

## SCN Treasurers Meeting Report

**Tuesday April 13th 2021 10am – 12 Noon via Zoom.**

### Attendees

Sally Ingledew	SCN Manager	
Kevin Stock	SCN Admin	
Susie Berry	Regional Trustee	
Peter Newland	Treasurer	Chichester
Ken Laing	Treasurer	Emsworth
Margaret Stanger	Treasurer	Havant
Robert Hornby	Treasurer	Hayling Island
Sue Dobson	Treasurer	Horndean & District
Les Hill	Treasurer	Locks Heath
Graham Dandy	Treasurer	Meon Valley
Jean Morgan	Treasurer	Portsmouth
Valerie Mitchell	Assistant Treasurer	Rowlands Castle
John Ponting	Treasurer	Stubbington
Nick Hammond	Treasurer	Warsash
Jan Slawson	Assistant Treasurer	Warsash
Chris Cant	Treasurer	Waterlooville
Barbara Legg	Groups Treasurer	Waterlooville
Peter Langford	Treasurer	Guernsey
Juliette White	Treasurer	Jersey

Apologies received from: Ems Valley, Gosport, Portsdown, Solent

## 1. **Welcome** by Sally Ingledew, SCN Manager

SI commented that it was very positive that all the items on the agenda have come from u3as

## 2. **Update from the Board** Susie Berry

Beacon update from Sam Mauger. The original company has been taken over and that company cannot fulfil the contract. The Trust is claiming the money back This will cause serious delays in implementing Beacon 2.

Siftware is still employed to maintain Beacon 1, and it may be that their hours will be increased to enable better support and faster problem solving for Beacon 1.

Richard Tere is retiring and the board are looking for volunteers for the role of Treasurer.

Any u3a really struggling financially can apply to Susie as there is some money available.

## 3. **Accepting Card Payments** (Waterlooville u3a)

CC enquiring if anyone takes credit card payments. Currently no one does but interest was shown.

RH Recommended Square as a way of doing this. So far it seems to be working well.

PN Also chose Square in preference to Sumup as it details which member of the team did a transaction.

Chichester is planning to stop taking cheque payments, and this would allow payments to be taken by phone but, card not present has more risk. Standing orders are not efficient as there is no allowance for change.

JW Jersey confirmed the following charges as 1.75 for present and 2.75 for not present. Cannot get free banking £2.50 to process any cheque. Processing through photo on app is cheaper but appears as a cash amount.

CC was having success with Sumup until under T & Cs they found that it cannot be used for membership payments on the basis that the service must be completed in 7 days.

PN They are not membership fees but a charitable donation and the seven day completion does not apply, as it is not buying services, simply allowing access to u3a activities

*Post-meeting update from CC on Sumup*

*At the SCN Treasurer's Meeting, Sally asked me to report on my further negotiations with SumUp, the organisation who would process card payments, if only they were not for Membership Subscriptions. Those negotiations are still in hand, which is a distinct improvement after their flat refusal to handle such payments, but they are asking for commitments from me which I am reluctant to give without some further guidance and I shall be discussing this further with Jo (our Chair) and Barbara (our Secretary), as it would be a binding assurance on behalf of Waterlooville u3a.*

#### **4. Review of the Beacon 1 Financial Package (Warsash u3a)**

NH The review is in the Appendix at the end of this report. Adam Walton has resigned so a replacement is urgently needed.

#### **5. PayPal and Bacs for Membership renewals/new members as TAT is pushing for u3as to adopt Beacon 1 (Stubbington u3a)**

PN use PayPal with identifying code direct with Beacon. BACS the members have a simple code to use to identify.

LH references eg membership number works and use batch payment on Beacon makes it quicker. Gift Aid does not have to be renewed every year unless the members finances have changed (this is the responsibility of the member, not the u3a).

JP problem with memb sec getting membership forms. NH PayPal and Beacon need not involve memb sec.

LH no application forms . Create letter in Beacon with members details on for that individual member to check.

PN has nearly eliminated cheques and paper work. New members are assumed to be on line.

JP much resistance to use online /telephone banking.

Havant reconcile payments with bacs payments.

