

**MINUTES OF THE 108th COMMITTEE MEETING OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH u3a,
HELD IN METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONGTON, AT 2pm ON THURSDAY 12th
JANUARY 2023.**

PRESENT

Andrew Devin	Chairman
Keith Ward	Vice-Chairman
Lynne Stevenson	Treasurer
Alan Stevenson	Membership Officer
Kevin Ford	Deputy Treasurer
Beverley Maher	Entertainments' Co-ordinator
Phil Rowley	Publicity Officer
Joe Neilson	Committee Member
Diane Ellis	Committee Member

1. APOLOGIES

None

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last committee meeting held on 10th November 2022 were approved, and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman commenced the meeting by confirming the sad news that Business Secretary, Fay Howell, had passed away in hospital on the previous evening. A one-minute silence was held in memory and respect for Fay.

a **General**

(i) Unfortunately, after a lengthy period of feeling unwell, the Groups' Co-ordinator, Val Greatbatch, spoke to the Chairman shortly after Christmas to reluctantly tender her resignation from the Committee. She will however remain a member of the u3a.

b **Website updates**

All Branch Websites within the u3a Movement were not accessible from 19th November 2022 to shortly before Christmas. The Hosting Company TSO notified the Trust that they were in violation regarding data limits, and suspended the account. The Trust disagreed with TSO, but have had difficulty in making contact, and have been unable to obtain system backups.

New arrangements were put in place just before Christmas, whereby "SiteBuilder" and data are hosted on a sole use VPS server, and managed by the same provider who has managed the Trust's main website for 15 years. In addition to daily off-site server backups, managed by the hosting company, daily database dumps are held on another server hosted by Amazon Web Services.

The Trust is planning to transfer from "Sitebuilder" to the open source software "Wordpress" in 2023. The recent issues have resulted in much

work for Branch Webmasters who were required to start again from a skeleton site. The Chairman confirmed that the Stoke South site was fully operational and up to date.

c U3a Trust Matters

(i) Following the Trust AGM, when most of the Board's proposals were rejected by the Branches, the Trust felt compelled to examine its arrangements over governance. The Board of Directors asked for feedback and proposals during December 2022, and have formulated a strategy titled "Fit for the Future."

The Board have agreed to proceed on two fronts:

1. Some changes would be needed to the Trust's Articles of Association, but legal opinion is first required.
2. A pilot approach will be applied such that a temporary consultative assembly will be created at the end of January 2023.

(ii) Finally, there is a vacancy for the position of West Midlands Regional Trustee. Nominations for this position will be required by 15 February 2023.

5. BUSINESS SECRETARY'S REPORT

Agenda items were discussed by all present.

a Correspondence

Emails issued by the u3a Trust are also sent to the Chairman and Treasurer. They will examine and report to the committee accordingly until a new Secretary is appointed.

AD/LS

Emails are often received from the Council's Community Section. PR has the name of the sender and will make contact to have them re-routed.

PR

b AGM date

The Chairman had circulated a proposal to committee members for the AGM to take place on 18th May 2023. This date was confirmed.

c Newsletter

AD confirmed that he would prepare the Newsletter until the appointment of a new editor.

AD

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

- a Treasurer, LS, presented a Statement of Income and Expenditure as at 10th January 2023. Details were as follows:

	£	
Current	-1,339.87	Balance 2022/23
	17,942.05	B/F from 2021/22
	£16,602.18	TOTAL BALANCE

- b LS stated that we continue to have a deficit for the current year, largely due to low attendance. She confirmed the completion of the Gift Aid Application, the value of which was some £260.

- c LS informed the committee that the u3a Trust will increase the cost of TAM per member from £3.35 to £3.60 effective from April 2023. LS considered that members should be asked whether they wished to receive the magazine

in the future. For those persons who have no interest in the magazine, it would save the Branch £3.60 per member. AD agreed to insert an article in the Jan/Feb Newsletter.

AD

7. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

AS reported that at present, the number of members was 416, this was an increase of 11 relative to November 2022.

8. GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Following the resignation of Val Greatbatch, the report was delivered by various members of the committee.

It was agreed that until a Group's Co-ordinator is appointed, issues arising would be resolved as follows: (a) General queries relating to activities at Central Hall will be referred to LS/AS; and (b) Issues at other locations would be referred to other committee members on an ad hoc basis.

ALL

a Computer Group:

JN reported that only two members attended the meeting on 6th January, but there had been some uncertainty about the date. He was therefore hopeful that attendance would be larger on 20th January.

JN also reported that the internet reception at Longton Library was poor. The Library ICT Mentor Team provided a document that offered free mobile data (via a SIM card) to someone from a low-income household. AD agreed to investigate.

AD

b Group Leader's Information Pack:

Trish Rowley will obtain all documents prepared and held by VG. She will contact AD to agree the next step.

TR/AD

c Incident Reports

(i) AD confirmed that he had prepared an "Incident Report Form" relating to a minor injury sustained at an Indoor Kurling meeting.

(ii) AS reported that an injury had been sustained by a member at the Table Tennis meeting held on 14th December. No "Incident Report Form" has yet been completed, nor has an LCH Accident Report. AD agreed to progress.

AD

9 ENTERTAINMENTS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

a Future Bookings

(i) 26/01/23: Sally McMahon from the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity will be attending to talk about the Charity, and the costs of keeping three air ambulance helicopters operational. The Charity's mission is to provide outstanding pre-hospital treatment through the helicopter service, saving lives by saving time. Members, may if they wish, make a contribution to Charity funds.

(ii) 23/02/23: Well known Local Historian Mervyn Edwards, will present a talk about The History of Longton Park.

(iii) 30/03/23: Jack Holmes from Green Doctor who will provide advice on energy saving.

(b) Membership questionnaire

BM suggested at the November 2022 meeting that she would like a questionnaire to be issued to members to determine whether the entertainment provided is to their liking, and if not to propose something different. After a short discussion, the committee decided not to proceed at this time.

(c) Business Card Update

JN distributed a sample card that the committee found acceptable. A small amendment is required to the Logo.

JN

10. PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT

PR confirmed that he had been invited to speak about the u3a at the meeting of "Grey Power North Staffs" on 6th February. He will confirm the booking with the group's chairman, Malcom Swann in January.

PR

PR asked for 100 Activity Timetables plus a pack of leaflets to be printed for him to distribute at the presentation.

LS

11. CATERING

(a) Staffing

DE confirmed that she would take on the role of catering lead, and had a couple of contacts who were prepared to support her.

(b) The Food Allergy/Intolerance Policy and Procedure was formally authorised by the Committee and will be uploaded to the Branch Website.

AD

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No business was raised.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9th February 2023

The meeting was formally closed at 3.20 pm.

Chairman: *Andrew Devin*

Date: *9th February 2023*