

Minutes LSA u3a Committee

February 3, 2023

Venue: Bath St, Lytham

1. **Welcome:** Attendees were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair.
2. **Members present:** Kathy Wykes [KW / Chair], Angela Simmons [AS / Treasurer], Martin Lammam [ML / Membership], Sue Pullar [SP / Groups], Pete Colley [PC / Beacon]. **Apologies:** Barbara Pollitt [Hospitality]
3. **Minutes of Meeting from January 6, 2023:** The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct representation. The Chair signed two copies – one for the file and a copy for the notice board at the General Meeting. A copy will also be uploaded on the website.
4. **Matters Arising:**
 - a. Previous action 4.4: The memory stick containing a potential backup presentation in the case of a general meeting presenter 'no show', has to be tested using the URC sound system to ensure the audio is acceptable. PC has looked into this and reported back:

We currently rely on David Wilson's personal projector for the General Meetings. Due to the age of this equipment there can be some issues in connecting it with the URC sound system. Possible solutions were discussed at the meeting, as follows:

- a new lead to provide a direct connection between the projector and the URC system, c. £20
- a Bluetooth receiver, c. £50
- a new Projector, c. £200

In light of the fact that we are dependent upon a member's equipment for a monthly high profile event the committee considered that we should go down the new projector route. The previous action was closed and a new action raised for PC to investigate the new projector further.

Action: PC

b. Previous action 4.5: Establish ability for members to pay online via PayPal.

Action: AS ongoing

c. Previous action 4.7: Group Leaders are to be reminded of the policy of one free taster session for non-members – this will be covered at the February Group Leader Meeting.

Action: KW ongoing

d. Previous action 4.8: A Group Leader meeting has been convened for February 24.

Action: KW complete

e. Previous action 4.13: Beacon training for Group Leaders. This will be covered at the February Group Leader meeting.

Action: PC ongoing

f. Previous action 4.20: In order to help in the review of the end of year accounts they are to be presented in both Beacon and traditional spreadsheet format.

Action: AS ongoing

g. TAT magazine deliveries need resolving. ML to discuss with Catharine Oldroyd to determine previous processes.

Action: ML ongoing

h. Previous action 6a: Lanyards and any other stock items to be retrieved from previous committee members.

Action: KW complete

i. Previous action 6b: Progress idea of Group Leader meeting.

Action: KW complete

5. Chair's Update

- a. PC had resigned from his position as Secretary. Until a replacement is found KW will fulfil the role of Acting Secretary in addition as her role as Chair.
- b. As the Chair had been unwell for most of January and unable to fully undertake her role, she thanked the Committee for their support and understanding during this time.
- c. The Chair has written to those members that had joined since December to welcome them, asking for feedback and seeking support in running the u3a.

There had been a reasonable response and she will be meeting with these members over the coming week to discuss their possible involvement.

- d. During this briefing PC expressed concern that the LSA u3a had poor visibility in the area and that a more “strategic approach” is required, making more use of the website, social media and adopting a more comprehensive recruitment of new volunteers. PC agreed to prepare a strategy paper addressing his concerns for discussion by the committee.

Action: PC

6. Preparations for AGM

Due to holiday arrangements, it was not possible to arrange a meeting with the Accounts Reviewer until the beginning of February. When all the subsequent necessary timings are taken into consideration a March AGM is felt to be too rushed. It was proposed and agreed by the meeting therefore to hold the 2023 AGM on April 14.

The Chair presented the key dates to feed into this April date, as follows:

February 14 Receive M Halliwell report

February 17 KW to Issue Trustee report to Trustees for review [to be agreed at March 3 Committee Meeting]

March 3 Send out nominations forms for Secretary position

March 17 Post / email notice of AGM together with Trustee Report.

Nominations to be received by this date

April 14 AGM

There was discussion regarding the lack of a secretary for the AGM. For the time being it is assumed that there will not be a secretary.

7. Report back from Officer

- a. **Secretary** – As reported earlier PC had resigned from this position and the role is currently being undertaken by KW.
- b. **Treasurer** – AS had issued the 2022 accounts prior to the meeting. A few points arose, as follows:
 - i. The Bridge Group holds a general fund of £252 and the main accounts show a deficit for the Bridge Group.. During last year’s accounts there had been significant confusion regarding how the Bridge Group paid the rent on the premises they used during their meetings. There had been decisions and agreements made by previous committees, the facts of which were not clear to any of the present committee. Over time the discussions had become circular and non-productive. Earlier in 2022

the Committee had decided to change the arrangements such that the Bridge Group would pay their own rent however the discrepancy in the accounts was still there. This meeting agreed to write off the £252 in the accounts.

- ii. Despite best efforts the Committee have been unable to locate certain assets that have appeared in previous annual accounts without a custodian. In addition, some assets previously recorded have been deemed no longer fit for purpose. On the advice of the Accounts Reviewer such items should be deleted from the final accounts and no longer recorded. This was agreed by the committee.
- iii. The accounts are currently prepared using an accrual system. Beacon assumes a cash accounting system. In the interests of clarity, it was agreed:
 1. Cash accounting will be used for 2023 accounts onwards.
 2. Accrual accounting will be retained for the 2022 accounts.
- iv. The meeting agreed that the reserves policy for 2023 will be 50% of the envisaged expenditure for the year and that this will be based upon 2022 expenditure. Therefore, based upon a 2022 expenditure of £6852, the general reserves will be £3426.
- v. AS and ML will meet with the accounts assessor on February 7.
- vi. AS was asked to prepare a draft 2023 budget for the next Committee Meeting.

