

Committee Meeting Minutes

Venue: John Storer House

Date & Time: Wednesday 12th April 2023

Present: Pam Upton (PU) - CHAIR, Bob Pyatt (BP), Debra Hardwick (DH), Garry Rigby (GR), Greetha Bala (GB), Bev Gillman (BG), Margaret Kelvey (MK), Helen Reid (HR), Sue Ronald (SR), Peter Reid (PR), Tony Westaway (TW).

Apologies for absence: Phil Bass (PB)

1. Welcome

Pam welcomed in the new look Committee, with particular reference to new members Debra and Peter and an official welcome to Geetha following her election at the AGM. Pam also reported that David Jefferson had decided not to become a Committee Member. It was agreed that some of the 'welcome' paperwork could be overwhelming and after some discussion the Committee agreed to review the enrolment and induction of new Committee Members. There is also a TAT induction recommendation to consider. In reference to financial liability, Trustees were reassured that insurance surrounding the role is more than adequate.

2. Minutes of last meeting - Wednesday 8th March 2023

A typing correction in point 6 of the minutes was identified and then minutes were agreed and ratified. PU to send to TW.

Action: PU/TW

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

3f (vi) - Bob reported that Sue Cotton has confirmed that funds from Lu3a should be £4,200.

3e (i) - Margaret has spoken to Sue Unsworth, She has confirmed that there has been no responses from the membership, to the Friends of Charnwood Group. Rather than close the group down, it was agreed to seek alternatives - possibly a coffee morning. Committee members will bring ideas to the next meeting. In the meantime Tony will remove the group from the website.

Action: Committee

3c (iv) - Activities List on website to be reviewed for accuracy.

Action: BG/TW

3e (ii) - Short discussion about encouraging new groups and setting up of additional groups when an existing group is full. Tai Chi is a perfect example as it has a long waiting list. There needs to be a new tutor as the existing tutors are unable to offer extra sessions and this has been difficult so far. Margaret will seek an update.

Action: MK

3f (iii) - Bob contacted the originator Group Leader about the deposit and the monies have been repaid.

3g (iii) - Tony reported that there had been 35 'hits' on the Monthly Meeting Survey.

4. Reports

a. Secretary (DH)

- (i) DH reported a successful handover from PU, including any current issues.
- (ii) DH has updated the Committee details and uploaded the new Constitution onto the Charity Commission website.
- (iii) Login username and password have now been issued from Netsuite for access to TAT and the Committee information has been updated.
- (iv) DH has created a suite of template documents incorporating the Charnwood u3a and Charity Commission logos/registration number. Letterhead, memo and report templates are available and others can be added.
- (v) General Enquiries:
There have been 4 enquiries. Judith Boston co-ordinator of the National Garden Scheme contacted us to see if we have groups wanting to visit gardens in Leicestershire. Helen commented that the Gardening Groups were already aware of the scheme.
The ex-BBC reporter Bharat Patel contacted us about the opportunity to be a guest speaker at a Monthly Meeting.
A student at Loughborough University has a study product researching how inclusive design can help older adults gain digital competence.
Action: DH to forward emails to HR
Farmer Barnes Dairy have raised an invitation to visit the farm, near Melton Mowbray, next year.

Contact details for all are available on request

b. Beacon Administrator (PB)

Phil's written report was received in his absence.

- (i) Phil reported that an upgrade to the Beacon Members Portal is due on 18th April.
- (ii) Last month PB noted posts on the National Support Forum complaining of slow joining and renewals. The problem must have gone away because there have been no further posts after 28th February, but there has been no official feedback on this.
- (iii) The notification email for the April newsletter triggered email rejection messages from three addresses. Two turned out to be mis-spelled email addresses in Beacon. The Membership Secretary has fixed the two known erroneous addresses and is waiting for a response from the member with the third problem address.
- (iv) At last month's committee meeting PB offered to complete the details of those groups that had not yet had their members added to Beacon. The Groups Coordinator supplied several lists of names on 4th April and they have been added to Beacon. In doing this, a number of discrepancies were identified, including one or two people on the lists that are not members of Charnwood U3A. Also, the list given for *Canasta 1* was actually for *Canasta 1 Quorn* (a quite different group).
- (v) Alternatives to Beacon:
Web Integrate's Agreement for Services was circulated to the Committee on 8th March. To get the maximum benefit from the Simple Membership system Cu3a would need to get a PayPal account, allowing members to join and renew their membership subscription online and minimising the work of the Membership Secretary.
- (vi) Last month, the Membership Secretary expressed concern that information in Beacon could be lost if/when we move to Simple Membership. PB gave him Administrator access and he has satisfied himself that a full export does contain all the data.
- (vii) The Simple Membership Transition Team met again, on Zoom, on Thursday, 6th April.
- (viii) I.T. Help Desk - There had been no enquiries to the Help Desk this month.

c. Membership Secretary (GR)

(i) Garry reported that membership numbers last month were 1029. Since then there had been 1 death, 0 resignations and 15 new members.

(ii) There are currently **1043** members. The breakdown of membership is as follows: Associate = 18, Honorary = 12, Individual = 968, Postal = 50.

(iii) Simple Membership:

A meeting last month looked at the challenges that need resolving before we can move to it.

Membership Cards:

It was seen as being important that we keep this facility. If Simple Membership cannot provide this, there may be other ways of doing it.

Transferring the Data:

From a membership perspective GR was happy that we could access all the membership data in Beacon. Phil has given him administrative rights to Beacon and he could see that we would not lose any data.

