

Slightly amended **MINUTES of Zoom meeting – 13th January 2021**

1. **AGREEMENT FOR RECORDING OF THE MEETING**

All those attending before the start of the meeting agreed for the meeting to be recorded.

2. **ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES**

Acting Chair		Sue Shannon-Jones	Present
Secretary		Denise Jones	Present
Treasurer		Michael Young	Present
Wales Trustee		Chris Winner	Absent
Abergavenny		Valerie Stowell	Apology
Abergavenny	2 nd contact	Derek Pope	Present
Barry & District		John Waud	Absent
Blackwood		Roger Evans	Absent
Bridgend		Denise Jones	Present as above
Caerphilly		Pat Williams	Absent
Caldicot & District		Linda Stewart	Present
Cardiff		Tony Baines	Present
Chepstow		Derek Shottin	Present & Host
Chepstow	2 nd contact	Hugh Hutton	Present
Chepstow	3 rd contact	Shelagh Davies	Present
Cowbridge		Valerie Monaghan	Absent
Crickhowell & District		Kate Thomas	Present
Cynon Valley		Lloyd Evans	Absent
Ebbw Vale		Janice Andrews	Absent
Garth Olwg		Beryl Keating	Present
Gilwern		Rhiannon Williams	Present
Maesteg		Jane Jenkins	Present
Monmouth		Mary Ross	Present
Neath		Susan Sear	Present
Newbridge		Jean M Lewis	Absent
Newport		Rob Wilkinson	Present
Pontyclun		Sharon Corbett	Apologies
Porthcawl		Sally Corbett	Present
Risca		Iris Davies	Absent
Sully		Wendy Gruffydd	Apology
Sully	2 nd contact	Martin Sanders	Present
Sully	3 rd contact	Claire Stansfield	Present
Sully	4 th contact	Jan Palmer	Present
Swansea		Peter Lloyd	Present
Tonyrefail		Cynthia Evans	Absent
Torfaen		Dave Davies	Present
Tredegar		S Lloyd	Absent
Usk		Mike Faraday	Present
Usk	2 nd contact	Margaret Hatfield	Present

3. The list will be presented like this in the future. Denise reported that Mary Allen had apologised for her non attendance but as she is no longer a member of Cardiff committee, she will not be attending in the future and wished the network success.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Sue Shannon-Jones said that she should have asked Denise to put the Network AGM on the Agenda for today and informed the meeting that she would be stepping down at that time. It was suggested that the network hold the AGM next month. Mike Faraday said that the spelling of the "Mirthy" (free and paid for talks, free ones on Thursdays) was incorrect in the Minutes and it was suggested that the Minutes be saved as a PDF as some members were having difficulty in viewing them in anything other than word. Denise confirmed that this would be changed for the future. Sally Corbett proposed the amended Minutes be approved as herein further amended and this was seconded by Susan Sear.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Sue Shannon-Jones said that she had hardly anything to report and said that we should just all adhere to the government guidelines and asked how walking groups were faring. Kate Thomas said that in her walking group, the members had fully realised when to stop walking when the guidelines came out and felt that it was a common sense approach. Derek Shottin said that all trustees (committee members) were responsible and cannot leave it to the members. They would have to be told what they could and could not do. Sue Shannon-Jones said that it would obviously be different in different areas but that Derek Shottin was correct. Dave Davies said that there should be no ambiguity and that Wales government dictates were clearer than the rest of the UKs. No outside groups, not even different households.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Denise Jones said that she had received nothing of note to pass on since the last meeting save the publication of the new logo which she would circulate with these Minutes.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

Michael Young said that he had even less to report. The network still has no bank account. The network money is still held by Cardiff.

