



Much Wenlock and District U3A

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Much Wenlock and District u3a held at 2.00pm on 13th October, 2021 at the Priory Hall, Much Wenlock.

Present: Linda Wallace (Chairman), Alison Richards (Acting Secretary), Glynn Emery (Treasurer), David Foster (Vice Chair & Groups Co-ordinator), Robert Toft (Vice Chair), Michael Theobalds (Membership Secretary), Jean Buswell (Minutes Secretary and Executive Committee Member), Bill Hague (Executive Committee Member), Jane Hague (Executive Committee Member), and members of the u3a making a total attendance of 51 persons.

The Chairman welcomed members to the ninth AGM of the Much Wenlock and District u3a.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Paul & Veronica Smethurst, Alan & Jane Edwards and Yvonne Holyoak Power.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the AGM on 15th January, 2020 were accepted without amendment. Neil Lloyd was thanked for producing them and they have been posted on the Much Wenlock & District u3a website.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. Chairman's Report on behalf of the Trustees

The Chairman (Linda Wallace) supplemented her report with a PowerPoint presentation.

Opening

Linda opened by reminding us that when we held our last AGM in January 2020, we did not know then what was to come – a Covid pandemic. She noted that it has been a difficult time for all u3a branches and Much Wenlock is no exception. Sadly, our Honorary President Rita Denny died early in the pandemic. Many other members have also passed away during the past 21 months. Linda expressed her sadness and sent her condolences to all the families and friends who have lost loved ones.

For 2020, the membership year was extended until the end of April 2021 to take into account the difficulties our u3a faced and to offer better value to the

membership. She emphasised however, that the Financial Year remains the normal calendar year. Unfortunately, our membership numbers have dropped to 215 compared to 270 in January, 2020. This is a fall of approximately 20%, which is actually in line with the national average.

Linda said that we are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, and more activities are starting, so encouraged us to get the word out that we are up and running.

Groups

Linda thanked the Group Leaders for their work throughout the pandemic, keeping in touch with their members. Several groups continued during lockdown with the use of Zoom, including Creative Writing, Philosophy, Beginners Ukulele, Italian and Spanish. Linda congratulated Gillian Griffith, who won the 2020 National u3a Creative Writing competition for the West Midlands region and came third overall.

More groups have recommenced, including Bowling, Ukulele, Guitar, Music Appreciation, Out with Friends

Unfortunately some groups have ceased, including Ballroom Dancing, Theatre Workshop and Art History and Chess.

In April, David Foster organised a Group Leaders Meeting, via Zoom, to help relaunch our groups. This was really well attended and very positive.

Next month in November, there will be a Group Fayre after the talk to promote groups and help recognise potential new interest groups.

Keeping in Touch

Linda thanked the committee and other u3a members who helped everyone to keep in touch during lockdown by offering newsletters, quizzes, website updates and posts on Facebook.

A new bookmark has been printed for members, detailing what groups are available, the planned speakers and how to get in contact.

Much Wenlock u3a Day, 4th June, 2021

The committee met regularly during lockdown, and was keen to participate in the National u3a day in June. A fun day was organised in The Square in Much Wenlock with the Guitar and Ukulele Groups playing music, and the committee promoting our u3a. It was a sunny, beautiful day, with lots of interest shown by locals and visitors to the town.

Afternoon Tea 'Re-launch'

The Chairman thanked Jean Buswell for organising the Afternoon Tea in August and also David and Lesley Foster, the 'Lockdown Band', for providing the music. She described the event as a fantastic way to re-start u3a activities and a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon with excellent feedback from members.

The Way Forward

The monthly talks re-started in September and there is a full programme of speakers planned until July 2022. Linda conveyed huge thanks to Jean for organising the speakers.

It has been confirmed that the Kilworth House play is scheduled for 24th June, 2022 and will be 'Carousel'.

On Monday 11th October, two Committee members - Michael Theobalds and Robert Toft appeared on Radio Shropshire to promote Much Wenlock & District u3a and take part in the Monday Night 'Pub Quiz at Home'. They were thanked for their participation and congratulated on their performances!

Linda re-iterated that David Foster is organising the Group Fayre for November to promote the interest groups and explore what additional activities could be run. She emphasised that the u3a is all about grass roots up, so any suggestions for new interest groups will be welcomed. Ideas already submitted include IT literacy, table tennis, possibly French.

The Chairman concluded her report by thanking the Committee members for their work, and the members for sticking with our u3a during these difficult times. She encouraged everyone to 'Let the fun commence'!

5. Financial Report for 2020

Linda explained that the Financial Report for 2020 has been issued by our Treasurer, Glynn Emery and published on the website showing a healthy closing position at the end of the financial year. Paper copies were made available at the meeting. The Report included a Summary Position, the Financial Statement from the Beacon software system, Auditor's Report and the 2021 Budget.

She thanked Colin Taylor for diligently examining the accounts for 2020 and for the speedy turnaround.

The Chair invited the membership to direct any questions to Glynn but none were forthcoming.

6. Appointment of an Examiner for the Accounts for 1st January to 31st December, 2020.

As Colin Taylor cannot examine the accounts for 2021, the Chair appealed to the floor for anyone willing to audit the accounts for that financial year. Although there were no immediate volunteers, the meeting approved a proposal for the Committee to seek out an auditor and subsequently, Jo Cohen came forward to fulfil the role.

7. **Election of Officers** (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and up to two Vice-Chairmen)

The Chairman reported that no nominations were received by the closing date of 22 September, 2021. However, nominations had since been received for:

Chairman	Linda Wallace
Vice Chairs	David Foster and Robert Toft
Treasurer	Glynn Emery
Secretary	Alison Richards

The meeting approved these as valid nominations and, in the absence of other nominations, Linda declared herself, David, Robert, Glynn and Alison elected.

8. **Election of Executive Committee Members**

The Chairman stated that, under the Constitution, there can be up to 13 members (including the officers), thus 8 committee places were available.

She noted that no nominations were received by the closing date of 22 September, 2021. However, nominations had since been received from:

Jean Buswell
Bill Hague
Jane Hague
Michael Theobalds
Linda Davies

The meeting approved these as valid nominations and so the five people named above were declared as elected.

As there were still vacancies for three people on the Committee, Linda appealed to the floor for volunteers but none were forthcoming.

9. **Membership Fee for 2021**

The membership year in 2020 was extended until 30 April 2021 to provide members with 4 months free membership and thus address some of the

disruption caused by lockdown. The membership year for Much Wenlock & District u3a will now run from 1st May – 30th April.

The membership fees have remained constant since the inception of Much Wenlock & District u3a. The committee have reviewed this and believe that there are sufficient reserves for the coming year, so propose no increase or decrease in fees.

There were no comments about membership fees from the floor and the meeting gave its approval for the fee to remain at £15 for individual membership and £28 for joint membership.

10. **Any Other Business**

There was no further business and the Chairman thanked members for attending. The meeting closed at 2.15pm.

The members were then treated to an excellent talk on 'Search and Rescue Dogs', by Caroline Yorke before refreshments were served.