



York u3a

Draft Minutes of the AGM held on 13 March 2021

The AGM was held online using Zoom. It started at 11.40 and closed at 12.20.

1. Confirmation that the meeting is quorate (40 members)

Lorrae Atkins, Website Manager and Deputy Chair, confirmed 98 participating devices were signed in, and many were couples, so it was quorate.

2. Welcome

David Maughan Brown, Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for such a large turnout.

3. Voting procedure

The Chairman asked that members vote by holding up their hand and waiting to be counted by Lorrae who would be checking the Zoom screens.

4. Receive and approve the Minutes of the 2019 AGM (see below)

The minutes of the previous AGM had been circulated to members before the meeting. They were approved by a show of hands.

5. Receive the Chairman's Report (in lieu of 'Receive and Approve the Annual Report')

The Chairman explained that the Annual Report was a more formal document that had already been sent to the Charity Commission. Instead of delivering the formal Annual Report, he would be delivering a Chairman's Report, which would not require formal approval via a vote.

Chairman's Report

October 2019 - March 2021

"The fact that I am delivering this annual report via Zoom at a virtual AGM five months after our AGM was originally scheduled is evidence, if one needed any, of the extraordinary year we have just been through. As we have moved in and out of various levels of lockdown over the past year, a good deal of time has had to be spent on Health and Safety and risk assessments. Some of our outdoor groups have been able to meet in limited numbers, but where our indoor groups have been able to meet at all it has had to be on line, and some of our activities simply don't lend themselves to being conducted via Zoom. It is a great tribute to very many of our Group Leaders and to the members of their groups that so many have been

able to keep going. We very much appreciate the effort that has gone into that and the frustration of Group Leaders whose groups have not been able to meet.

Trying to maintain contact with our members has been one of our main priorities, and the committee has been acutely conscious of the fact that a significant portion of our membership doesn't use the internet. Early in the first lockdown, members of the committee phoned all 240 or so of our members who were not recorded on our membership list as having email addresses to check on how they were managing, and in the process we obtained email address for some 80 of them. Since then our bi-monthly Newsletter, retitled NewsMail, has been distributed electronically; updates on the implications of the various lockdown measures have emailed; some important external communications have been sent out, and others have been posted on our Website; and I have tried to keep in touch via a number of emails. With our office closed for the duration it has, unfortunately, only been possible to post a few of these communications out to members who don't have email. Our Saturday morning talks programme has continued with great success thanks to Lorrae Atkins, Peter Jarman and Anna Baldwin, our Talks Secretaries, and Tom Baldwin.

Apart from the postponement of the AGM and the stop it has put to many of our usual activities, the pandemic saw us extending our 2019-2020 membership to the end of December, and reducing our membership fee for the remainder of 2020-21 to £10. Ren Buss will outline the detail of the financial implications of the pandemic in her Treasurer's report. The major implication has, entirely understandably, been for our membership numbers. These have fallen by just under 17% (from 1794 in April when we stopped accepting new members for 2019-20 to 1,495 now). Given the limitations to what we have been able to do over the past year and uncertainties about the future, this is a much more limited drop off in numbers than one might have expected and is a huge tribute to the loyalty of our members and to the efforts so many of our Group Leaders have gone to to keep their groups going where this has been at all possible.

Moving on from the consequences for us of the Covid-19 pandemic, the major developments to report on have been the implementation of the Beacon system and the changes that have taken place in the membership of your committee. After some understandable hesitation dating back a number of years, the committee finally decided to commit to a changeover to Beacon, the u3a's dedicated membership management software, which, thanks to the very hard work of a subcommittee consisting of Sandra Mason, Lorrae Atkins and Sheila Wilson was successfully and seamlessly installed over the summer last year and enabled roughly half our membership renewals to take place on line. Given that the office has been closed and the usual renewals teams haven't been able to help, a huge thank you goes to Sandra Mason, in particular, and Lorrae Atkins for their dedication in undertaking the renewals process. Beacon's capabilities will make a significant difference to the work of members of the committee and to Group Leaders who choose to take advantage of it.

