

**MINUTES OF THE 111th COMMITTEE MEETING OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH u3a,
HELD IN METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONGTON, AT 2pm ON THURSDAY 8th JUNE
2023.**

PRESENT

Andrew Devin	Chairman
Keith Ward	Vice-Chairman
Lynne Stevenson	Treasurer
Phil Rowley	Business Secretary
Alan Stevenson	Membership Secretary
Kevin Ford	Deputy Treasurer
Joe Neilson	Committee Member
Diane Ellis	Catering Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Beverley Maher, Pauline Williams.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 13th April 2023 were approved, and signed by the chairman as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chairman	Andrew Devin
Vice-Chairman	Keith Ward
Treasurer	Lynne Stevenson
Business Secretary	Phil Rowley
Membership Secretary	Alan Stevenson
Deputy Treasurer	Kevin Ford
Groups Co-ordinator	Pauline Williams
Entertainments Co-ordinator	Beverley Maher
Publicity Officer	Phil Rowley
Catering	Diane Ellis
New Member Liaison	All Committee
West Midlands Focus Group	Joe Neilson
Minutes Secretary	Andrew Devin
Facebook/Twitter	Pat Winfield
Newsletter Editor	Andrew Devin
Webmaster	Andrew Devin
Bank Signatories / Funding	Lynne Stevenson, Andrew Devin, and Kevin Ford
Data Protection	Andrew Devin
Equal Opportunities / Safeguarding	All Committee

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

a Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of a new committee year. AD considered that an addition of one member only (Pauline Williams) was indicative of the stability of the committee. AD added that although the previous meeting was held in April, no matters requiring committee consideration had arisen during the interim.

b AGM review

AD considered that both the administration and presentation of the AGM went very well. The one common area of disappointment for the committee was the poor attendance. General discussion centred on: (a) the date chosen; (b) whether the publicity given could have been better, e.g. issue of general email immediately prior to the meeting; and (c) possible reasons why attendance at activities and monthly meetings are lower than prior years. KW observed that Covid was still a consideration for many.

LS thanked the Catering Officer (DE) for expending much time and effort in baking and decorating coronation cup-cakes. She considered it a disappointment that only a small audience were able to enjoy them.

General opinion was that the entertainment provided by the Mel Baines Trio (minus 1) was again up to their normal high standard.

The committee concluded that greater thought would be given prior to the next AGM of all possible means to encourage attendance. Attendances at future monthly meetings should be an indicator regarding trend changes.

AD stated that he had issued the draft minutes of the AGM to all members of the committee for review, and requested permission to place them onto the branch website. Accordingly, the request was granted.

AD

c U3a Trust Matters

1. AD had received a reminder that to be able to vote at the Trust AGM (18th October 2023) we must “register to vote”. The meeting will be a hybrid, allowing delegates to attend in person or online. In prior years, vice-chairman (KW) has been the nominated voting officer for the branch. KW again agreed to undertake this task. Accordingly, AD will complete the necessary registration form.

AD

2. AD received an email from the new Regional Trustee, Jean Jackson, in which she attached the quarterly Regional Newsletter and set out some of her early plans, as follows:

She will continue with “Fireside chats” for Chairs on the first Monday of each month, 1pm to 2pm via zoom;

She has arranged for a Regional Support Team meeting to take place on 13th June, again via zoom and all are welcome.

She has arranged for a “Region Meeting” to be held in Sutton Coldfield on 19th July, which is open to all members though tickets are required.

Finally, she posed the question whether any branches have members who would be interested in joining the national publicity team. Branch publicity officer PR expressed an interest, and will contact the Trustee for further details.

PR

6. BUSINESS SECRETARY’S REPORT

AD welcomed the newly appointed business secretary (PR) to his post.

a Correspondence

The Secretary was in receipt of one item of correspondence only; i.e. from Stoke-on-Trent City Council Community Section (David Grice). The Section

wished to publicise “A Gladstone Pottery Museum’s Hidden Histories Project.” Although PR wishes to be involved personally, no branch action was considered necessary.

- b PR confirmed that he was now in receipt of relevant correspondence from the u3a Trust. His contact details had been recently added via the Trust’s new portal, which permits branches to input officer details locally. AD explained that prior to the recent introduction of the portal, all correspondence was routed via the Business Secretary, who then distributed accordingly. Correspondence is now targeted to specific officers, making the business secretary role less onerous.

