

**Exmouth & District u3a
Minutes of Committee Meeting
Held on Tuesday 07 February 2023**

Present on Zoom

Christine Chittock (Chair), Lyn Holmes, Steve Rixon, John Hunt, Olwen Smith
Non-Committee: Alison Jackson (Succession planning), Brenda Craig (Minutes)

CC thanked LH for joining the meeting from Australia at midnight!

Apologies for Absence

Ann Newby, Alice Robson

Any New Business

AJ: Proposed New Structure - discussed under Succession Planning.

LH: Printing Costs - discussed under Finance.

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 03 January 2023

Agreed by all present as a true and accurate record.

Annual Membership Fee 2024-25 and Finances

CC thanked SR for his Treasurer's report.

- SR talked the committee through the figures on his report which were based on a membership of 1001.
- **Recurring Expenditure** included the following:
 - TAT: fee per member
 - Beacon fee per member
 - Magazine postage
 - Insurance
 - Heart internet
 - Pavilion Hall hire charge
 - Technician Fee
 - New Members meetings room hire
 - Guest Speaker costs and expenses
 - Committee Meeting room hire
 - Overheads (postage, PAT, expenses)
 - Newsletter by post
 - Membership
 - Other Income
- The total recurring expenditure expected for 2023-24 is £13,027.09 and for 2024-25 £13,327.09. It was acknowledged that SR's 'Recurring Costs' sheet was very useful.
- **Magazine postage:** £1700. No previous records are available regarding this charge. OS confirmed approximately 800 magazines were sent out. Only one magazine is allocated for Joint Membership. Associate Members do not receive the magazine.
- **Membership fees** were considered and, based on operating costs, it was decided the subscription should remain the same at £12/year for the AGM. However, it was felt that there should be more discussion on this.
 - There are currently 20 Associate Members, the fee for whom is £8.50. It was agreed that this fee should remain the same. There are some members still paying £15 (previous fee). Members who can be contacted regarding this, usually confirm that Exmouth u3a can keep the extra, which is put into donations. Donations are also received from visitors. This income could be allocated for newsletters etc.
 - OS confirmed that membership fees were not a factor in people choosing to join Exmouth u3a.

- CC established at the Devon Link meeting on 31.01.23 that Exmouth u3a current membership fee of £12/year is one of the lowest in the area, with significantly more members than other Devon u3as.
 - OS confirmed 2 members have a reduced fee. All efforts are made to contact members regarding fees. If contact is impossible and fees are still being received, the member must continue to be treated as active.
- **TAT membership numbers:** At the time of the meeting, membership was up to 1009. OS advised that 75-100 members/year do not renew. OS believed that TAT take membership numbers at the end of March when numbers are highest, so she takes a member's name off the list as soon as possible after confirmation of non-renewal. OS requested notification from SR as soon as payments for membership had been banked. **Action SR for notification and to look at TAT numbers.**
- **Policy Note 5:** Retiring committee costs are covered in Policy Note 5, which covers Committee expenditure. CC suggested a review of Policy Note 5 in March or April this year as it was substantially out of date and asked SR to look at this. **Action: SR**
- **Pavilion fees** for 2024 are £375/morning, an increase of £25 per session. The Technician's fees remain at £24/hr. 2023 is booked excluding August. Speakers are booked through to June 2024. Pavilion dates for 2024 must be secured by June 2023 at the latest.
- **Heart Internet:** The £86 shown on the spreadsheet does not include the hosting service. Two separate invoices are paid to Heart (£50 and £36). See also information in Website Developments.
- **Additional services:** Research has been done and additional costs of £158 per year needs to be added. However, no negotiations have been entered into yet.
- **Enhancements** to free template may need to be paid for. The cost is currently unknown. Possible enhancement could be to enable group organisers to update their own groups.
- **Zoom Pro** is a decision for the new Committee. JH is happy for his own to be used until July, but after this there may have to be a monthly cost. However, a Zoom Pro contract depends on whether someone is prepared to be the Zoom Coordinator. CC thanked JH for the continuing use of his Zoom Pro.
- **Storage** for finance papers was discussed and this may need to be enhanced for Secretary archives. There is also an issue regarding a future equipment store. SR advised that currently there is still a lot of floor to ceiling space in which to put everything but a decision needs to be made on what needs to be kept. £521.22 is currently factored in.
Action JH: Equipment inventory to be completed for March committee meeting.
- **Possible decisions for new Committee:**
 - u3a laptop is now obsolete and needs replacing, especially if the new Committee continues to stream and possibly needs to lend out. Consideration should be given to whether the new Secretary would need use of the laptop. JH advised that a mid-range laptop would suffice at a rough cost of £500. A decision would also need to be made on whether to buy Office.
 - A second microphone and audio mixing desk may need to be purchased due to the quality of audio in the Pavilion; total cost approximately £350.
 - A new print run for communications would cost approximately £150. There are still 100 leaflets available. Advertising in the local paper would also have an associated cost.
- For the above reasons, JH strongly advised not reducing membership fees so as to have contingency and keep the options open.
- **Projected Expenditure:** CC asked for Committee agreement on JH's projected expenditure. LH and JH both stated that it was for the new Committee to accept. However, CC advised there was a need to have reasons for decisions on fees, that JH's paper helped to explain and therefore the Committee was asked for agreement with the projected expenditure with current known information.
- There was some discussion on why necessary purchase decisions had to wait for the new Committee. SR felt strongly that these purchases were not related to a new

