

Treasurer's Report for the Year Ending 30 September 2023

The Financial Statement had been sent out to all members with the pre-AGM documentation but slides were shown with relevant extracts of the figures during the Report.

The finances of the u3a are made up of the General Fund, the Social Fund and the Groups' finances and each were covered in turn. Overall, the finances remain in good shape and show a continued emergence from the lockdown periods in terms of increased Group activity, viability and sustainability. On an overall basis, the surplus for this year reduced somewhat to around £2,500 compared to £5,000 in the previous year, which is mostly due to the General Fund and is covered below.

Total reserves have grown to some £63,000. This is spread mainly between £24,500 in the General Fund and £36,000 across the various Groups, with the other £2,600 or so in the Social Fund. The vast majority of the assets are cash and bank balances although, as at the year end, one of the Groups was in course of collecting money from members for trips organised hence the debtors shown which were received very promptly after the year end. The creditors are monies owing for coaches booked for future trips by Theatre Group.

General Fund

This handles subscriptions and central administrative costs. Membership levels remained pretty constant between this year and last, but with subs having been reduced from £7 to £6 in 2023, the amount of subscription income fell accordingly. Gift Aid income was virtually unchanged from the previous year but will fall in the current financial year as it will be based on the lower subs amount.

Much less sundry income was received during the year than in the previous year. The bulk of this came from Groups which had to close down during the year (*Ancient Civilisations, Classical Studies and Jazz Appreciation*) which is fewer than last year. Additionally, there was no commission from Riviera Travel whereas last year almost £600 was received. Members were reminded about Riviera's scheme whereby they pay commission to a u3a whenever a member books a holiday with them. Since the financial year end, we have received over £1,800 from this source which will appear in next year's Accounts.

As regards expenditure, main outgoings were the annual subscription to the Third Age Trust (£4 per member) and the Licence fee for using the Beacon system (£1.00 per member), both of which remained pretty constant against last year. With subs currently only £6.00 a head, it is evident that just £1.00 of this is available to the u3a towards overhead costs.

As far as other costs are concerned, there was a big increase in the cost of Meetings as the impact of Covid receded. This includes the first two Leaders Lunches since the lockdowns as the first, which was scheduled for September 2022, had to be moved into October in order to avoid clashing with the Queen's state funeral, hence holding both in the same financial year.

Two New Member Welcome Meetings were held during the year as well as the first physical AGM since Covid which took place last February.

The amount required to support Groups financially reduced considerably from around £350 to just £40 and, other than that, most other costs were fairly stable across the two years.

Overall, then, total expenses increased by around £500 and with the drop in income received, the overall outturn for the General Fund was a much lower surplus than last year. This was not unexpected given the decision to reduce subs - in fact the expectation was to see a larger reduction, possibly break even only. So the General Fund reserves have increased to just over £24,500, all of which is in bank accounts, and this amount fully meets our Reserves Policy.

Social Fund

This is the account through which the finances of the Open Visits and Talks pass. As mentioned in the Chairman's Report, a Trip was arranged to Beaulieu during the year. This was calculated to break even but due to a late withdrawal for personal reasons, there was a small deficit which was comfortably covered by the funds held. The remaining reserves are considered to be more than adequate to cover any upfront costs for future Trips and Open Talks.

Groups' Finances

Group Leaders and/or Treasurers were thanked for providing their figures for the year so that they could be consolidated into the overall Financial Statement. This is an important process as it is a requirement of the Charity Commission and also necessary to ensure that the Insurance cover provided by Third Age Trust extends to all activities that the Groups undertake.

For the second year running, increased activity was in evidence during the year with overall income of £110,000 compared to £88,000 last year and just £18,500 in the previous (Covid affected) year.

The Financial Statement shows headline figures for the 5 Groups with the highest income over the year, with the others grouped together. As usual, Theatre Group generated the most activity with their income representing over 32% of the total for all Groups. The figures cover 17 trips which they organised during the year although some of these took place after the end of September. The next highest is Garden Visits Group which ran 11 trips during the year, compared to just 6 the previous year. A breakdown of the headline figures for all of the Groups will be placed on the website after the AGM.

This time last year it was reported that around half a dozen Groups were running with negative reserves at the end of the financial year and were being supported by the Group Leaders. Pleasingly, as at 30 September 2023 there was only one Group in such a position, and that was purely a timing issue whereby outgoings and subsequent reimbursement by Group members

straddled the end of the financial year. The Group was back in the black shortly after the end of September.

Independent Examination

The Financial Statement had been overseen by our Independent Examiner, Ian Gross, and no concerns were raised. Following approval of this Report by the members present, his formal Report confirming this will be supplied prior to sending the Final Statement to the Charity Commission as part of the Annual Return.

The independent examination of the u3a's finances is an important issue and, on behalf of the Committee, Ian was again thanked for his diligence and thoughtful attention to this time consuming task.

Under item 8 of the Agenda, it was confirmed that Ian had offered to continue in the role of Independent Examiner for the coming year and that the Committee had agreed unanimously to accept this offer, subject to any comments from the floor at the AGM. In the absence of any such comments, it was confirmed that Ian was duly appointed IE for the financial year to 30/09/2024.

Finally

The Treasurer stated that while he had put himself forward for re-election again, this would be the last term that he could serve under the terms of the Constitution, so a replacement Treasurer would be needed this time next year. He asked anyone interested in the role to make contact so that the content and expectations of the role could be discussed, and also offered to provide ongoing assistance to the new holder of the role during their first 12 months.

Questions from the Floor

There were no questions from the floor.

Vote to approve the Financial Statement

Proposed by Janine Clephan
Seconded by Alison Makepeace

The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously