

TRING U3A COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

3 September 2020

Time: 19.00hrs

Virtual - Zoom

1. Those Present

Rob Jones (Chairman), Jill Collinge (Vice **Chair**) & Paul Simmons (Treasurer)

Committee Members: Jennie Scott and June Courtney

Non Committee Members: Liz Murray (Newsletter Coordinator), Sue Williams (Speaker Secretary),

John Cameron, (Membership Secretary) and Barry Salmon, (Group Coordinator)

Joy Petticrew (Secretary)

2. Apologies for absence:

David Griffiths is temporarily standing down from the Committee due to illness.

Mike Perry - no apologies received.

3. Minutes of last Meeting held on 6 August 2020

The Minutes were approved and digitally signed by Jill.

4. Actions arising from the Minutes

All actions had been undertaken with the exception of:

7(d) Mike Perry to provide some information for the September Newsletter regarding the National Wildlife Competition that he is encouraging his group to submit photos to.

4. Treasurer's report (PS)

(a) Bank balances as per Bank Statements received in August 2020

	Brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Carried forward
Main account	£22822.58	£19.10	£2339.75	£20501.93

(b) Represented by

Cash	0
NW1	£12673.58
CAF	£7828.35
Total	£20501.93

Paul noted that £2,100 of the expenditure was the U3A Capitation fee. Paul and John are going to start claiming the Gift Aid for this year a month earlier than normal, so in September.

(c) Beacon Software (Finance)

Paul is experimenting with the software but will not be able to use it for the end of year accounts this year because they will not be in an acceptable format for the External Auditor. There is a membership subscription issue in Beacon but this will be corrected when the 2021 subscriptions are entered.

(d) To consider the membership fee for 2020/2021

Extract below from the EBM 10 November 2019.

"The Third Age Trust have suggested in the past that reserves should be no more than about six months running costs and that if a U3A believes it has too much in reserves then a pragmatic way of dealing with this is to reduce members' annual fees.

We are in this situation and are therefore able to reduce the subscription for 2020.

As is our current practice, we will continue to keep a close eye on our reserves throughout next year. If we decide our objective has been met, the subscription will revert to £15 for 2021 but we will not make a decision until probably autumn of next year. We wish to reserve the right to revert to previous year's levels or to maintain the reduction to £10 for a further year if we think it is affordable."

Extract of discussion from 6 August 2020 meeting.

Membership may be extended from 2020 as we are not able to provide much benefit for members this year due to Covid19. We would want to cover our costs, the U3A Trust capitation fee for 2021 remains at £3.50 per member which we have to pay. All members are benefiting from the monthly Newsletter, some groups are continuing to run virtually and about a 15% of our members are benefitting from the virtual monthly meetings.

John noted that if we do charge a fee for membership next year, he will still have to prepare membership cards, print and post out to members as he will be unable to use the volunteer members who help out in normal times with this type of mailing.

Rob, Jill and Paul had a pre meeting to discuss the membership fee for 2020/21. Paul presented projections for the remainder of 2020 and for 2021 based on the membership fee of £5.00 for 2021 and 500 members renewing membership. We should still have sufficient surplus with 6 months running costs. The Newsletter is extremely valuable to members so we must continue to provide this. This is of course a guesstimate and it may be wrong, however, if necessary we can revisit some of our expenditure in 2021. The Committee unanimously agreed with this membership fee just for 2020/2021.

(e) Membership Cards

It was unanimously agreed not to provide membership cards for 2020/2021 to keep our costs down.

(f) Advising members about the 2020/2021 membership fee.

In the October Newsletter we will advise members of the membership fee of £5.00 for this coming year and acknowledge that the Committee are taking this decision because in the current Covid19 climate we are aware that members are not getting as much value as normal from their membership.

We will make it clear that we will not be providing membership cards this year. We will only accept membership renewals by bank transfer or cheque, NO CASH. If people pay by cheque they have their cheque book stub as a receipt and if by bank transfer, evidence on their bank statement. If a member insists on a receipt they will be sent an email receipt.

(g) Distribution of the Newsletter to those without email addresses

John is going to contact Jane Legge to ask if her volunteers are happy to start distributing the hard copy Newsletters again to members who have not provided us with an email address. This too, will help to keep our future costs down.