Committee and this was accepted as a valid point. The Committee agreed that items not currently needed should be purchased when necessary. Approval was given for the projected expenditure.

- **Zoom monthly contract:** CC recommended that a Zoom monthly contract should continue for possible future Zoom meetings and Coffee and Chat.
- **Printing costs:** It was noted that printing costs had increased substantially. However, it was agreed that some members needed the support of printed material to remain included. Reasons for not using the internet were either financial or sight issues using a computer screen. CC advised that a substantial amount of funding from raffle sales might have an influence on printing costs.
- With the bank surplus and high membership, it was felt the cost could be sustained for another couple of years. £150 is already allocated for newsletter costs. At the time of the meeting, the newsletter had already been sent out.
- It was accepted that encouragement to use electronic means should still be maintained.
- 16 members receive a posted newsletter; some are given out at meetings.
- 13 members have no email and no posted newsletter unless they need an important renewal letter.
- AJ suggested fundraising should be discussed at a strategic level in the future.
- CC advised that Marion Ricketts was keen for group organisers and members to have a buddy system to look at u3a material together, in members' own homes or at a local library.
- A vote was taken on whether to increase costs for these individual members. Agreement was given by all to keep costs the same.
- **Accounting Process:** OS advised that an accounting process would need to be set up with any new printing company. The last print run had to be paid for by cash and a member reimbursed. LH or SR to speak to printer. **Action LH/SR**
- Other notes on SR Finance Report:
 - Bank balances reconciled at 31 January 2023.
HSBC £4858.14. Lloyds £5964.14 (this month's figures)
Net movement last month to this month -£962.04.
HSBC account to be phased out.
 - All invoices received have been paid.
 - Does Exmouth u3a need/use a CLA Education Licence to allow copying of materials for u3a use within certain limits?

Succession planning

The SP working group and committee have worked extremely hard and have secured people both to come forward for the committee and to help. It was agreed that efforts had been very successful.

Chair

LH has two further people who have shown an interest. **Action LH** to follow up.

Vice Chair

Some u3a groups have two Vice Chair positions. Exmouth u3a will have one. LH to stand for role.

Secretary

Following communication and a meeting with Olivia Pyne, CC advised that OP is prepared to stand as Secretary at the May 2023 AGM.

Minutes Secretary

Liz Geach is prepared to stand as Minutes Secretary. CC stated that it is general across u3as nationally that the Minutes Secretary is a Committee member and Trustee. However it was agreed that it is difficult to be on the Committee and to take Minutes. Further, the Minutes Secretary does not have access to Beacon and members'

information. Therefore, the majority agreed it was not necessary for the Minutes Secretary to be a Committee post.

Assistant Treasurer

SR had sent out an email, for which CC thanked him. Several email responses were received, two of which were positive. SR will be contacting both after the meeting to discuss the position further. **Action SR**

Membership Secretary

OS suggested the replacement Membership Secretary could shadow to get used to the role before OS stands down.

Communications & Technology

- Eleven emails had been received by JH in response to the email sent to all members in January; six were unable to help. The names of possible members were detailed in his report to Committee members.
- LH will continue to liaise with Nigel Day regarding a text only based Newsletter. Cecilia Jenkins and Rachel Cockell will be available as support/back up. ND, CJ and RC to get together to decide who will be covering which aspects but LH to liaise with ND initially. **Action LH**

Database

- CC advised that Alison Hazell is willing to stand as a Committee member, but due to imminent retirement, would prefer to join the Committee next year to allow time to familiarise herself with the u3a.
- AJ stated that agreement had been reached previously that Database would not be a Committee role.
- JH advised that a Committee member for Communications and Technology could incorporate Database within that broader role.
- JH is happy to discuss Database with Alison Hazell at an appropriate time for AH.
- LH suggested that perhaps Melanie Parker would agree to cover Database for the year, with AH shadowing to ease into the role. AH could be co-opted later in the year if she were happy to take on a broader role.