The committee has met every month and seen a significant change in membership as new members, many of whom who are standing for election today, have been coopted. Sheila Wilson and Jean Haywood, our excellent Treasurer and Secretary respectively, came to the end of their allowable six-year terms of office and have been very ably replaced by Ren Buss and Mike Barnard respectively, but Sheila and Jean have taken a significant chunk of the committee's institutional memory with them, and I would like to record our thanks to them on behalf of us all for all they have done for our u3a over the years. Janis Oxtoby has joined us as Minutes Secretary and Alison Holmes's and John Powderley's portfolios have been seamlessly taken over by Rosemary Royds Tree as Groups Co-ordinator and and Nick David as Editor respectively. Hilary Davies has taken over from Jennie Pugsley as the committee's representative of the frustratingly inactive travel committees, and Mo Sandland and Steve

Russell have joined the committee as Assistant Membership Secretary and Assistant Treasurer respectively. Paul Howarth has completed his three years on the committee and I am very pleased to be able to report that he has this week been replaced on the committee by Quinn Smith. Eve Birch was unable to continue as Office Manager and we are seeking a replacement, which becomes more urgent as the moment for reopening the office approaches. We are also looking for someone to join Anna Baldwin on the Saturday morning talks team from October when Peter Jarman's term of office will be coming to an end. I would like to express a huge thank you both to all the committee members who have left us since our last AGM for their excellent contributions, and to those who remain. The pandemic and consequent lockdown have affected all committee members' portfolios to a greater or lesser extent and I would like to place on record my admiration for their perseverance, and warm appreciation for their commitment and support over a particularly difficult period.

If the Prime Minister's road map out of lockdown goes to plan, March 29th will see the return of the 'Rule of Six' and our potential return to the limited range of our outdoor activities that allowed. The next milestone for us should be May 17th when groups of up to 30 will be permitted to meet outdoors and groups of six members of interest groups should be able to meet indoors. All remaining restrictions should be lifted from June 21st, but as things stand we are not planning to resume our face-to-face Saturday morning meetings before September. We will keep you informed of all the implications of any changes.

It remains only to thank all the volunteers, in the garden, in the office, and at the Saturday morning meetings who worked for us all in those almost-impossible-to-remember five whole months between our last AGM and the arrival of the pandemic and lockdown; to thank Chris from the Central Methodist Church and Tracey from the Friends Meeting House for their help and cooperation; and finally thanks to you all for your virtual presence at this AGM. I will be very happy to try to answer any questions."

During the brief discussion that followed:

- Anna Baldwin thanked the Chairman for his substantial contribution.
- It was noted that there is a York u3a Facebook group which members could join.
- In the future it was planned to try have mixed meetings at which some members could meet face-to-face while others could attend via Zoom. The Friends Meeting House facilities are being improved to facilitate this.
- Lorrae Atkins was thanked for running all the Zoom sessions.

6. Receive and approve the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2020

The Annual Accounts for the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 had been circulated to members before the meeting and were displayed on the Zoom screen. The Treasurer, Ren Buss, delivered her financial report as follows:

"Finance Report u3a AGM Saturday 13 March 2021

1. As the AGM has been deferred because of Covid, the numbers presented here today relate to what is now a fairly historic period – the 12 months August 2019 to July 2020 ie July last year.
2. These numbers were prepared by the previous Treasurer, Sheila Wilson, to whom we are very grateful for her commitment to finishing the work required as well as supporting and guiding me (at an appropriate social distance) into acting as Treasurer for the financial year we are now in.

3. The outcome for the year to July 2020 was very similar to the previous 12 months with income and spending including Group activities both falling slightly with revenue at £183k (£187k in previous year) and spend at £179k (compared to the previous year of £185k).

This slight “shrinkage” is not surprising as the first formal lockdown restrictions were put in place late March 2020.

The last of the monies provided through the Henry Mills Legacy were utilised during the year which ended up showing an overall £3k surplus and still very healthy bank balances of £83k.