5. Membership Secretary's report (JC)

(a) Membership stats and 5th Isolation Newsletter circulation

August Isolation Newsletters sent by email to all members with an email address (4/8/20)	475
Actual Isolation Newsletter emails sent (allowing for people with the same email address)	438
Virtual single attendees at August Monthly Meeting	43
Virtual Dual attendees at August Monthly Meeting	12
Total virtual attendees at August Monthly Meeting	55
Booked virtual meeting but did not attend	32
Newsletters posted	65
Current Membership	547
New members who have joined so far in 2020	26
Queries logged in 2020	130

(b) Members joined since last Committee Meeting

None. One person has made enquiries, but has done so before and has never completed the membership form.

(c) Beacon Software (Membership)

John is completing the documentation on how we do procedures on Beacon.

6. Group Co-ordinator's report (BS)

(a) Table Tennis Group

The Table Tennis group resumed at Victoria Hall today, 3rd September. Apparently it was a very good session. They have 3 tables and everyone has to play singles. The Group Leader Graham Smith has organised a rota so each member gets a turn to play. Graham spent a long time reading and dealing with five different Risk Assessment Documents of various kinds from both Dacorum Borough Council and Table Tennis England. These documents are now recorded on file with Joy. The Committee would like to extend their thanks to Graham for making this happen.

(b) Nora Grace Hall.

Barry has been in touch with the administration team at NG Hall enquiring about the last clause on their Risk Assessment Form; that the Hirer is responsible for cleaning the toilets after their event has finished. They say this is mandatory, Barry suspects it is because they do not have a full time Caretaker (NB: Victoria Hall do). John noted that following advice he has received we (the Trustees) could become liable if a member became ill with Covid19 and would not be covered by U3A Trust Public Liability insurance. The Committee agreed that none of our Group Leaders who use this hall are ready to resume their classes as yet so for the time being we will leave Barry to correspond with Nora Grace Hall as and when required and review this when circumstances change hopefully in early 2021.

(c) Catholic Hall

The Catholic Hall have confirmed that they are not ready to reopen yet.

(d) Temperance Hall

Emma Cave at this Hall has confirmed that they are now open for groups of up to 18 people to maintain social distancing. They have provided us with a Risk Assessment document which is on file in Joy's records. Although they do not have a full time caretaker they have undertaken to do the cleaning between group

events. John's Discussion Group is the only one that uses this hall, and he confirmed at this meeting that for the time being, they are happy to continue on Zoom.

7. Speaker Secretary's report (SW)

Sue was attending this meeting, she could hear us, but we could not see or hear her. She had provided some notes in advance:

1) The speaker on 10th September is confirmed as Dr James Taylor who will speak about the art/humour of postcards (as in the newsletter). Joy had confirmed the bookings to date as 68 on Zoom with 16 partner/friends sharing the screen.

2) The speaker for October is Ian Keable and his subject is 'The Cock Lane Ghost'. Sue chose this topic as we are approaching Halloween. Ian has been to Tring to speak to us before (about magician David Devant) and was well received. He was due to be live in Tring for us this month, so she is honouring the booking for Zoom. There is a clip of one of his other talks on:

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6bNCxSQ5FY&feature=youtu.be>

People may have also seen him on TV demonstrating his magic and mindreading.

3) Sue has just been in touch with a speaker for November who has confirmed he is available. She has not yet definitely confirmed this with him but would like to do so as he may get booked if she doesn't. His name is Bob Sinfield and he is an actor and writer. The topic would be 'The Great Unwatched' which is about the golden days of radio! You can see a clip on his website: <http://bobsinfield.co.uk/>

4) Jill has spoken to Sue about possibly offering members a Christmas Zoom talk. Depending on what the committee decides, she has a potential speaker with an unusual seasonal topic in mind.

8. Any other Business

a) High Street Research Project - U3A Trust - Project Leader, Mike Perry

Mike sent the weblink of the Tring Image Archive to the U3A Trust Project Leader, Jeff Carter on 11th August.

In Mike's absence we could not take this any further.

b) How do we increase group take up of Zoom ; what support / change is needed including the support offered by John to the Group Leaders.

