

Wigtownshire U3A

held on Thursday 12th November at 1.30pm via Zoom.us

Present: Sue Robb, Gill Hay, Richard McElrea, Moyra Breckridge, Jim Holt, Lesley Miller, Julie McGlashan.

1. Welcome and apologies

Celia Heller gave her apologies. The Committee welcomed Magnus Johnson from Stewartry who was giving a presentation about the Beacon system.

2. Beacon

Magnus gave a comprehensive presentation of the Beacon system which is a secure membership management system accessed through a website www.u3abeacon.org.uk. If we choose to go with it, then he will be our support person for 6-9 months. At the moment the system has not migrated to Beacon 2 but if we do opt to adopt it now, then it will be easier to transfer (anticipated April 2021); and if we leave it later, he will be sidelined to a support team nationally. The cost currently is £1 per capita depending on the membership numbers, invoiced at 31 March next year.

The advantages are a centralised store of information, for membership and financial data which is kept accurate and updated, rather than several people having their own systems, paper and on laptops, duplication and out of date information. Once the information is input, it is simple to use, and easy to pass on where there are changes of personnel. Levels of access can be determined for various officers, including Group Leaders who can have their own ledger if they wish. In time authorised users will become able to train others in its use. There are four levels of access: view; change; create; and delete.

There are options including asking members if they want to have TAM (an issue we've discussed before and a potential cost saving). The system can create personalised emails and also postal letters. It also produces membership cards bar coded for checking at meetings.

Financially, the system will produce end of year statements. It is easy to audit, all on one sheet. You can create whatever accounts you need including those needed for income tax.

If we confirm the go-ahead, then We will sign a Beacon Site Licence Form. Marcus suggested that Lesley inputs Committee members in the Demoton website, which will generate a password for everyone to go in and use the system to see how it works. Jim Holt suggested he might be interested in becoming an administrator for the system, with some initial help from others to get it set up.

The committee thanked Magnus for his time. The presentation finished at 2.50pm so it was decided to adjourn and revisit the rest of the agenda on 26th November .

3. Date of next meeting

Thursday 26th November via Zoom. Gill to send out invitations. The Committee thanked Gill for sorting out the licence.

4. Close

The meeting closed at 2.50pm.

Signed.....

Date.....