave Luddington's talk on the Red Cross, he proposed sending a £60 donation to the British Red Cross. The Committee agreed.

- f) The date of the next Committee meeting was confirmed as June 26th, to be held at Paul's house, 1 Chess Vale Rise.
- g) Pete had recently had two enquiries from members about the MS Office suite of programs. On contacting the Third Age Trust (TAT) regarding the current discount price of the software it transpired that TAT no longer provide this service. However, Julie Travers, who had been the TAT contact for the software, recommended contacting a company named 'tt-exchange'. Paul agreed to provide a signed letter for Pete to register himself as the approved point of contact with the company. The Microsoft suite should cost only £23.00 + VAT per licence.
- h) Pete said the Charities Commission had asked for the email addresses of all Committee members. It was agreed to send them.
- i) Mary pointed out that should some disaster befall Pete and herself, no one would have a list of Speakers for the following 12 months. It was agreed she should send the list to Paul.