

Buckingham & District U3A

Minutes

For the 214th Committee Meeting held on Monday 22 January 2018 at 10 am in the Council Chambers at the Buckingham Community Centre

Present: Martin Paul (Chairman), Paddy Collins (Treasurer), Steve Heywood (Group Liaison Officer), Lorna Joy, Janti Mistry (Membership), Derek Morgan (Webmaster), Mike Weston (Vice Chairman), Carolina Kenealy (Newsletter Editor), Linda Beazley (Speaker Secretary), and Cliff Dammers (Secretary)

Apologies: Roger Edwards

Absences

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the Committee members.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 December 2017 were approved.

Matters Arising:

Steve Heywood reported that the rota for serving tea at the open meeting was in hand. The Camera Club would do the teas at the January meeting and the Philosophy Group at the February meeting. Maggie Pringle, Karen Burton and Jo Taylor have agreed to co-ordinate with the groups to ensure they know where to get tea, milk, cups, etc.

It was agreed that the annual lunch is to be mentioned in the newsletter in the future.

Paddy Collins reported on progress in converting the Association to a charitable incorporated organisation.

The Third Age Trust is under pressure from the Charity Commission. The charitable and non-charitable purposes and activities have been reported separately in the past and the accounts should be consolidated.

Under normal circumstances the Association would adopt a new statement of objectives at an AGM or EGM by changing the constitution. As the Association is in the process of converting to a CIO, it will comply with the Charity Commission's requirement in the constitution for the CIO.

Paddy Collins presented a draft constitution based on the pro forma constitution published by the Charity Commission and a summary of the changes from the Association's existing constitution. The main issue is the quorum for meetings. This is reduced from the present 20% to 5% of members.

The new constitution must be approved and new trustees agreed and then sent to the Charity Commission. When the Charity Commission has approved the new constitution, it will send the Association a form for the trustees to sign. Then a new bank account for the Association will be opened and gift aid arrangements put in place. The target date is September 2018, the end of the current fiscal year.

The Committee unanimously approved the draft constitution presented by Paddy Collins.

The Committee discussed the use of personal credit cards for expenses incurred by group leaders. The Third Age Trust advises against such use. The Association has a debit card but it is never used.

It was decided to consult with the group leaders who most often need to incur expenses, including Beryl and Di, and consider the issue at the next Committee meeting.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman described the arrangements for the new members coffee morning to be held on 30 January. The Committee members were urged to attend.

The Committee discussed the possibility of a celebration of the Association's 20th anniversary in February of this year. It was decided to celebrate during the summer social with a cake. The anniversary and celebration are to be announced in the newsletter. Karen will be asked to take responsibility with back up from Carolina Kenealy.

The Southwest Herts U3A is making a trip to the Normandy landing beaches and has some spare places. A notice will be posted in the rear of the hall at the next open meeting.

The Milton Keynes rowing club has asked to put up a notice at the open meeting.

The arrangements for the open meeting on 24 January are in hand.

The Speaker Secretary should send an e-mail with the schedule of speakers for the remainder of the year. There will be a social event in July, the AGM in November and the Christmas Social in December.

The Committee discussed the desirability of having a back up speaker available in the event that the scheduled speaker is unable to speak at the last minute.

The Chairman is unable to attend the February open meeting. Mike Weston will take his place.

Treasurer's Report

Business as usual.

Webmaster's Report

Derek Morgan reported that he had sent data protection guidelines to the group co-ordinators.

He reported the he had circulated the handbook for the group co-ordinators to the Committee. The work on it last year had come to a halt and it never received final approval by the Committee. The Committee needs to check the handbook and approve it.

Newsletter Editor's Report

Carolina Kenealy said that she would like to resume publishing in the Newsletter what is going on each week. Newsletters are published in April, September and December. The deadline for the April Newsletter is 31 March. The Newsletter will be published in 11 point type in booklet form. It is compiled as an A5 and sent to the printers. It is also produced in A4 so that it can be put on the website and e-mailed to members.

The Committee discussed whether the Association should continue sending hard copies to members. It cost £178.46 to post 350 copies of the most recent issue. It was decided to continue to post hard copies because many members do not have access to the internet or cannot or prefer not to use it.

Membership Secretary's Report

There were 19 applications for new membership during the past month. There are 829 members. Janti Mistry showed an analysis of the members who fail to renew. 38% of the failures do not renew after one year and 53% after two years.

Group Liaison Officer

Steve Heywood reported that the History of Literature and Theatre group will be meeting in the Buckingham Library. A new group is being formed: French News. The co-ordinator will be asked to inform the Newsletter Editor and liaise with the Group Liaison Officer and the Webmaster. The Treasurer has issued a cheque for the hall rental for the group.

A.O.B

The Committee co-opted Carolina Kenealy as Newsletter Editor.

It was decided that the group leaders are to be invited to attend meetings of the Committee as guests. There will a rota, to be the same as for serving the tea. The Secretary is to invite the group leaders.

The Committee discussed the matter of speakers who waive their fee. It was agreed that a small donation (around £50) would be made to charity in such cases.

The Committee discussed shadows for Committee Members. This was the practice in the past. They did not attend Committee meetings regularly and many only came to one meeting. It was decided to reinstate the practice and to make an announcement calling for volunteers at the January open meeting.

The Chairman reported that the Bed Plus U3A had folded and asked if the Committee was of the view that the Association should join another U3A grouping. Some groups, for example, the Poetry Writing Group, found it useful to liaise with another group. The Committee discussed the idea of joining another grouping and decided not to do so.

Next meeting to be held on Monday 26 February 2018 at 10 am in the Council Chambers at the Buckingham Community Centre.

Charity No. 1071631