

Hastings & Rother U3A

Minutes of Committee Meeting

held at 10.30 on Thursday 20th February 2020 at St Peter's Community Centre, Bexhill

Present

Robert Hadland (Chair)	George Webster (Vice Chair)
Ken Saunders (Business Secretary)	Jenny Meteyard (Minutes)
Josephine Noyce (Assistant Treasurer)	Lynda Wood (Groups)
Chris Legg (Membership)	Gail Oswald (Treasurer)
Sue Deeks (Initial Enquiries)	Carol Crossley (Venues)
Richard Collisson (IT) invited	Bruce Henderson

NB Database, Website and IT Administrators and SUN Representative are not committee members but may send reports and/or attend meetings at times if appropriate, and receive the relevant paperwork.

Robert welcomed Bruce Henderson and Richard Collisson to the meeting. Bruce is currently working with Chris Legg on Membership and will be taking over this role; Richard was at the meeting to report as IT administrator.

1. Apologies for absence

Barbara Spackman (Speakers); Mike Wilson (general); Lesley Almond (general)

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 9th January 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters arising (not covered in the agenda)

None.

4. General Reports

IT administrator

Richard had collated a document with information to be sent to **speakers at the White Rock** (through an error this was not circulated). It was emphasised that speakers should not touch lapel mikes - if there are complaints about sound, the technician will deal with this. A wired mike is included but the hand-held mike is ours. White Rock include a ceiling-mounted projector for an extra charge of £25. Speakers need information on how to access the building if they have equipment etc to unload, and this will be added along with parking information.

Richard also reported on the **computer equipment owned by H&R U3A** (circulated before the meeting). There was some discussion around who actually needs laptops, and issues of software. It was agreed that for certain roles such as Treasurer it is better to have a dedicated laptop, which with any change of personnel can be handed on, including not only data but also any necessary software. Those whose work is entirely through the Beacon system do not need a U3A laptop. At the moment the Newsletter editor is happy to use her own (there are no data issues); one assistant has a U3A laptop but only currently uses it to proofread. The issue of a printer was also discussed as the Membership Secretary needs to print regularly at a low volume (e.g. membership forms) and it would be more cost-effective to have a mono laser printer for this. It was suggested that for others there should be a standardised system of charging/reclaiming costs of printing, but no decision was made on this.

RC

It was therefore agreed that:

- The Treasurer needs a U3A laptop and will have a new one; the old one will be given to Lorna for use at monthly meetings
- The Groups Co-ordinator should have a U3A laptop (new) rather than using her own
- Richard will cost the purchase of 2 new laptops and will also look into the best way to acquire the Office suite for these – possibly a corporate licence. Costings will be sent to the Treasurer for approval.
- Bruce, in consultation with Chris, will purchase a suitable mono laser printer.

RC/GO

RC/GO

BH/CL

The Equipment Officer Ernie Grice needs to be kept informed of all changes in equipment owned by H&R U3A.

RC

Chair

Robert reported that the first monthly meeting held at the White Rock Sussex Room had been successful, and particular thanks were given to Carol Crossley, Sue Deeks and Richard Collisson for their contributions in finding the venue and managing the arrangements. 130 members attended, tea/coffee organisation worked well and a charge of £2 for this seemed acceptable. There were a few comments that the room was cold, but the venue is in the process of installing a new boiler. Staff members were helpful and co-operative including technicians, who were so quick to solve a problem with the projector (replacing it with another) that Richard was the only person aware of this! There was no negative feedback about transport or parking issues. Ken did comment however that there is an issue with the lift: it cannot be called from downstairs so anyone who needs to use this will have to ask someone to go up and send it down. Members should be alerted to this at meetings.

RH

There are a number of pending changes to the committee. Robert expressed thanks to Chris Legg for his work as Membership Secretary and wished him well when he moves to Shropshire. The move will be taking place sooner than expected. Bruce Henderson has agreed to take on the role and has already had detailed discussions with Chris. Josephine therefore proposed that Bruce Henderson be co-opted as a trustee/member of the committee in the role of Membership Secretary, and this was seconded by Ken Saunders and unanimously agreed by a show of hands.

Brian Gould will be resigning as Webmaster and Ken Saunders as Business Secretary at the AGM in July, so volunteers are needed for these roles. (Tricia Jobling was thought to have volunteered as Webmaster, but this was a misunderstanding, as she is only prepared to take this on if no-one else can be found). Ken suggested that at a future monthly meeting someone stands up and talks about the role of Business Secretary to clarify that it is not too arduous, since he does not deal with membership or minutes, and many items that appear on the job description are only once a year. He has updated the job description (see below under Business Secretary) and Bruce commented that all the job descriptions need to be updated.

