

WARRINGTON U3A

(Registered Charity No. 1085069)

Minutes for Executive Committee Meeting

Monday November 20th 2023

The Lounge, Alford Hall, 1.30pm

Present:

Eion MacDonald, Jane Rowley, Andrew Young, Debbie Taylor, Janice Hayes, Paul Atherton, Ron Stafford and Jenny Ruffley (JAR)

Visitors: Alan Osborne

Apologies: Liz Bruton, Richard Kong and Judi Deakin

Agenda Items

1. Minutes of October meeting – approved.
2. Matters arising

Addressed in following reports

3. Registrar's Report

AY reported that there are currently 980 paying members (975 last year) this includes 109 new members (107 last year). Recruitment seems to be going well.

4. Treasurer's Report

DT had emailed the latest cash statement to committee members, along with a breakdown of costs for Speakers. Wu3a looks like it is on track with the budget outline, only £500 adrift at this stage. A new laptop (£599) has been purchased using the grant from Warrington Charities Trust. Also, a new projector (£349) has been bought using Wu3a funds. DT used her credit card to secure this equipment, a cheque was approved to reimburse her. DT agreed to sort out registering the new kit for guarantees, a photo of the serial numbers has been taken. AO will organise the setting up of the new equipment.

DT reported that the Coop bank signatories for the current account have been set up. There are still some issues with the deposit account. EM's details were asked for again, DT has sent in his form again. Coop bank has made enquiries about Ian Lancaster, he was removed from the account a couple of years ago, so this seems odd. DT is continuing to work with the bank. DT also reported on her progress with Santander, details of trustees; AY, JH and RS were supplied as requested. There is a problem with RS's form, DT is sending it in again. Some procedures with the banks seem to be changing. Checks with the Charity Commission have been very slow.

DT reported that the Third Age Trust membership per capita (capitation) fee is fixed until 2026/27. The optional magazine is billed separately - the Trust is considering a digital format for the future, but it is unclear what the charge to members for this will be. The Trust will need to have a contribution to production costs, even if the postage element is eliminated.

DT reported that she will be attending the Warrington Charities Trust AGM with JH, feedback on how the grant has been spent will be given.

5. Accommodation Report

PA reported that the room layout for GMs at Winmarleigh Street created by RS had been accepted by Natalie. The November GM rooms were set out as requested, unfortunately, the partition between the back rooms could not be removed as the key couldn't be located. Hopefully this will not be an issue in future. There have been problems with heating at this venue, an engineer is due to visit around 22/11 to check the boiler. Natalie wrote to PA suggesting that we didn't need access to the building for the GM until 1.00pm. PA sent her a copy of Wu3a's contract, then Natalie's response was that we could enter as we wished. PA reported that a new member of staff has been appointed at Winmarleigh St, hopefully things will improve there. JR reported that there had been no decaffeinated tea or coffee provision at the last GM. AO said it should be requested from Natalie on the day. EM suggested that it might be of use to have some sort of poster placed outside Winmarleigh St for the GM, this would be useful for new members. AO mentioned that the u3a store have some useful merchandise, stands, banners etc. JH raised the issue of the quality of the tables when used without table cloths. The round tables seem to lack a proper surface and are in something of a poor state. JH mentioned that the storage at Winmarleigh St was getting harder to access and was rather full. We may need to consider reorganising the storage or providing larger cabinets if possible. DT mentioned that she has received no invoices as yet.

PA reported that he has been trying to clarify the bookings made at Grappenhall, Liz Jordan seems to have got a little confused between Wu3a and Lymm u3a bookings, DT has been in touch with John at Grappenhall, but has still not received any invoices. JR offered to check in with Liz tomorrow when she will be on the premises for Table Tennis.

PA reported that the Padgate based Ukulele group, Just Learning Stage 1 will be meeting on Thursdays instead of Wednesdays and the Stage 2 group will meet at Ken's house as the numbers concerned are small. DT reported that Ken plans to pay £50 towards his photocopying costs.

PA reported that he had no further news regarding the progress of Fairfield Street's bid for funds. Information requested from group leaders was sent to Roger Coasby by at least 3 GLs as PA was copied in the email messages sent. JAR reported that she is hoping to become a trustee at Fairfield Street, three individuals have volunteered.