Reservations:

Garry still had reservations about the timing. He would prefer that it is done at the end of the membership year ie ready for a 1 August start which is when new members can join and get 14 months for the price of 12. However, Simple Membership is more than just the membership database. The financial side must also be integrated. The difficulty for the Treasurer is that the financial year is 01 Jan – 31 Dec.

d. Treasurer (BP)

(i) Bob reported that until 2020, Groups held their own bank accounts. TAT recommends that all group funds should be managed centrally. Most Groups have now transferred funds and BP is contacting the remainder. Bob will address the issues at the Group Leaders meeting.

(ii) Bob gave a more detailed breakdown of the March 2023 account. However, some anomalies were identified and BP will refresh for the next meeting.

(iii) This year will be the last of Bob's tenure as Treasurer. He raised concern about recruiting a replacement. It was agreed that the recruitment process would begin now, with the option to co-opt an individual onto the Committee immediately. It was agreed to 'advertise' the role in the monthly Newsletter, using the short version of the role description (which includes a link to a more detailed document).

Action: HR

(iv) Further to the Zoom meeting attended by Bob, it was agreed that the Committee would draft a Financial Policy. This to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: DH

(v) Bob confirmed that for the purposes of the annual report to the Charity Commission, the figures do not include Group Funds.

e. Web Manager (TW)

(i) Tony reported various updates and additions to the website to bring pages up to date for members and the Committee.

(ii) Post AGM, ratified minutes from 2022 have been added to the website along with DRAFT minutes from 2023. The new constitution has replaced the old one on the website and the Committee contacts pages have been revised.

(iii) Generic forwarding emails have been amended/created and the EDI email address has changed so emails are forwarded to a single person.

(iv) Tony reported an intermittent issue with the generic emails. Krystal have been investigating and it appears to be a holding/delay problem with gmail. Testing will continue, but as an

interim measure it was agreed that any emails sent to the Committee would include a note asking for a simple reply to confirm receipt.

- (v) Tony has highlighted the need for recruiting his replacement and it would be useful if a handover could happen whilst he is still around.
- (vi) Peter suggested that the website might include testimonials from members. This was readily accepted by the Committee and TW/PR will investigate.
Action: TW/PR

5. Simple Membership

- (i) Following discussion, there still appear to be some unresolved issues regarding the transfer from Beacon to Simple Membership. There are still questions about generic emails, membership cards, website management and the timing of payment and changeover. Equally there are concerns about group leaders having to interact with the new system. It was felt inappropriate to sign the Simple Agreement for Services' in the absence of PB and the Committee voted unanimously to defer the decision to the next meeting.

6. Monthly Meeting Survey

- (i) Helen reported that some of the elements the survey raised had been addressed. It was suggested that a 'working party' be created to look into all the survey findings, including online attendees and suggest solutions. Helen, Sue & Margaret stepped forward and will report back to the Committee.
Action: HR/SR/MK

7. Programme Planning

- (i) Currently the planning team is made up of Margaret, Garry & Tony. With the imminent departure of Tony, it was agreed that a 3rd member of the team is required. It was suggested that Ian Proctor-Blain or David Jefferson might be approached. PU will contact both to assess their interest.
Action: PU
- (ii) Currently general enquiries come either to Pam or Debra. Pam asked for a single contact she could forward emails/information about possible speakers to and GB agreed to be that point of contact.
- (iii) For speakers at Monthly meetings there are certain things that have to happen in order to cover any issues, i.e. permission to show on YouTube and payment types. Bob confirmed that BACS is the preferred payment method. Margaret suggested that a process plan needs to be created and the current team will look at this.
Action: MK/BG/TW
- (iv) From the current schedule there were 4 speakers/groups that needed discussion. September - Lesley Smith: Although no doubt extremely watchable and enjoyable, the Committee felt the fee and expenses were too much. There are a couple of similar people, at a lower cost that will be investigated.
October - Indian Dance Group: Although they do not request a fee, it was agreed to pay £50.00.
December - Ratcliffe Chorale is tbc.
February - Mark Lister (SVu3a) has requested a fee, but we do not pay a fee to u3a members. It was agreed that finding a replacement speaker was a better option.
Payment bank details to be forwarded to BP.
Action: TW/MK/GB

8. Group Leaders Meeting Agenda

- (i) Bev Provided a draft agenda ahead of the meeting. There were some reservations about the running order, but it was ultimately agreed. Currently there are 47 GL attending. PB intends to raise the issue of switching from Beacon to Simple Membership.

9. Equipment Testing

- (i) Mike Hood is arranging for a tester. The intention is that members bring their items to the May Group Leaders meeting, GR will contact Mike to clarify arrangements.
Action: GR

10. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- (i) Pam reported that one of the key issues from the last meeting was 'about how we welcome new people' in particular those attending Monthly Meetings.
- (ii) Another issue was about creating new groups.
Pam/Geetha will act as a sub group to look at the issues.
Action: PU/GB

11. Complaint

- (i) The Independent Panel set up by TAT have concluded there were no grounds to uphold the complaint. Subsequently, we have been advised that an appeal is intended. Pam to update at next meeting.
Action: PU

12. AOB

- (i) It was agreed to defer discussion of Cu3a pens to the next meeting.

13. Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 10th May 2023.

Debra is not unavailable for this date so Helen will

Accepted as a true record.

Pam Upton - Chair