8. UPDATE ON CURRENT GUIDELINES, RESTARTING GROUPS, RISK ASSESSMENTS AND IDEAS FOR FUTURE ZOOM MEETINGS

There was a discussion about what to discuss in future zoom meetings. Sue Shannon-Jones explained that we used to have a plan for the network with workshops and study days. Tony Baines asked if there was a master plan as he was new to the network. Denise Jones confirmed that we used to have four network meetings (quarterly) and had begun to hold two workshops a year and 2 study days a year, one workshop or study day in between the 4 quarterly meetings. She said that she thought it would be a very slow build up to return to running those as we did before, way after the vaccine was distributed. Need trust from members to come back. Tony Baines suggested that we record the fact that the plan was intended, a new one is currently in abeyance and a hope that it would be resolved later. Derek Shottin said that was very negative, even with vaccinations u3a's will find it difficult to get back to order. We must be seen to be helping u3a's. We need to do it now, not wait, otherwise the network will not be useful. We do not know which u3a's are meeting. Claire Stansfield said that after the vaccination rollout, there should be more confidence as she believed people are desperate to get out and we should be looking forward. Linda Stewart said that her u3a has a 2 year plan and a sub-committee has been formed with PR and marketing for falling

membership/ideas meetings. Can we do that? Martin Sanders said that even when the vaccination programme is complete, it is only 70% effective and we could be in this position for some time to come so we need to concentrate on what can we do to encourage members to return. Derek Pope said he thought this was a 2 part approach, (a) if we can get members back and/or encourage them to zoom more and (b) a hybrid situation, part face to face and part zoom. Tony Baines endorsed that and although it felt a bit beaucocratic, we needed to do something and state it in the AGM. Perhaps form a sub committee and work on what Derek Shottin had suggested. Need to work out how frequent we should have meetings and active on a covid start up plan. Margaret Hatfield suggested we put forward ideas for new groups that might be appreciated by those who may have lost their jobs in the pandemic and going into Spring before we may have the opportunity for outdoor events and it would probably be quite some time before we were meeting in people's homes. We need to plan now as people are getting used to staying indoors and doing nothing. Peter Lloyd said that Swansea were already doing quite a lot via zoom lectures etc and vibes were that the social aspect was strong and people were waiting to restart. Dave Davies said he was having connection issues and apologised but needed to leave the meeting. Shelagh Davies said that Chepstow were focusing on supporting current groups and how to start new groups by contacting members individually. She said that there is definitely an appetite. They have started 4 online groups, a book group, an online opera group, an online discussion group and a group for corona virus statistics, most of which were requested by members, some of them by new members during the pandemic. They are also working with facebook and ways to work with this type of social media. Kate Thomas said that technology is working and that their group often had 120 to its formal meetings before the lockdown and the first zoom session had only 30 but since then they are rising to over 80 and some are using shared screens and basically it would seem that people are adapting and "hybrid" is the way forward. *Tony Baines said he endorsed that approach very strongly. Related to that, he advised that his computer group convener (David Harrison) supported by Cardiff Chair Owen Parry, had identified a potentially very helpful source of support for technology take-up from a Welsh Government support organisation called 'Digital Communities Wales'. That organisation's objective is to facilitate major increases in digital inclusion across Welsh communities as a whole. One immediate idea noted was the identification of members who are capable and willing to be 'digital champions and/or coaches' to others (acting through committees).* Margaret Hatfield suggested we get someone to "train" members. Rob Wilkinson asked if there was a charge. Tony Baines thought not but said that he will get DJ the information to circulate. During this time Michael Young had found the information online and put it in the "chat" and the website information is : www.digitalcommunities.gov.wales/ . Sue Shannon-Jones said that although we are negative at the moment and it will take a long time to get back to "normal", the network needs to help as much as it can. She suggested that we hold our AGM in April but still meet before then. Derek Shottin suggested that we ask all u3a's to present their plans to go forward when we can get back to anywhere near normal so that these can be shared to all other u3a's who can adapt or adopt them as their own. A great sharing of ideas. A network is all about helping others. Michael Young said that we could easily lose touch otherwise and that we need to help the smaller u3a groups, especially those who are not in regular contact with the network . We need to be a conduit otherwise we could see groups disappear. Sally Corbett said that the majority of her u3a were not interested at all in zoom so they are providing a monthly magazine and getting groups to contribute. Their end of year was at the end of last year when they had 470 members. This new year they had already had 260 renew and had decreased their fee. At the moment they weren't making plans and hoping for younger members to move forward and suggested that possibly we could postpone our AGM to September. Tony Baines said that we could connect, pool ideas and send to all u3a's. Derek Shottin said that the network should present an exit strategy, record it, produce an MP4 file/recordings/discs to send out to all u3a's to use at their leisure. Sue Shannon-Jones said that it was easy to make them available if they were recorded and put on the website. Derek Shottin said that they could be password protected, with a link on the network website. Sue Shannon-Jones