JAR reported that the flash mob singing event has been organised by the new Sea Shanties group, It will take place on Saturday 25/11 at 2.00pm by the Golden Gates. A flyer has been produced for distribution, this was circulated and approved. DT suggested that the event should be videoed for future use.

6. Secretary / Communications Report

JR reported that she had been approached by LB the GL for Tai Chi. She expressed her concerns regarding waiting lists. AY pointed out that the group information on the website did indicate if a group was full (grey background), he also mentioned that he highlights the waiting list issues to new members when he sees them in person at GMs.

JR reminded the committee of the messages she recently forwarded: Charity Commission information; u3a pilot council Zoom meeting 13/12/23 and in person 28/2/2024 and a communication from North West region u3a regarding the launch of a digital newsletter. JR suggested that the flash mob event could be a good subject for the North West newsletter, photos could be included.

JR reported that she had invited DT to set up her personal Charity Commission account. DT has done this. JR has looked at the previous year's submission, this looked fairly straightforward. JR and DT plan to work together to submit this year's report very soon.

7. Vice-Chairman's Report

JH reported that she and JAR attended the AGM for the Friends of Warrington Town Hall Group. The council is still considering how to make best use of the building, but it's looking as though it will not be of use to Wu3a for some time. It may be that the Pavilion might be of some use at some point.

8. Chairman's Report

EM had nothing to report.

9. AOB

- Issues at Winmarleigh St.

Staffing issues continue to be a problem.

The lighting continues to interfere with any projected images or films.

Equipment storage needs to be addressed.

- Use of Wu3a equipment

AO contributed to the discussion of this issue and reported as below

Current IT/ AV provision in Warrington u3a

Current plan involves equipping our major venues with appropriate IT/AV equipment available for use by groups. All venues need to be able to project presentations in daylight conditions

Winmarleigh House: u3a laptop (Win 10) digital projector, DVD player, Soundbar, 3 small PA systems
Extension cable

Alford Hall u3a laptop (Win 10), digital projector, screen, small wired set of speakers and CD player

Fairfield u3a laptop (Win 8.1) limited use, old digital projector (limited use) Medium PA system, CD player, Hi-fi system

Quaker meeting rooms Small TV

Miscellaneous equipment held by groups /individuals:

360 Microphone for Zoom meetings

Bluetooth microphone

Small wired speaker set

Small PA system -held by Line dancing

PA system -Ukelele also used for Monthly meetings

New Windows laptop and MacBook held by Computer group

Current problems:

Lack of individuals able to set up /maintain equipment in most groups

Problems not reported

Obsolete/ unreliable/inadequate specifications equipment:

Fairfield Laptop and Projector very unreliable/both obsolete, unable to display video clips/ pictures/power points for group use unless members bring in their own equipment.

Alford Hall laptop has too little RAM and a slow processor for current and future Photographic software and displaying / editing pictures without crashing or working unacceptably slowly.

No PA system for speakers in large rooms at Alford Hall

Adaptor needed to show Apple products (iPads) on projector

Short term solution:

Replace laptop at Alford Hall with the new 16gb Laptop

Use the previous Alford Hall laptop at Fairfield with the new projector

Move unused Fairfield PA system to Alford Hall

Bluetooth microphone to be held at Winmarleigh

Maintain Microsoft 365 account for displaying documents and power point presentations and online data storage.

JH raised the issue that the storage available at Winmarleigh Street is rather limited, JH suggested that we need to check whether what is stored there is all actually needed there, in particular the three almost identical speaker systems.

Long term

Replace the two remaining Windows 10 laptops by 2025

Continue training individuals to use equipment

U3A Budget for equipment

After discussing the current equipment, the committee agreed that new laptops and projectors etc. would be required in the future to replace older obsolete items. A rolling replacement programme was discussed and the committee agreed to take this proposal forward. It was agreed that £1200 should be added to the next budget round to allow for these replacements.

Meeting ended 15.20

Date of next meeting: **Monday 15th January, 2024, 1.30pm. at Alford Hall**