

Committee Meeting Minutes - **DRAFT**

Venue: John Storer House

Date & Time: Wednesday 12th June 2024 10.00am

Present: Pam Upton (PU) - CHAIR, Debra Hardwick (DH), Garry Rigby (GR), Pam Towers (PT), Bev Gillman (BG), Phil Bass (PB), Sue Ronald (SR), Helen Reid (HR)
(minutes)

Apologies for absence: Geetha Bala, Margaret Kelvey, David Jefferson

1. Minutes of last meeting to be ratified and signed

- Item 9: Group Leaders Meeting
 - Last sentence should read 'report for the **June** meeting...' (not May)

Correction will be made and then minutes signed and sent to Phil for uploading to the website.

Action: PU

2. Matters Arising and Actions (items not included in agenda)

- Pam U confirmed that the Venues List and Accessibility Audit had been updated and placed on the website.
- Garry confirmed that PAT testing of equipment had been organised for this afternoon's meeting, and group leaders had been invited to bring their equipment along for testing. Pam U mentioned she had a box of pencils which had been assigned to Mike, and she also had pens.
- Pam U agreed to mention at this afternoon's meeting that we need extra hands to move tables and chairs and for people to speak to her if they were willing to go on a rota for this.
- Item 7: Pam U had sent a message to group leaders to notify them of revised and updated policy documents now on the website.

3. Reports

a. Secretary (DH)

Nothing to add to written report. Pam U confirmed that revised text for First Aid guidance was included in her email to group leaders. Sue thanked Debra for listing documents that are available.

b. System Administrator (PB)

Online Payments:

Phil and Pam T would like to be able to have online renewals for Sept/Oct which would entail opening a PayPal account, and Committee were asked for approval to open a PayPal account to trial it. Other u3as have reported that opening a PayPal account can take a long time because of having to prove charitable status to get the discounted fees.

Pam T pointed out that though Cu3a would need a PayPal account, members wouldn't need their own PayPal account as they could pay by credit or debit card. The main advantage would be that it will automatically be linked back to the ledger and there will be authorisation without Garry having to intervene. Disadvantages are that we haven't seen this work so we don't know what else might crop up, and also PayPal take a small cut, around 20p + 1.4% per transaction.

Pam T suggested - and it was agreed by Committee - that we apply for the PayPal account only at this stage (due to length of time it takes) but not use it, then a paper can be prepared for next month's meeting on advantages and disadvantages and we can discuss then. No cost is involved in applying for the account.

Action PB/PT

Garry commented that if it all happens automatically, how does he know when someone has paid, so he can send their card, etc. We will need to explore this as part of the detailed process. He plans to revamp the sheet for paper applications as it needs updating for this year's subscription and reorganising for better compatibility with Simple Membership (SM). However, he would need to revamp it again with PayPal in mind if we decide to go with that and pointed out that we need to have things in place by August.

Inactive Groups/Out of Date Group Details:

It was agreed that Phil could delete inactive groups. Pam U asked how Phil knew if a group was inactive. For a group to be marked as inactive, group leaders should inform Bev. We need to ensure that Bev, Phil and Garry know what's going on with groups, so group info on the website and activities list can be updated. Hopefully group leaders will have taken notice of Bev's recent reminder to update their group's details on the website and any anomalies will be rectified.

Group Leader Feedback:

Pam U commented on the good feedback from a group leader and suggested this is incorporated (with the group leader's permission) in a refresher piece on SM in *News & Views*. Phil asked if we can make a point of telling people that their username is not their email address. Garry suggested giving members their username as part of the renewal process; Phil would need to change the wording of the automatic email.

E-Mails:

Pam U reported a member saying she wasn't receiving the email about monthly meetings. It was suggested she check her spam.

Bev reported that she is still getting a lot of emails that are replies to group leaders. We had suggested that GLs use their personal email address if they don't want a generic address, but it seems the message needs reinforcing.

c. Membership (GR)

Garry reported that we now have over 1100 members, the first time we have reached that number. Following a small dip over the Covid period we have clearly now recovered. Gift Aid will be sorted out at the end of June, we should get about £1500. A new membership form will be coming out next month.

Helen asked if Garry had received the message she had forwarded from a group leader about a member who had died. (Garry later checked his email and found it). It seems that group leaders hear about deaths and inform their group members but not the Membership Secretary, another example of how information needs to be passed on, and people need to be reminded to do so.

d. Groups Co-ordinator (BG)

Mike Hill had informed Bev that he was standing down as Walking Groups Coordinator, and he was trying to get someone else to do it.

Mini (Short) Tennis – Bev had an email that the GL was standing down but the person named as taking over is not a Cu3a member. Bev has tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with this ‘new group leader.’ Bev had checked on the website and the members list is out of date by about 2 years. It is not known what is happening with this group. It was suggested the best way forward would be to visit a group meeting. The leader of the Reading group says she doesn’t want to be regarded as a group leader - even though she is currently operating fine in the role. There seems to be some disquiet about all the paperwork recently distributed following recent additions and updates. However, we must have these policies as a registered charity and need to keep group leaders informed. GLs have been sent all the updated policies rather than just directing them to the website, to make it easier for them, but at the risk of ‘information overload’.

e. Treasurer (PT)

We’ve had a lot of expenditure recently, with our biggest expenditure, the TAT affiliation fee, and the TAT magazine both being paid in the last couple of months, while the subs income won’t come through till later in the year. So the relatively low level of central funds is not an issue.