7. TREASURER’S REPORT

- a Treasurer, LS, presented a Statement of Income and Expenditure as at 5th June 2023. Details were as follows:

	£	
Current	-278.15	Balance 2023/24
	17,399.10	B/F from 2022/23
	£17,120.95	TOTAL BALANCE

- b LS explained that room hire and TAM mailing were the two largest items of expenditure, with room hire exceeding attendance income by £498. The above noted deficit for 2023/2024, in a value of £278.15, was not considered to be of major concern to the committee.
- c LS informed the committee that a deceased member, Joan Rose, had bequeathed £700 in her will to the branch. Joan was a passionate supporter of the u3a generally, and very appreciative of the committee (helping out whenever she was able). She therefore requested, via her son, that £200 be provided to the committee to have a meal in her memory, and the balance of £500 be spent on item(s) that would benefit the membership. LS requested that the committee give thought to the timing and venue for a meal, and also any purchase(s) that would benefit the overall membership. The subject will be placed on the agenda for the July meeting.

AD

8. MEMBERSHIP OFFICER’S REPORT

AS reported that at the date of the meeting, the number of members was 354. Most additions now relate to new members, there being very few renewals.

AS resolved a situation whereby a Stone u3a member attended an activity but was unable to present proof of u3a membership. He contacted the Stone membership officer who was able to confirm paid up membership. AD did however observe that the onus of proof should rest with the attendee.

AD asked if the committee request for applicants to reflect on whether they wished to take TAM had been effective. AS responded that some 30 members did not tick the appropriate box on the Membership Application Form, which resulted in a saving to the branch of some £100.

9. GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The chairman (AD) led the report, and opined that he was very pleased that Pauline Williams had been elected into the post. Prior to completing an application, PW had booked a number of holidays and will therefore not be available to attend the next two committee meetings.

Group Leaders' Information Pack

- a PW has written to AD to confirm that the recently prepared Group Leaders' Information pack may be issued without change. She has authorised inclusion of her telephone number only. AD will amend the document and send to LS/AS for printing, collation, and distribution. AD will also attempt to resolve whether plastic covers are still held by the previous office holder.

AD

10. ENTERTAINMENTS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

AD presented the report on behalf of BM who had tendered an apology. BM expressed her thanks to the "two Johns" for providing excellent entertainment at the AGM, particularly so because the lead female singer Mel was unavailable. Additionally, BM expressed thanks to DE for her "delicious melt-in-the-mouth cakes."

Bookings, etc.

(i) Glyn Williams, from Co-op Estate Planning, will provide a presentation on 29th June, titled "Tax, Care and Toy Boys." No fee is chargeable.

(ii) Diane Leopard has been booked for 27th July for a presentation titled "Letting photographs tell their stories." She is a complementary therapist who shares her photographs at both clinical and public presentations. She requires a projector, screen, and microphone.

PR/AD

(iii) Roger Browne's presentation on 31st August is titled "The Great American Songbook." Roger will bring his own portable electric piano, and no other equipment is needed.

(iv) Although BM provided a list of later bookings up to November, it was decided to discuss these closer to the dates.

(v) BM asked the committee to consider a possible presentation from an author named Jenny Mallin, who does not quote a specific fee. She has requested that we state the top end of our budget so that she can determine whether it would be feasible for her to attend. After a short discussion, the committee decided not to proceed further.

11. PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT

(a) Branch publicity lead, Phil Rowley, accepted an invitation to attend the Pensioners Convention on Monday 15th May, to provide a presentation about Stoke-on-Trent South u3a. He covered how the branch operates and the activities available. General enquiry by PR revealed that about half of the audience had heard of the u3a, but only a few of those present were currently members. Phil distributed branch activity timetables for attendees to peruse at their leisure.

PR was delighted with the support from the Pensioners Convention, which has provided publicity about the u3a in no fewer than 2½ pages of their latest

newsletter. He also received a letter of thanks from the Convention Chairman dated 15/05/23.

(b) The trade magazine "Trade Local" published the latest branch Activity Timetable in their recent issue. Unfortunately, the small space provided rendered the detail almost unreadable. PR will discuss the issue with magazine editor, Sue Durose, prior to the next issue.

(c) Following a question from member, Donna Bayliss, at the AGM regarding placement of publicity material in the Book Exchange (in the precinct), it was confirmed that this had been remedied.

(d) LS offered to print a quantity of publicity flyers. Initially officers will place within the Longton and Meir Park Tesco supermarkets. It was agreed that members should be asked at the next monthly meeting to take a flyer if they know of a location that placement would be beneficial to the branch.

PR

LS
AD

12. CATERING

DE plans to provide coffee, tea and biscuits at the monthly meeting on June 29th.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A question was asked a member, Richard Hales, at the AGM whether the committee had any plans for a u3a open day. After discussion by the committee, it was decided to defer the matter until the end of the summer, with an event in autumn being a possibility.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13th July 2023

The meeting was formally closed at 3.45 pm.

Chairman: *Andrew Devin*

Date: *13th July 2023*