Membership Secretary

Chris expressed gratitude to Bruce and also thanked the committee. He reported that there are now 747 members. Last year only 50 paid online but this year 152 had done so. 55 do not use email. Chris is creating new membership forms which should be printed next week and will be sent to Sue, Carol and Tony Hardiment (Welcome Co-ordinator).

CL

Initial Enquiries

Sue reported that she is receiving enquiries from doctors and from professional carers on behalf of clients with issues such as dementia, hoping that we can offer services such as social clubs which professional carers can also attend. Sue was concerned that if the social prescribing packs go to doctors and carers, then U3A could start to be seen as a replacement for social services/day care. It was agreed that this would not be consistent with the principles of U3A and what it was

set up to do, and that while we may be able to offer some support to people with health or social issues or to unpaid carers, we have a very large and increasing membership and are already struggling to provide for this. U3A relies on its members giving as well as receiving, e.g. starting and convening groups and contributing to learning opportunities, and must not be seen as a service provider. Carol stated that as yet no packs have gone to surgeries. Bruce suggested that it might be appropriate to have a membership policy with clear criteria for membership. It was therefore agreed that:

- Social prescribing packs will not at present be sent to surgeries as previously agreed (Carol will feed back to Lorna, since she initiated this).
- A sub-committee will be set up to develop a policy to deal with these issues, based on the principles of the U3A – Ken and Robert will initially liaise over this.

CC

KS/RH

Treasurer

Gail reported that the Gift Aid payment has been received. The Lloyds internet banking has been set up and the first online payment successfully made and authorised. Additional/replacement signatories will be added. Anyone who sets up a payment will email the other signatories (since it appears that this is not automatic, as previously stated), preferably with details of the recipient(s) and the amount(s), and as soon as a signatory has authorised the payment they will immediately email all the signatories that this has been done. Gail will move forward to open savings accounts which allow easier transfer, although a lump sum will be kept in a term account which offers better interest rates.

GO

Speaker Secretary

Robert reported that the additional speaker meeting has been arranged for 24th August 2020. As St Peter's will be closed at that date, Carol is investigating whether the White Rock is free. Robert will confirm the topic.

RH/CC

Website

Brian had sent the usual page visit statistics.

Business Secretary

Ken had previously circulated an updated job description for his role. He commented that it looked more than it really is, as many items are only once a year, or require very little activity (e.g. custodianship of documents). Ken noted that the list of committee members, which he updates, only goes to the committee. He now has an induction pack for new committee members. He proposed and it was agreed that in future the volunteers list should only contain the convenor for each group (e.g. Welcome Team), as it had proved impossible to keep the list updated; convenors will therefore be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date list of their own group. Ken will finalise the job description and it will then appear on the website.

KS

KS

It was noted that we should have a risk assessment for the White Rock. Ken will find the template and email to Carol to complete.

Groups Co-ordinator

Lynda reported that there are 2 new groups. 12 people are interested in a backgammon group but no-one is prepared to act as convenor. There is the possibility of a new music theory group. A letter from the Chairman has been sent to a group convenor who has not rejoined U3A. With changes to the Beacon system, it can be difficult to find out if members have lapsed but are continuing to attend groups. Lynda has sent a message to convenors asking them to regularly update their lists and to inform her when there is a change, and has also asked for group convenors to write pieces for the newsletter.

Lynda has also informed them that U3A may be able to subsidise venues. There was some discussion of the issue of paying for venues as it could mean that U3A is heavily subsidising some groups and not others. At present for activities where hire of a hall is necessary, it appears

that attendees pay some or all of the cost. Some concern was felt that a few convenors may be allowing non-U3A members to attend and/or not keeping clear accounts of who is paying for what. Lynda and Robert will meet with one particular group convenor to establish exactly what is happening. Jenny suggested that this was another area where perhaps a policy is needed. The Convenors' Tea is confirmed for Wednesday 17th June at the Royal Victoria. This is for convenors and volunteers only, not partners.

LW/CC

Venues Co-ordinator

Carol confirmed that the White Rock staff will dispense drinks (water, tea, coffee with biscuits) but we need to take the money, count it and then hand over. She also reported that a cloakroom would cost an extra £25 so was not practical.

CC

Newsletter

Glossy paper is to be used for future editions.

5. Any other business

- Ken has ordered 80 copies of the Gardens Open for Charities brochure and will bring them to the Monday meeting.
- A Showcase or other event was suggested for U3A National Day on 3rd June, but in the absence of volunteers to organise this and given the large and increasing membership numbers, it was not felt to be necessary.

KS

6. Dates/venues of future committee meetings

- Thursday 2nd April 2020 10.00 a.m.
- Thursday 14th May 2020 10.00 a.m.
- Thursday 25th June 2020 10.00 a.m.

Meetings will be held in the **Bell Room, St Peter's Community Centre**

Signed

Date

Minutes were taken by Jenny Meteyard. The meeting closed at 12.00