Action: AS

- vii. It was noted that some of the Groups are retaining sums greater than £100. There was some debate regarding who 'owns' such funds and how it is accounted for on Beacon. It was agreed that an agreed policy is required, ideally in time for the Group Leaders meeting in February. KW will set out an initial proposal and send to committee members for an online discussion with the aim of agreeing a way ahead.

Action: KW

- viii. The Chair thanked AS for all the hard work that had been put into preparing the accounts this year, particularly noting the transition from the previous spreadsheet format into Beacon. The Chair also thanked ML for the additional support and advice that he had provided to AS during this process.

c. Membership Secretary – We now have a total of 453 members. There were 27 new members in January and 35 enquiries. Annual subscriptions still outstanding from 116 members. As our annual payment to national u3a is

based upon the number of members shown on Beacon, any members not paying by the end of March will be removed.

ML has regrettably tendered his resignation from the Committee. He will however stay on until a replacement is found. The Chair noted that ML has done a sterling job on the Committee, both in his own role as Membership Secretary and also in his support of AS., and his support will be sadly missed.

- d. **Groups Coordinator** – SP reported that we now have 37 groups! This is almost double the number of a year ago. SP is to check that all groups are reflected on the website and correct if there are any inaccuracies.

Action: SP

- e. **Beacon** – PC had provided a written progress report, see Annex 1.

Certain documents on the website are password protected. This password had been sent to members last year and should now be re-sent to include all new members.

Action: KW

- 8. **Newsletter approval:** The newsletter was approved for release. KW to email out to the membership and to the Printers. ML will pick up the printed copies for the General Meeting.
- 9. **Group Leaders Meeting** – Room has been booked – Our Lady of the Sea Parish Rooms. A general agenda is agreed, to include: Overall Group Leader expectations, Handbook, finance, Beacon, Feedback. It was agreed to suggest that the Group Leaders invite other group members if they support the leader with either finance or Beacon matters.
- 10. **Arrangements for next General Meeting:** KW will organise Meeters and Greeters and Hall Manager. No specific points for KW to raise to the membership were identified.
- 11. **AOB**
 - a. **SP** advised that she does not check her email account every day and if an important email is sent out it should be supported with a text message.
 - b. The Meeting were reminded of the expenses policy regarding submitting claims for printer cartridges. Any exceptions to this should be agreed prior to expenditure in the future. SP has a monthly printing job to cover the group boards. It is not considered to be feasible for anyone else to do this printing and not necessary to have the committee printer.
 - c. ML explained that the new system to deposit cash / cheques into the bank is to use a Banking Deposit Bag. When this is used you do not receive an immediate receipt from the bank but the funds appear on the bank statement.

ML asked the committee to approve the use of this bag, which is a recognised bank facility. The Committee agreed to this.

- d. PC has recently established a new Science and Technology Group. To support his first speaker meeting he has booked a Hall at a cost of £30. Attendees will be asked to contribute a small fee but as this is a new group he is unsure whether the numbers will balance his outgoings. He therefore asked the committee whether they would subsidise the costs for the first meeting if he didn't manage to get sufficient attendees. The committee agreed to this. PC also advised that he plans to advertise his meeting presentations on external media and any non u3a members attending will be treated as attending taster sessions and encouraged to join the u3a. Full records will be kept of the names of all attendees.

Signed: **Chair**

Date:

ANNEX 1

Beacon Manager Report

3rd February 2023

During the month I've sat down with Angela, Martin and Sue to understand their Roles and what they do, particularly with respect to Beacon, what, if any, problems and they're having and what additional things they'd like to do. I believe that all immediate problems are sorted.

Sue has been extremely active in updating group information, and I've encouraged her to pass on any remaining updates, including from the next General Meeting boards, to Paulene Colley before she goes on holiday. Paulene should be able to implement them so that Beacon will be totally up to date when Sue returns.

As a result of these efforts and her work to get Group Leaders using Beacon we now have 21 Group Leaders with access (up from 4 when I started) of whom 12 have logged on. Of the 9 who haven't logged on, 1 had a login failure due to entering the wrong username. I went back to him and am waiting for him to try again.

My discussions have highlighted the incredible amount of work that individuals are suffering and that could be greatly reduced with more effective use of Beacon, and proper training and support. Some steps have been taken already and the Group Leaders meeting will help as well.

Having a more comprehensive website with a more appropriate home page and structure that is better integrated with Beacon could significantly help recruitment of new members, better inform members and Group Leaders as well as helping to recruit volunteers. It will also enable Group Leaders to keep their Group Members better informed and encourage new members to their Group in addition to helping with administering their Group(s).

I've met with Graham and plan to start working on these changes soon and largely complete them over the next 2 months. I'm also happy to receive any input from the Committee but recognise the pressures that Committee members are currently under.

All changes I'm planning are consistent with advice from u3a, will incorporate u3a published materials and, where appropriate, our own documents and policies. Other features that I'd like to add, such as enabling new members to join on line, members to renew on line and add/ remove themselves from Groups on line will only be implemented with Committee approval.

Pete Colley