

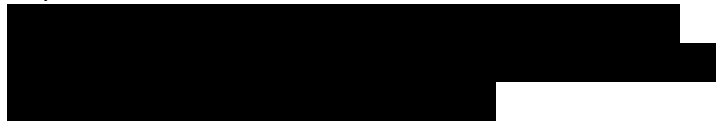
Minutes u3a Committee Meeting 1st August 2023

Present

Susie [REDACTED] (SW)
 Lynda [REDACTED] (LG)
 Corinna [REDACTED] (CW)
 Judith [REDACTED] (JH)
 Doreen [REDACTED] (DK)
 John [REDACTED] (JP)
 Marion [REDACTED] (MH)
 Terry [REDACTED] (TMcC)
 Mike [REDACTED] (MC)
 Adrian [REDACTED] (AD)
 Roger [REDACTED] (RC)
 Pam [REDACTED] (PJ)

Apologies - none

SUBJECT	ACTIONS	DATE COMPLETED
<p>Minutes Accuracy DK would like it minuted that from last months actions she emailed required information to LG on 18/07/23</p>	<p>LG to amend last months minutes</p>	<p>04/08/23 LG amended last months minutes accordingly</p>
<p>Matters Arising RC informed committee guidelines for Capital Goods completed and put onto website. SW feels managing funds is adequately covered in current Financial Policy therefore no further action required LG investigated committee numbers and numbers required for a quorum. Following paragraph from constitution - “There must be at least five and not more than twelve u3a members appointed to the Executive Committee. There shall be a quorum when at least one-third of the number of members of the Executive Committee or three members of the Executive Committee, whichever is the greater, are present at the meeting.”</p> <p>Whats app group set up and able to be used</p> <p>Keys for cupboard</p>	<p>MH to liaise with LP and</p>	

<p>MC would like to have an key and after discussion it was felt by the committee that there was no real need for Lynne Patrick to have a key. MH will ask Lynne to return her key and give it to MC.</p> <p>JP requested that all attachments be emailed as a PDF in future - takes up less room and cannot be altered.</p>	<p>MC</p> <p>All committee members</p>	
<p>Chair Report</p> <p>Code of Conduct for members taken from u3a website adapted for Witney u3a and agreed by committee then distributed to all members.</p> <p>SW informed the committee she had received 2 responses so far and both negative comments - including not feeling welcome at speaker meetings and feeling reprimanded.</p> <p>SW responded to both members offering one to one meetings to discuss further.</p> <p>SW also received a response from Carterton u3a saying what a marvellous idea and could they use it.</p> <p>JH informed committee that another member had told her how unwelcome they felt at speaker meetings.</p> <p>PJ asked the committee if it is still practice at speaker meetings for new members to be greeted by a volunteer and shown into the hall to be seated beside an existing member?</p> <p>DK explained this was still the expected procedure but in practice it may not be happening owing to change of personnel. However the plan is to re introduce as soon as possible.</p> <p></p> <p>PJ explained this issue is not new and has been experienced for years. When she was in the Chair at speaker meetings she used to invite people to stop and speak to their neighbour.</p> <p>SW agreed to adopt this idea</p> <p>Draft guidelines for GL's</p> <p>These have been distributed to GL's for them to consult at their individual group meetings and send any comments to the committee by 27th August, after which the committee can confirm guidelines and put on website.</p> <p>Blanket Hall visit</p> <p>Successful day confirmed by PJ and no costs charged to</p>	<p>Amendment from JH</p> <p>SW speaker meetings</p>	

<p>u3a</p> <p>Chairs Forum A forum for all u3a Chairs was started last year via Zoom. SW will participate in next meeting and report back.</p> <p>Registering to Vote at AGM SW has sorted out any issues no further action required SW discussed a newsletter (distributed to committee members previous evening) received from u3a Trust and invited opinions as to whether Witney u3a would like to take part with an event in Alfresco Autumn.</p>	<p>SW</p>	
<p>Business Secretary Report This year's Code of Conduct for Trustees had been emailed to all committee members prior to meeting. At meeting all members signed and dated copy.</p> <p>Following the distribution of Code of Conduct for Witney u3a members, both SW & LG feel currently there is no need for a disciplinary policy to be developed but there is a definite requirement for a complaints policy. A complaints policy is one of the strong recommendations given by the Charities Commission.</p> <p>AD expressed that he felt the Code of Conduct to members was veering on being too corporate and confrontational. He had received 3 phone calls and 2 emails about the tenure of where Witney u3a was heading especially as code of conduct followed distribution of slightly officious emails from JP regarding membership and subscription.</p> <p>He pointed out that 5 points in the code of conduct say "expect" and only one says "must" so what are the consequences?</p> <p>SW replied it was a pity AD did not respond when she sent out the Code of Conduct to committee members for comment. AD acknowledged this. As a committee we need to be aware of some of the difficulties that have arisen within Witney u3a. Having a Code of Conduct for members is one way for the committee to deal with any skirmishes. The code of conduct is not new and had been pulled from National u3a and adapted for Witney u3a.</p> <p>RC commented that it is similar to u3a principals AD felt principals were sufficient to make members realise they should respect each other and the committee.</p>	<p>All committee members</p> <p>SW & LG</p>	<p>01/08/23</p>