NH if you say u3a does not take cheques/cash a majority will comply. Payments could be made at bank or post office.

LH App for taking pic of cheque does not come through as cheque just an amount

#### **6. How do u3as handle their group accounts (Horndean & District u3a)**

Portsmouth group finances and beacon.

NH basically the group account is a notepad, no link to u3a as a whole. u3a pays invoices direct to venue,

CC Collect money and pass to group treasurer who pays invoices. Separate Beacon account for this.

JP groups keep their own accounts which JP checks. Any extra goes into main u3a account. All monies must go through u3a. This is required by the Charity Commission.

LH payment creates a contract with venue, and this must be with u3a or invalidates insurance. Or sign paper contract between venue and u3a

#### **7. Are you providing financial support for new/changed activities or practices that could enrich u3a lives after lockdown? (Havant u3a)**

MS Havant are anticipating continuing online activities and are looking at keeping zoom licenses and other licences eg music. FB pages are also popular.

Looking at webcasts, podcasts streaming increases range of speakers.

SI recommended Members Link and sharing of ideas.

NH Trust will not provide list of zoom speakers as this implies recommendation.

LH speakers forum in SCN area recommends and shares information.

SI suggested asking all u3as in SCN for zoom speaker recommendations.

## 8. Any Other Business

SI asked for suggestions for a physical network meeting when this is possible. Not a role meeting, but really just to get together and actually meet. Ideally open to all members of the committee. Actual role/peer meetings will continue to be on zoom. KS confirmed National AGM will be virtual and is on the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021 11.00am

## Appendix

### Beacon Team Financial Workshop (01 Apr 21)

- Currently there are 475 live Beacon sites with 211,000 Beacon members.
- Error 502 problems were associated with insufficient capacity of data/e-mail server. This has now been resolved.
- Beacon 2 is on hold because APT has been bought out and new contractor is unable/unwilling to provide Beacon 2.
- Beacon 1 will receive additional support and continues to be the u3a primary management system.
- Adam Walton (TAT SME for Beacon) has moved on.

**Financial Statements:** Lack Flexibility. The only view is a year to year to date set of figures. Require month-by-month set of figures within the financial year.

The financial statement does not allow for part-year reporting. Currently “include previous year” is fairly useless except at the year end.

The statement does not show the surplus or deficit for the period

**Categories:** Making a financial report: Best practices Use of categories requires better guidance. The category list is in alphabetical order, making no distinction between income, expenditure and asset categories

**Transactions:** Correcting reconciled transactions: Guidance required: Beacon option to disable reconciliations: Posting a payment as money received or paid. A visible signal showing that which had been selected (red highlight for payment)

Why are there two downloads? Why can there not be one download.

Changing / clearing data after reconciliation.

**Posting Payments:** Multiple entries on a single invoice ( hall hire invoice covering several groups) have to be posted as separate invoice payments. Batch posting facility may be an option.

Why does the Reconcile Account function default to the cash account?

Require a reporting function that can be tailored to individual u3a requirements.

**Accruals:** Require method for handling Accruals. Do small u3as require Accrual accounting?

### **Asset Register**

As well as an asset register, a purchase ledger and possibly a debtors ledger for those u3as who do not do accrual accounting.

Beacon to store documents.

**Gift Aid:** Gift Aid can go back 4 years from the members' declaration date Beacon should be able to deal with this. The system should be able to pick up all payments made within the last 4 years by a member with a valid Gift Aid declaration, which have not yet been included in the claim.

**Groups Cash:** Opening closing balances for groups. Ledger gives a running total for groups, would it be better to have a running total for the group concerned. Balances in the main ledger do not transfer to the new financial year -they have to be re-entered at the start of each financial year with a double entry to a suspense or holding account.

The group statement does not relate to the main ledger.

Ledger by group does not allow for sorting by group with subtotals.

**Membership:** Running batch totals as transactions are entered. Credit batches ability to view and adjust.

**User guide:** Could it be a PDF version: Could we print the whole of the finance section or the whole of the Guide. Could all links be clickable? Some are clickable some are not. BEACON HELP CENTRE hosts User Guides.

### **Rollover / update**

**Knowledge based training:** User guide Knowledge Base to be in training format.