

Committee Meeting Minutes

Venue: John Storer House

Date & Time: Wednesday 8th November 2023, 10.00 am.

Present: Pam Upton (PU) (Chair), Debra Hardwick (DH), Geetha Bala (GB), Phil Bass (PB), Bev Gillman (BG), Margaret Kelvey (MK), Bob Pyatt (BP), Garry Rigby (GR), Sue Ronald (SR), Tony Westaway (TW).

Apologies: Helen Reid, Peter Reid

1. Minutes of last meeting on 11th October

Corrections: Membership Report – first sentence should read October.

With the above correction, signed copy to be sent to Phil for the website.

Action: PU

2. Matters arising (items not included in agenda)

2a, (p.1): Pam reported that we may have a potential candidate for the Treasurer vacancy. However, he has a fixed meeting every Wednesday. It was suggested that the Committee could change its meeting date/time and Tony recorded that in the past, the Committee meeting used to be held on a Tuesday. This then allowed any pertinent items to be issued at the Group Meeting on a Wednesday afternoon. Pam will circulate her availability to the Committee to determine if an alternative date/time can be considered.

3, Reports:

Membership Secretary, (p. 2): Garry confirmed that because there are a small number of renewals outstanding, he will close the HSBC account in the new year.

6, (p. 5): Should GDPR personal data be held by groups?

Debra was able to report that, following confirmation from Garry, all members joining through Beacon had given consent for details to be held. However, those joining via SM, did not. This needs to be addressed within the SM system. Garry pointed out that the Privacy Policy held on the website should cover the SM members in the interim. No further action required.

3. Reports

Secretary (DH)

Nothing to add to the report. Land R Network meeting notes later in this document.

Systems Administrator (PB)

Phil reported that since the report was written there had been one query to the helpdesk. This was resolved in 48 hours.

System generated emails – regarding death of a member, it was agreed that the text should be amended, so it's not as stark. After some discussion it was agreed to simply

add 'Sadly' at the beginning of the message to soften the tone. Garry requested sight of any other auto email templates. **Action: PB**

Due to a mistake with an outgoing email from Pam, her personal email address appeared in the 'Subject' field. Phil will check what the system does if the subject field is not populated. **Action: PB**

In the absence of Peter and Helen, it was agreed to defer discussion of the SM Accessibility and Usability Audit to the December meeting.

Group Leaders Co-ordinator (BG)

Bev had nothing to add to her report, but invited questions/queries.

Point 5, one of the topics of the Group Leaders' meeting was 'How to keep groups going?' This was discussed at the meeting and a list of ideas has been collated. Bev will issue to the Group Leaders and Pam will circulate to the Committee.

Action: BG/PU

It was also suggested that groups could exhibit at the Charnwood u3a AGM.

Membership Secretary (GR)

Garry reported that outstanding renewals are now down to 52.

A prospective new member had applied for membership in August but despite reminders has still not paid the fee. It was agreed that Bev would contact GLs to check that group attendees are fully paid up members. **Action: BG/GR**

Garry still has issues with fields in SM. His report highlights the 'niggles' and 'problems' and Phil will contact Ric.

Action: PB

Treasurer (BP)

Bob reported total expenditure YTD of £14K. At that level of outgoings the reserves could soon deplete, which may require an increase in membership fees.

The issue of multiple deposits going into Unity and HSBC continues with some amounts unallocated. Bob will check with the bank whether he can have sight of the deposit slips and what the cost for this would be. Bev will inform GLs that they must notify Bob of any deposits made and also ask them to identify any deposits already made but not advised to Bob. **Action: BP/BG**

Bob pointed out in his report that there is a lot of activity in the 'Interest Group Funds' involving a multiplicity of transactions.

Sue asked how much time per month Bob spends on u3a finance activity. Bob explained that due to the launching of SM he spent 4 mornings in October on the system, although normal activity would be around one and a half days per month.

Web Manager (TW)

Very little activity now as the SM website becomes 'live'. The Committee agreed that Tony's access to make changes to the old website be removed.

Pam took this opportunity to thank Tony for all his work both on a technical and personal level and for his support with his knowledge of policy and legislation, adding that he will be missed by all.

4. Pickleball Loan

After some discussion the Committee agreed to augment the 'Start Up' loan for the Pickleball group and to set a maximum limit of £400 for start-up loans. Bev wanted it recorded that she did not agree with a 'Start Up' loan including any Group Leader training costs.