asked if we could circulate all u3a's to ask them to come forward with their plans to present at the next network meeting and ask them what they want, if anything, from us as a network. Rhiannon Williams asked if a 5 min presentation would be sufficient and it was decided that we could not listen to everyone if they did more than 5 minutes and of course not everyone would provide a presentation, others might put theirs in writing which we could circulate in any event. Denise Jones asked for time to consult our groups. Rob Wilkinson thought that we should not make it compulsory. We agreed that we would hear them all and consolidate. Denise Jones said that her u3a were very behind in technology, out of 125 members, only 6 regularly meeting via zoom. Derek Pope said that we ought to be concentrating on training people to be able to use zoom. Jane Jenkins said that her group was very small and they were running nearly all their groups via Skype and had been since the first lockdown and apologised but had to leave then for a hospital appointment. Sue Shannon-Jones said that each u3a has different issues and it seems that perhaps the very small u3a's were getting together better than the larger ones. Kate Thomas said that we probably all feel that we are not achieving and that we need to be positive not negative. Beryl Keating said that using the term "presentation" might frighten people and perhaps a written "report" can be circulated. Sue Shannon-Jones said that some people who never used technology now are. Kate Thomas was concerned that we ought to compare like for like and perhaps spread the presentations/reports over a 3 month period to get a proper discussion. Sue Shannon-Jones said that we ought to wait and see what response we get and then we can organise how to split the presentations/reports when we next meet but it was likely that Chepstow and Swansea would be willing to present in our meeting in February. Margaret Hatfield apologised but had to leave the meeting now. Rob Wilkinson also apologised but had to leave now.

9. SPEAKERS FOR ZOOM MEETINGS

Derek Shottin reported that he had received a favourable response and that all the speakers were free. He shared his screen and showed us the list of people who had agreed to provide free zoom talks. His group had already had a talk from Lyn Joseph and John Burrows, both of which he recommended. He said that Cardiff had suggested joint meetings, shared zoom meetings with smaller u3a's. The Mirthy talks were ok but not free of course. Kate apologised but had to leave now. Beryl Keating said that their first zoom meeting was to be held next week and not sure how many can participate. Peter Lloyd said that that Swansea had asked Neath and Pontardulais (their nearest u3a's) to join them on their own zoom package, to access it via their committee only in order to limit it to known members. It was quite easy to extend the packages. Denise Jones asked Derek Shottin if he would put himself available to assist u3a's if they had any questions or issues with zoom and he said that he would gladly do so. The link for obtaining the list of zoom speakers is as follows:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/walesu3a/page/10321>

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Denise Jones said that she would be attending the network link meeting and would report later. Tony Baines asked if anyone had heard anything about the u3a Day in June and that there were tutorial days for possible ideas for the potential 2nd June event, if it proceeds. Denise Jones said that this would probably be discussed at the network link meeting.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It had previously been agreed that the next meeting would be held on the 24th February at 2.30pm to give u3a's time to prepare a report/presentation to present to the network. As the AGM should have a notice period, it would probably be held in April.

The meeting then closed at 15.53.