Garry said he had no record of how much he’d paid into the bank. Pam T confirmed that this information is clear from the bank statements.

4. PayPal and Bank Card Payments

Already discussed under System Administrator report.

5. Managing the Website and System

Pam U introduced this item and her paper. Historically we have had 2 separate roles: System Administrator (for Beacon as was) and Web Manager, but now under SM, Phil is doing both. We need to rationalise and decide if we want one role or two coordinating roles with 2 separate people. The paper sets out pros and cons of each, with summaries of how two roles may be divided.

When asked to comment, Phil said he is in favour of having understudies but not role-sharing. In answer to a question from Helen about possible issues with data security mentioned in the paper, Phil replied that GDPR protection is provided by SM, so it is not an issue.

Pam U pointed out the clear demarcation between the 2 proposed roles. If we went for 2 separate roles, there would need to be coordination between the role holders and a detailed role description for each. In answer to a question from Sue, it was confirmed that Cu3a would communicate with Ric at SM via the System Administrator only. We control our own website, and only need to consult Ric for a few specific things, e.g. changing page template, adding contact form.

Pam T said she had been working with Martyn Speight on the finance system, and that he has been putting proposals to Ric. So Martyn has taken on some of the System Administrator role, which Phil confirmed is happening currently. Phil would prefer to have one person in charge of the SM system as a whole, though as the finance system is not well supported, he felt it useful to have someone else involved during the transition from old to new system. Martyn volunteered to do this and the Events too, so Phil let him do that.

Pam U mentioned the issue of usability and accessibility of the website which is still to be tackled and the importance of the interface between website and members. SM has developed in an ad hoc way and we need to rationalise where we are. Garry said it was useful to have someone dealing with the changes, which Martyn had helped him with, and felt we don't want to overburden one person.

Debra suggested that we could have a Committee position as SM Coordinator and below that someone with responsibility on the Systems side and someone else with responsibility for the website. These latter 2 people would not need to be on the Committee but would make decisions in their area and inform the SM Coordinator who would be the point of contact with the SM company. This would build in succession and a safety net. It was generally agreed that this was a way forward, but we need to plot out the details. It was agreed that Pam U and Phil would meet up to

draw up detailed proposals to present to the next Committee meeting, and also consult other members who might fill these roles.

Action: PU/PB

6. Group Risk Assessments

As an alternative to the standard risk assessment check list, Martyn Speight has produced detailed 'Notes for Walk Leaders' and 'Notes for New Group Members' for the Thursday 6 Milers walking group. Our Health and Safety Policy states that the u3a should ensure that reasonable care has been taken to avoid harming others and that participants are aware of the risks. It was agreed that if members have access to these detailed guidelines, we can certainly say that reasonable care has been taken. Also the notes could be readily adapted for other walking groups. Pam U offered to ask Martyn if he could make amendments to make it general to all walks.

Helen suggested one amendment to the 'Day Trips' risk assessment, from "Have all the participants voluntarily supplied the details of a person/next of kin.." to "Have all the participants been asked to voluntarily supply the details of a person/next of kin.." and this was agreed. This question was not in the Venue-based risk assessment and should be added. Pam will make these amendments and email group leaders telling them about risk assessments, including explanation and reassurance about what is necessary. She will also tell group leaders of the need for a fresh risk assessment for every trip/holiday, but venue- or home-based only if something changes. Also stress that the risk assessment checklists can be amended according to the group's needs.

Action: PU

Bev questioned why risk assessment documents have to be kept for 3 years. This is required by insurance rules.

The Golf group leader had questioned how risk assessments could apply. He should check if the venue has risk assessment/health & safety. Pam U suggested sharing Martyn's walking notes with Golf and Outdoor Bowls group leaders to illustrate that reasonable precautions can be taken by distributing such notes to group members.

Action: PU

There was a query about First Aid kits and it was suggested reasonable costs for these could be borne by Cu3a. A few comments were made on the relevance of

some points, but it was stressed that the checklists can be amended. It was clear that accessing some venues' own risk assessments can be problematical.

Bev queried the First Aid advice in the Local Policies document, and Pam U confirmed this had been updated in the last few days and put on the website. Re Day Trip risk assessment, the importance of personal responsibility on day trips is clearly stated in guidelines sent out to members.

7. EDI Meeting 23rd May

A useful meeting was held with four new and recent members attending, and a shortlist of suggestions for action was drawn up. One idea was to reinstate the New Members meeting, which had been discontinued due to very few new members attending. To be viable, it would need to be combined with the Group Leaders meeting, or perhaps an Open Day for potential members, or just a few Group Leaders to meet with new members. It was also suggested we reinstate the monthly new members coffee mornings at Tesco, with Committee members attending on a rota basis. A trifold leaflet with information about Cu3a would be useful – there is a template on the u3a brand centre. A small group of people would need to work on this. A 'buddy' system was also suggested. So we have the list, we now need to discuss the practicalities. Everyone was asked to think about this for the next Committee meeting.

Action: ALL

8. Role descriptions and Role Sharing

We agreed that the Equipment Register and PAT testing would go on the Vice Chair's role description.

Pam U will circulate the role descriptions for Membership Secretary and Treasurer, as amendments have been suggested and need to be approved, which can be done by email.

Action: PU

The issue of role sharing was deferred to the next meeting.

9. AOB

There was no other business.

Date & Time of next meeting: Wednesday 10th July 2024, 10.00am

Meeting closed at: 12.00 pm

Accepted as a true record. Pam Upton-Chair.

P. Upton

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