John has offered to help Group Leaders run their groups on Zoom if they wish to. He has purchased a Pro Licence for 100. Jill asked John if he wanted any help with this as it seems very onerous, but he said the ones he expected to start using Zoom are the groups he generally goes to anyway, so he is quite happy to do it. He did note that to date this is only theory, he has not tried it out yet, just run his own Discussion group via Zoom.

John is giving a talk via Zoom for the Boxmoor U3A group later this month and giving the same talk to our Science and Technology Group at the end of the month. He has done a dummy run and was happy with the quality of the video etc.,

Thelma Fisher, Poetry Group Leader is going to purchase a licence for this month because her group is at the same time that John will be using his Zoom licence, but from thereafter, John will liaise with Thelma to use his licence for her group where possible.

The Gardening Group Leaders are interested in using Zoom too.

As the new Group Leader for the Architecture Group is unwell, previous Group Leader, Rouse Rouse has agreed to do a talk via Zoom later this month. Then other group members will be invited to do talks to try to restart the group.

Barry said that currently 8 groups are using Zoom and hopefully the Walking and College Lake groups might resume shortly.

c) Committee responsibility Backups

We are going to make a new feature in the monthly Newsletter with one of the Committee members describing what they do e.g Treasurer, Secretary, Speaker Secretary, Group Leader Coordinator etc., and hopefully encourage other members to come forward as backups if required at any time. Also getting others involved for when Committee members have come to the end of their period of office and are required to stand down. (e.g. Joy at Feb AGM in 2021)

d) Christmas Social Update (Thursday 10th December)

As noted in Sue's report above, we are now looking for a Speaker for this event with a seasonal theme. We may be able to record 6 ukuleles playing and singing together (this is how they are still running currently and getting together out in the open) and possibly a recording of the Poetry group reading out some poems. However, we have got to be able to coordinate these recordings along with a speaker on Zoom if this is going to work. It has to be a good event to end the year and give everyone optimism for the various groups to resume as normal sometime next year. Rob has said that he can coordinate this event on Zoom. Jill has asked the Committee to send any suggestions to her as soon as possible, to make this event a real success.

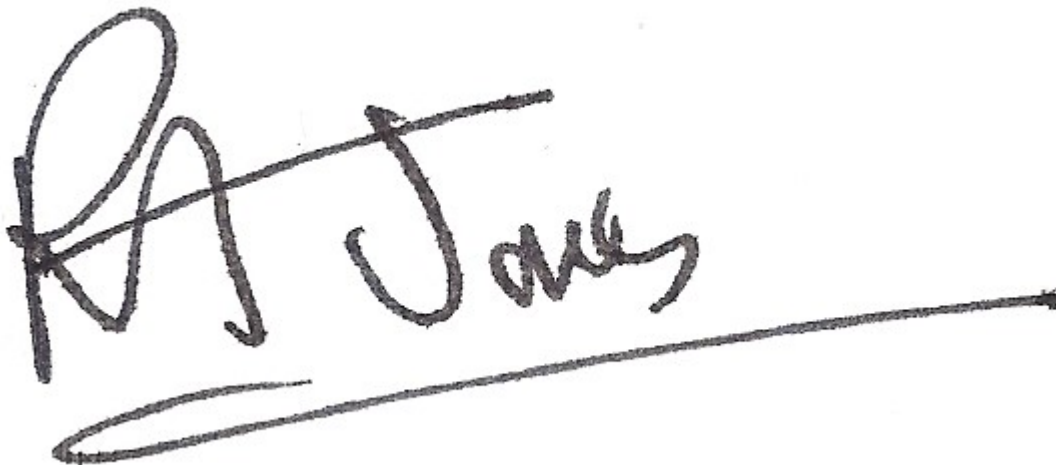
e) Group Leaders Meeting, Friday 16 October - via Zoom

It is intended that this meeting will still go ahead on Zoom with as many Group Leaders in attendance as possible. Barry will write to the Group Leaders w/c 14 September.

10. Date of the next meeting: Thursday 1st October.

Time: 7p.m. via ZOOM

Minutes approved and digitally signed off 1st October 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Jones', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.