

Registered Charity No.1101615

Sudbury u3a Financial Policy

Contents

1. Purpose
2. Trustees' financial responsibilities
3. Banking
 - 3.1. Bank accounts
 - 3.2. Online banking
 - 3.3. Payment by bank cards
 - 3.4. Personal debit or credit cards
4. Group's finances
 - 4.1. Receipts
 - 4.2. Payments
 - 4.3. Social Activities
 - 4.4. Payments to other charities
5. Expenses policy
6. Membership fees
7. Asset Register
8. Reserves

1. Purpose

All charities are required to determine their "Internal Controls" for running the charity, one of these being the Financial Controls, or Financial Policy.

"Trustees" includes all members of the committee.

2. Trustees' financial responsibilities

The trustees of Sudbury u3a are responsible for:

- Safeguarding the assets of the charity.
- Identifying and managing the risk of loss, waste, theft or fraud.
- Ensuring the financial reporting is robust and of sufficient quality.
- Keeping financial records in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation (e.g. Charities Acts, Companies Acts etc).
- Preparing Annual Accounts in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation.
- The accounts should show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the u3a.

Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. These include those of the u3a and all the interest groups, sub-groups etc., where appropriate.

To enable the trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures detailed below will be followed.

A copy of this policy will be given to all trustees on their election/appointment to the committee and made available to members on the Sudbury u3a website.

The policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary.

3 Banking

3.1 Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of Sudbury u3a and operated by the trustees.
- New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.
- The authorised signatories are the Chairman, Treasurer and Membership Secretary. This responsibility cannot be delegated.
- All cheques must be signed by two signatories.
- All external bank transfers must be authorised by two signatures.
- Transfers between u3a accounts can be authorised by one signature, usually the treasurer.
- The signatories are responsible for examining the payment and the relevant support documentation for accuracy and completeness prior to authorisation.
- All bank statements must be sent to the Treasurer directly.
- Blank cheques will never be issued.
- Blank cheques will never be signed by one signatory for a second to complete later.
- Whenever practical two people should be involved in counting cash receipts.

3.2 Online banking

- Where online operation of the bank accounts is in place only trustees approved by the committee will have access to this facility.
- The security of the online system is in line with the arrangements offered by Lloyds Bank plc and in accordance with the mandated approval limits.

3.3 Payment by bank cards

- Operation of the online banking service is under the control of the Treasurer who has full access rights and is responsible for assigning the appropriate delegate rights, as agreed by the committee and in accordance with the bank mandate.
- All payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate.
- Access to the online accounts is via a card reader and personal access card or by logging on to the bank system with a personal password and access code.
- The issue of any bank debit card in the name of Sudbury u3a will be approved by the committee.
- The use of these cards overrides the dual control aspect of the payment authorisation process, but is permitted, where agreed in advance in recognition that online purchases for certain goods and services represents the most effective, and in some cases, the only method of completing the purchase.
- The committee will predetermine the spending limits for any card: the limit may be per transaction, per day or per month.
- All transactions made using these cards appear immediately on the appropriate bank account (subject to the timescales for electronic banking transactions) and are subject to review by the nominated officers through the online banking service. All such payments must be supported by an invoice or receipt made out to Sudbury u3a.

3.4 Personal debit or credit cards

- The use of personal debit or credit cards for interest group activities needs to be closely managed and is subject to review by the treasurer and any other committee member.
- Prior approval must be given by the committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Sudbury u3a or specific interest groups. In these circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim.

4. Groups' finances

Interest groups are expected to be self-financing and can collect such sums of money as the group members and leadership deem to be necessary to undertake their activities. The funds of these groups belong to the u3a. Groups are permitted to make any expenditure deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership and can withdraw money on request from the ringfenced funds held by the u3a on their behalf, as appropriate. The Treasurer, Group Co-ordinator and Group Leader(s) need to agree what records they need to keep of the group's transactions in order to:

- Allow the Treasurer to keep accurate accounts for presentation to the AGM, for discussion with the trustees and to meet regulatory requirements.
- Allow the group members to understand how their monies are being managed.
- Maintain transparency and trust for all concerned.
- Minimise the risk of error and potential loss of funds.
- Allow group leaders to maintain cash floats.

4.1 Receipts

To manage the handover of cash and cheques to be paid into the Sudbury u3a bank account the committee has decided that:

- Bank paying in slips will not be given to group leaders for this purpose they can be obtained at our bank in central Sudbury.
- Group leaders may pay sums due by issuing their own cheque or paying online through their own bank account.
- Where applicable receipts will be acknowledged to group leaders by email.
- Where net sums are being paid over this needs to be fully demonstrated to the Treasurer.
- Members may pay sums directly to the Sudbury u3a using online banking but must notify the treasurer and relevant group leader by email clearly indicating what the payment is for.
- Cash held back for cash flow purposes will be within the u3a's approved limits, that will vary by activity.

4.2 Payments

- The committee will inform relevant group leaders as to the approved process for payments relating to:
 - When a trip is organised by and paid through the u3a or paid directly by the members to the trip organiser.
 - When payments may be deducted from activity revenue:
 - Venues
 - Coaches
 - Tutors
 - Speakers
 - Other
 - When payment for venues, coaches, tutors, speakers etc must be paid by the u3a.
- Outside speakers should be asked to state their fees, travel costs and bank details to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will pay the appropriate amount by bank transfer promptly after the talk has been given
- Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, they must provide evidence of their self-employed status and invoice the u3a as agreed.

- The committee (via the Treasurer) will monitor the income and expenditure of the groups. Group leaders need to provide regular information, as agreed, to the Treasurer. Where groups do not comply then the committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

4.3 Social activities

- Events such as theatre trips, visits or educational days out must be charged at cost and all participants pay appropriately. The costs paid by members must cover out-of-pocket expenses.
- The organiser of an event must not benefit from any discount (e.g. a free place) offered by the organisation providing the event. The value of free places must be shared out among all participants to the event.
- Out-of-pocket expenses can be paid to an organiser out of the money collected for the event. As all u3a members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event.

4.4 Payments to other charities

- In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives.
- Sudbury u3a will make payments to speakers who have indicated that they intend to donate their fee to a specific charity but not direct to their nominated charity.

5 Expenses policy

- Out of pocket expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed.
- Expense claims must be submitted with receipts. Expense claims will be authorised by the executive committee and no committee member should authorise their own claim.
- Expenses will include, with committee approval. attendance at the Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops.
- Expense claims should reflect the cheapest travel option available. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current HMRC approved rate for the actual mileage travelled. Car parking and congestion charges can be reclaimed, with receipts.
- Parking or other fines will not be allowed.
- Overnight accommodation will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and will need the prior agreement of the executive committee.

6 Membership Fees and membership of more than one u3a

- The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. Sudbury u3a is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all members.
- For u3a members who can evidence membership of another u3a, Sudbury u3a will reduce the cost of membership by the amount that is paid to the Trust for each member.

7 Asset register

- An asset register is maintained by the Treasurer which records all assets held including their initial purchase price, date of purchase, estimated nominal value and location.
- It should be noted that under a receipts and payments reporting system, all assets are fully written off against receipts in the year of purchase.
- The register is reviewed annually.

8 Reserves

- Sudbury u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover at least half one year of regular operating activity plus any capital or long-term expenditure commitments authorised by the trustees. This is considered by the committee a reasonable level of reserve for this type of charity and is in line with Third Age Trust guidelines.
- Holding (interest group) account activities are excluded from this figure as these activities are inflated by high-cost activities such as theatre visits and days out and are entirely self-financing.

Approved by the committee 12th December 2023