Meeters and Greeters/Monthly Meetings/Social Committee

- Shirley Reid has withdrawn her name from Meeters & Greeters lead but will be helping LH. She may consider the role in the future.
- CC confirmed that, following a telephone conversation with Jane Stephen, JS may be prepared to help out/lead Meeters & Greeters. **Action LH** to contact JS.
- Going forward it was agreed that it would be better to have more people for the monthly meetings. It was also mentioned that most people feel nervous about going up on stage and it would be useful for those people to have the possibility of a practice session.
- JH indicated AR would not be standing again but will be helping LH on the social committee.

AJ asked if it was necessary for her to attend any future committee meetings as she had fulfilled her role with regard to succession planning and said she would leave the meeting at that point so the committee could make a decision. It was agreed that as AJ had fulfilled her responsibilities on Succession Planning, for which the Committee was very grateful, there was no need for her to attend further Committee meetings. However, the Committee would appreciate the option to seek further advice from her if the need arises.

Action CC to write to AJ to thank her for her input and to explain the Committee's decision.

AGM Arrangements

- The content of Bulletin 1 was checked by the Committee.
- Hubs and retiring Committee members to be mentioned in the Trustees Report.
- Nomination papers to be sent out.
- **Voting:** Zoom members will not be included in the count. Voting will be a person count with a show of hands. It was agreed that it was crucial to count the number of people in the Pavilion hall, and everyone to be seated at the time of the count. Meeters and greeters to count show of hands in sections.
- Minutes to be taken by either BC or incoming Minutes Secretary with BC shadowing.
- Care to be taken regarding advertising to ensure members only are present in the Pavilion hall.
- Agreement was given to AJ to have Hospiscare leaflets at the back of the hall, to inform about voluntary work opportunities/fund raising.

Website Developments

JH referred to his previously circulated report on progress of the website team with its work on developing the new website. The committee noted this and agreed to all of the recommendations in the report. In summary, these were:

- Agreement to ensure that we retain our domain name (www.exmouthu3a.org.uk) for our website and also our u3a email addresses.
- Agreement to adopt JH's brief statement on communications strategy as an interim measure, with the new committee, in time, developing a more considered strategy to reflect its approach to communications.
- Agreement at the earliest opportunity for hosting to be arranged with Heart Internet, at least in the short-term. During this developmental stage, the link to the prototype website would only be shared on a restricted basis (i.e. to committee members and the website team only)
- Agreement to all the conclusions and recommendations at the top of page 3 of the report.
- Agreement to the funding bid in the report, i.e. funds for:
 - Renewal of current Heart Internet contract (the current annual cost of this is £86.26, covering the registration of the Exmouth u3a domain name and up to 100 email addresses - @exmouthu3a.org.uk)
 - Additional hosting services required from Heart Internet (or possible alternative hosting organisation in longer-term)
 - WordPress plug-ins for new website if required
- Agreement to the suggested timetable for action outlined on pages 3 and 4 of the report.

It was noted that the next immediate step is to find out more about the current Heart Internet contract. It was not clear who holds this contract or what it says. JH will continue to make enquiries, starting with Melanie as Beacon Administrator.

The committee wished to record its thanks to all members of the website team group for all the hard work and the progress that has been made so quickly.

Role Descriptions

Chair

All gave approval to the current role description

Secretary

- CC advised this needs to include a Minutes Secretary which will be a new role for Exmouth u3a.
- Re Item 3.1 – Ensures bookings are made. CC has liaised with IB and confirmed this is part of the Secretary role.

- Re 'Organise monthly meetings', JH advised this is usually done by the Speakers Organiser.
- Re 'keeping something in a notebook' it was agreed that keeping a record is key and that 'notebook' should be changed to 'record'.

All approved the role description for the Secretary with minor alterations as above.

Minutes Secretary

Approval was given with the proviso that the requirement for the Minutes Secretary to be a Trustee was deleted. CC felt that the Minutes Secretary should be a Trustee but accepted that it was a majority decision as discussed earlier in the meeting.

Reports from Committee Members

- CC thanked committee members for their very comprehensive reports.
- There was no New Member news and no questions on the reports.

AOB

- At some stage the cabinet in Albion Court needs to be cleared.
- Paperwork for the use of Radcliffe House, Exmouth for Committee meetings has not been received yet. However, Committee meetings have been booked at Radcliffe House up to May 2023.

Next Meeting

Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 1:30pm
Radcliffe House, Burnside, Exmouth