<p>AD the conduct does not give us anything to use as it says “expect” DK agreed. RC says it enables us to deal with issues on a case by case basis.</p> <p>SW explained it offers a framework against which we could discuss individuals behaviour. If an issue cannot be resolved regionally u3a national offers an independent person to arbitrate.</p> <p>TMCC asked if we are not getting ahead of ourselves? SW informed the committee we can develop a policy and put on website without consultation - guidelines have to be put forward for consultation.</p> <p>DK explained historically people had been invited to come and discuss issues and when this was not taken up issues were left unresolved.</p> <p>SW - if members are not happy and a face to face meeting does not resolve issues we can sign post them to the complaints policy and procedures for their next steps.</p> <p>After discussion AD agreed with this on a forward basis but would like a message going out to members to remind them of the need to respect each other and the committee.</p>	SW	
<p>AD had not been receiving emails from Business Secretary but will be in the future. Bus Sec was using wrong email</p>	MH	02/08/23
<p>MH will send LG correct email for AD</p> <p>SW agreed we would soften the messaging in future and asked that the Code of Conduct go out in new members pack.</p>	JP	
<p>JP will look at current accompanying letter to see if messaging is already embedded.</p> <p>MC asked if we can capture comments on website. RC replied this is not a current option and after discussion committee feels it is not something we would like.</p> <p>Drafted guidelines sent to GL’s to circulate to their group members is a methodology which enables comments from all members before being adopted by committee.</p>		
<p>AD agrees this demonstrates bottom up rather than top down.</p> <p>MH will send out further emails about no speaker meeting on 4th August.</p>	MH	02/08/23 & 04/08/23

Treasurers Report

TMcC brought to committee a prepared forecast budget for the year. He explained budget is speculative however April to July are actuals. A percentage was added to last years figures to give projected budget. Last year saw a loss of approximately £2K and year before £800 therefore current year could see a loss of approx £3K with projected figures.

Currently there are monies in the bank and it has been the intention to have losses but if it continues we will eventually have a £4K deficit and no monies to spend which may come as a shock to some members.

Discussion held about income.

Basic income is from subscriptions and our options are to cut back on expenditure, increase income or a mixture of both.

The early bird offer incurs a cost of £2.5K therefore may have to be withdrawn. It was suggested we approach town and district councils for grants JH proposed increasing membership to £20 for early bird offer and if not taken up £25

CW pointed out speaker costs are rising as speakers increase their fees and more are claiming travel expenses

TMcC informed committee that room hire costs were being raised by 7%.

DK commented that the u3a is not charged the full room rates.

AD asked for explanation of Balance column. TMcC explained this total is cumulative.

PJ informed committee that static expenditure is £4 for capitation and £1 beacon for each member should not change for a few years.

RC commented that a new laptop would be required soon as the present one does not support Windows 11.

A new one would be in the region of at least £700

SW asked how much notice the membership requires of a subscription increase fee.

JP starts preparing for membership enrolment in December of each year.

Committee agreed to start putting comms out Sep/Oct TMcC would like to withdraw early bird offer.

RC pointed out that the Early Bird discount was introduced as a temporary measure after Covid in recognition that we had not been able to offer members a full service during the pandemic and our