4. Moving forward, we have been through a very patchy period re the activities we can and can't undertake, however we still have certain costs that had to be met – the lease for our use of the Friends Meeting House being the main item plus we still need to pay for plus our membership of TAT, their newsletter, and our Beacon Membership system usage fees.
5. It was for this reason that the committee reduced the annual subscription from £17 to £10 for this current financial year to July 2021. Looking at numbers uncertainty remains high, particularly re the extent to which Groups will be able to reactivate before the end of July; however I am currently expecting that we will record a deficit of circa £5k for the year up to this July.
6. Next financial year we all very much hope we will be able to meet more actively.

Costs will rise, in certain cases significantly (the lease cost for the Friends in particular) and we are also aware that groups may incur extra costs when meeting because they will need to hire larger premises / two coaches etc.

7. Therefore, given our continuing healthy bank balance, the committee have decided that the Subscription next year will be set at £15 per person.

Also that we are in a position to continue supporting Groups and funding up to 50% of premises / facility usage costs. We hope this will assist groups grappling higher costs to restart in a manner consistent with any space restrictions and lingering Covid concerns.

8. Finally two pleas please before I open the floor to question:
 - With moving away from using cheques and also asking you to renew using PayPal if possible, we are facing challenges of tax rules re Gift Aid. As I am a firm believer in getting as much back from the tax man as possible and whatever we get helps defray our costs, please would everyone consider paying singly next year? It's a nuisance paying separately / doing it twice when you are husband and wife or paying for a friend but it really will help our processes optimising our gift aid receipts.
 - Once we are permitted I am sure many of us are itching to travel. I would like to remind you please that if you decide to travel through Riviera Travel, provided you mention that you are a **York u3a member** when you book, we can ask them for a very significant 10% of the cost of your booking to be donated to York u3a. The full process is explained on our website.”

During the discussion that followed:

- It was suggested that it would be a good idea for an article on the history of the Henry Mills fund to be written. Brian Joscelyne agreed to do this.
- Concern was expressed that a PayPal account was needed for the payment of membership fees. In reply it was stated that members do not need to have a personal PayPal account to pay using PayPal. York u3a its own PayPal account which can be used. Instructions would be provided when the time came for renewals to be paid. There would be a small fee but this would be a cost for York u3a. Cheques and Bank Transfer payments would also continue to be possible mechanisms for payment but members would be asked to consider using the on-line renewal system if at all possible as it helps the volunteers administering renewals
- The point was made that York u3a is in a strong financial position due to Committee diligence/ past decisions and the previous financial assistance from the Henry Mills Bequest. However it was important to be aware that the Charity Commission would not look favourably on a Charity with unnecessary reserves. The committee believed our reserves to be appropriate, given scheduled rent increases, current uncertainties, and the anticipation that we would probably need to invest in technology to facilitate 'blended' meetings and support members unable or unwilling to attend meetings in person.

The accounts were approved by a show of hands.

7. Election of Committee members

The Chairman explained that, as stated in the AGM Notice, the following members had joined the committee during the past year. As required by the constitution they were now standing for election as Trustees, proposed and seconded by other members of the committee. All elected were by a show of hands.

Name	Role	Proposer	Seconder
Nick David	Editor	David Maughan Brown	Lorrae Atkins
Steve Russell	Assistant Treasurer	Sandra Mason	Anna Baldwin
Ren Buss	Treasurer	Peter Jarman	Hilary Davies
Rosemary Royds Tree	Groups Co-ordinator	Janis Oxtoby	Peter Jarman
Mike Barnard	Secretary & Region Rep	Anna Baldwin	David Maughan Brown
Mo Sandland	Asst Membership Secretary	Lorrae Atkins	Hilary Davies

The following committee members were retiring at the AGM: Sheila Wilson and Paul Howarth. The Chairman expressed his warm appreciation to them for their service.

All other current committee members were still within their terms of office.

8. Appointment of Examiner of Accounts

The committee proposed the re-appointment of Hunter Gee Holroyd. This was agreed by a show of hands.

9. Any other business

- Anyone who would be interested in helping to organise the monthly Saturday talks was requested please contact to Anna Baldwin (contact details are on the York u3a website.)

*Mike Barnard, Secretary York u3a, March 2021
Awaiting approval at the next AGM*