

Third Report to Northumbria Region u3a
regarding
Equipment needed for Hybrid Zoom Meetings.

3rd June 2021 updated 15th September 2021

Terms of Reference:

To identify what equipment would be required to enable an u3a to conduct hybrid meetings so that members who did not attend live meetings would be able to join in using the Zoom internet platform.

Decision of the Committee

At the meeting on 21st May 2021 the committee accepted the working group's initial report and authorised the group to purchase equipment up to the value of £500.

Working Group considerations

The working group has considered the equipment available and decided to purchase the following equipment:

1. Logitech C930-E Business Webcam
2. Anker Speaker PowerConf S3, Conference Speaker with 6 Mics
3. UHF Handheld Wireless Bluetooth Microphone
4. A microphone stand to hold 3 above
5. The total cost of the above equipment is approximately £266. The purchases were made from Amazon and made on a credit card which will give cover in the event of any problems with the equipment.

In addition to the above one member of the working group has offered to use his own equipment when testing less expensive equipment and one u3a owns audio equipment which will also be used in the testing. The cost of these additional items is expected to be in the range of £100 - £150.

Working Group proposals

Having decided on the equipment to be purchased the group discussed and has decided the following:

1. The group will visit a community centre to test both types of equipment. The centre will be Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (SBIC) which is used by Wearside u3a. This was done on 5th July 2021.
2. The group will invite members of the committee to join a Zoom meeting from home where they will be the remote participants and the working group will attend Brunswick Methodist Church Hall. This was done on 2nd September 2021.

Results from the testing sessions

Subject to the limitations presented at the chosen venues regarding internet access it was considered that the equipment purchased was satisfactory and that the ability to hold Zoom meetings using that equipment was possible.

The use of the internet connection at Brunswick was not totally satisfactory and this was overcome by using a G4 connection using a mobile telephone. (It should be noted that this was not as good on a second time at Brunswick Church Hall as the 4G connection proved to be very slow. However, the hall's own connection worked on that occasion and the comments on those joining as remote participants was favourable.)

It was considered that the sound quality received over the Zoom link of both microphone equipment (2 and 3 above) was satisfactory from all parts of hall as was the sound provided by 2 above.