Addition
from RC

<p>costs had not been as high as usual . It was advertised as “for the current year only” (although it has been extended beyond this) to enable us to remove the discount easily, avoiding objections by members as occurred the last time the subscription was increased</p> <p>RC view is that removing the discount should be the first step in managing our financial situation, together with an explanation of why we need to do this and we may need to increase the basic subscription in future years to cover increased costs.</p> <p>SW reminded committee that under Charity Commission rules we must not make a loss and she likes JH’s proposal.</p> <p>MH & CW commented that some members feel Witney u3a is not expensive</p> <p>SW and committee agreed to withdraw the early bird offer for next year and would like a time table of messaging</p> <p>TMcC will approach councils for grants especially against new equipment.</p> <p>AD queried expenses for speakers CW replied some are free others are more than £100 but it usually balances out at the end of the year to within budget. However as previously stated some speakers are increasing their fees in line with the rise in cost of living.</p> <p>TMcC asked if we need to continue with publicity AD recommended we do but only have a maintenance budget.</p> <p>JP explained printing and stationary budget is mostly programmes sent out to all members and new members. CW asked if this was necessary AD thinks electronic would suffice. DK asked if there is a cheaper level of printing costs.</p> <p>SW pointed largest expenditure is room hire and speakers.</p> <p>MH asked what £1K equipment cost was in April.</p> <p>TMcC will investigate and report back.</p> <p>AD & MH thanked TMcC for his forecast budget.</p> <p>JP magazine costs are for those members who opted in.</p> <p>SW reminded meeting we still have monies in the bank as well as reserves. Members could be given the option of subscription increase or only one speaker meeting per month</p> <p>PJ informed committee some u3a’s charge £1 to attend</p>	<p>Amendment by SW</p>	
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<p>speaker meetings</p> <p>JH said that an increase was flagged at the AGM</p> <p>AD asked how many other u3a's have 2 speaker meetings per month.</p> <p>PJ replied not many but this is a USP for Witney u3a</p> <p>MH asked how many visitors attend speaker meetings. Reply is that it does depend on the speaker last month it was 2 at one meeting and 10 at the other.</p> <p>RC informed committee Gill B laptop is low power and struggles with migration to new website. Therefore a new machine would be appreciated. SW agrees this would be a sensible investment for the Witney u3a and to purchase before January 24.</p> <p>SW thanked TMcC for his forecast budget which led to a useful discussion. Could committee email her ideas regarding funding prior to Oct.</p>	All committee	
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<p>Recruitment to Committee</p> <p>SW no real progress from announcements at speaker meetings despite offering job share and/or no need to be on the committee. What more can we do? Perhaps a Situations Vacant in newsletter</p> <p>MC informed committee we also require a replacement for RC.</p> <p>SW informed committee one member may be approachable therefore she will contact them and report back</p>	<p>MC</p> <p>SW</p>	<p>03/08/23</p>
<p>Group Co Ordinators Report</p> <p>GL's have had new guidelines and date set for next forum</p> <p>Beacon training for GL's and committee on 3rd August 13 people signed up.</p> <p>SW asked committee members to whats app JP any specific training prior to day</p> <p>DK will email GL's and committee</p> <p>DK explained group calendar goes out of date very quickly however committee felt this should be put on website</p> <p>DK explained her job description has altered dramatically especially regarding the number of emails</p>	<p>DK</p> <p>RC</p>	<p>02/08/23</p>

<p>she receives on a daily basis. All of which require a response</p> <p>DK enjoys setting up new groups but this also takes time and effort and it is now too much doing both tasks as well as overseeing the members who help her.</p> <p>DK said open day will bring in new members but not many GL's had requested a table on the day and as it stands at moment there are not enough to hold the open day.</p> <p>MH pointed out the open day was arranged to be part of National u3a week in September.</p> <p>SW emphasised we do not need new members but a steady flow for maintenance. Did the committee want to cancel the open day and celebrate in a different way?</p> <p>DK will email for one last push</p> <p>DK informed committee that Bath u3a indicated they were having similar issues recruiting committee members.</p> <p>AD said one option is to do nothing</p> <p>CW asked if she therefore needed to source a speaker for the 21st September. SW replied she can approach her husband to fill in.</p> <p>SW acknowledges DK requires more help.</p> <p>CW asked who needs information regarding speaker meetings</p> <p>Reply</p> <p>MH MC SW RW Gill B</p> <p>PJ and CW left the meeting at 12.40</p>	DK	
<p>Membership/Beacon report</p> <p>Membership stands at 604 including 57 new members since April, 4 lapsed and 76 left.</p> <p>He will not be available much at beginning of September therefore not be attending new members meeting Ann C will deputise</p>		
<p>Business Admin Report</p> <p>Nil to report all trips going ahead</p>		
<p>Publicity Report</p> <p>Blanket Hall visit press release not so far in Witney gazette can MC put in newsletter</p> <p>MH informed committee members have asked for names and photos of committee members.</p> <p>After discussion agreed first names only and group photo probably at October meeting.</p>	MC	03/08/23
<p>Web Report</p> <p>RC informed committee that Gill B has completed a</p>		

<p>test of migration onto new site the purpose of which was to find faults with process and feed back to migration team. They are trying to get to grips with how it works and how to make it better. From sample pages committee agreed looks better but could be less busy.</p> <p>Current status final migration team have more work to do to improve but should be done by the end of the year. Test site is a learning experience.</p> <p>GB has requested for ours to be at the beginning of next year.</p> <p>SW impressed with work done so far and thanked all for their efforts</p>	<p>Amendment by RC</p>	
<p>IT report</p> <p>Amp purchased and offered to last Science and Tech group but it was declined by speaker. It is now available for use and stored in the u3a cupboard in the church.</p> <p>MH thought it worked well</p>	<p>Deletion by RC</p>	
<p>Newsletter Report</p> <p>MC informed next newsletter will be reduced in content and he and Jackie W have developed a small questionnaire to ask members their opinion of how they would like newsletter to appear in future.</p> <p>This will hopefully be electronic and some printed off to be on table at speaker meetings.</p> <p>JH left meeting at 13.00</p>		
<p>Audio Visual Report</p> <p>Work on upgrade is currently ongoing in church and should be completed by 11th August at the latest u3a laptops will need to be reconfigured and speakers on a forward basis should be able to use their own. RC requested a training session</p>	<p>Amendment RC</p>	
<p>AOB</p> <p>MH asked if we need to do anything about “roadkill” platform for Wychwood project.</p> <p>AD replied we had not committed to anything.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 13.10</p>		