It should be noted that any request for such a loan will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

5. Draft Group Management Guide (PU)

Most Committee members had read through the draft document and were happy with the revisions. There were two observations: On the opening page Phil requested that the website address be quoted as the Charnwood u3a web address and Sue pointed out a correction was required for the 'Contents' list as Accessibility starts on page 9.

With these changes the revised document was approved. Pam to make the adjustments and save as a word document and a pdf. Both can then be uploaded on the website.

Action: PU/PB

Pam also noted that we also have a Local Policies document. This included advice on travel, which is covered in the Guide. Therefore is this additional policy required?

Bev to check the document in time for discussion at the December meeting, along with the Starting a New Group document.

Action: BG

6. Speaker Programme (MK/GB)

Radcliffe Chorale have been booked for the December meeting. The room set up will need to be changed with limited time as the church is not available until 1.30pm. Parking could be an issue but the tennis club may allow use of their parking facility. Payment of £150 for the pianist and conductor was agreed.

Margaret raised the request for mince pies at the end of the meeting. Garry will arrange and an increase the number.

Action: GR

The choir have also requested as much publicity about the concert as possible. News and Views, Bev to contact GLs and Pam to mention at this afternoons group meeting.

Proposals for next years meetings include:

April – Woodland Trust speaker

May – Magician

Oct – Organic chocolate making workshop. There is a fee of £140 for this plus travel to the event of £1 per mile. Tony queried the mileage charge in relation to HMRC, but Geetha expressed that is how the group always cover the cost.

Also on the list for consideration were:

A speaker from BBC Leicester, a Speaker from the 'A house in Time' TV programme and a speaker, originally from Somalia, who talks about her journey as a 7 year old escaping the dangers and how she arrived here.

Everyone agreed it looks like a varied and interesting mix of speakers and activities. Margaret and Geetha will investigate further.

Action: MK/GB

7. Third Age Trust AGM

Two resolutions:

a) To have TAT give more status & support to smaller networks.

- **this was defeated.**

b) To increase membership to at least 500,000 by end of 2028 and implement substantial promotional activities across the country – **this was passed.**

The meeting itself was well over its planned duration.

A video of the meeting is available via the Third Age Trust website.

8. Simple Membership (PB)

Phil reported that the old website is now pointed to SM.

2/3 items already passed to Ric have not been resolved yet and Phil will chase.

The issues highlighted by Garry in his report will also be forwarded to Ric.

Address labels are still an issue and Phil stated that SM are not pursuing it at the moment.

From a finance perspective, Bob reported that he undertook to put the 2023 transactions on SM. This took one and a half hours for 10 items! Bob feels that inputting data on the system is not easy and will be daunting for some GL's. The system does not keep a history of entries meaning a new entry each time.

The various issues highlight the need for GL training on the Finance part of the SM system. Phil has been asked to find out, via the forum, how other local u3as' are coping with finance element. Syston was suggested. **Action: PB**

Bob will feedback to Martyn.

9. L and R Network Meeting (19th October)

Highlights of the meeting are as follows:

A register of group meeting speakers was discussed again. One of the group agreed to set up and maintain an electronic spreadsheet which would be available to all Network members via the Google Drive. Therefore, individual u3a Speaker Co-ordinators are requested to send their speaker information to Roger Prescott.

The Network Treasurer reported that income is relatively low with a couple of large bills to pay. The current balance will probably last about 3 years, if there are no

significant cost increases. The finances will be scrutinised and actions such as finding a cheaper meeting venue investigated.

All agreed that what members of L and R network want is more sharing of information. The Group Discussions at the meeting were a prime example of this working well. Roger Prescott compiled the outcomes from the group discussions, which was circulated to members.

TAT issues were discussed at length, in particular the pilot scheme for restructuring. It was felt that TAT need to be more relevant to local u3a groups and there needed to be better communication path to and from TAT. We await the outcome of the pilot schemes.

As our Trustee for the East Midlands, it was felt we needed more information about the role of John Lewis. He will be invited to the Network AGM to shed more light and his role and how the pilot schemes, if adopted will work and how they benefit 'grass roots' u3a groups.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 12:10 pm.

Date & Time of the next meeting: Wednesday 13th December at 10.00 am.

Accepted as a true record. Pam Upton,



Chair...

.....