



Buckingham & District U3A

Minutes

For the 244th Committee Meeting held at 10:00 am 25th January 2021 via Zoom.

Present: Lilia Bogle (Vice Chairman), Paddy Collins (Treasurer), Derek Morgan (Webmaster), Ann Abraham (Membership Secretary), Steve Heywood (Groups Liaison Officer), Roland Simpkins (Speaker Secretary), Dorothy Morgan (Secretary).

Apologies: None received

Absences: None

1. Welcome: The Chairman Lilia Bogle welcomed the Committee Members and opened the meeting. The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2020 were not yet received but can be approved retrospectively.

2. Matters Arising – to follow

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that a survey of numbers had been sent to Third Age Trust and they will assist in keeping groups going if we wish.

Gifts have been sent to the retiring Trustees, feedback so far is that they were delighted.

A letter from the Chairman to all the members has been placed on the website updating them on the current situation, inviting them to join in the Open Meetings held on Zoom, and asking for a volunteer to produce a Newsletter for those who are not able to access the technology.

4. Treasurer's Report

Confirms access to the Bank is being organised for the new Membership Secretary. Apparently 1 in 6 of the members have paid their subscription anyway.

Funds are such that we could consider not charging for 2021 year.

Membership Secretary asked about the cheque scanning app, which would be useful as the TSB in Winslow is closing and she has nowhere local to pay in cheques received, although she has processed some new/renewal members cheques received. Treasurer said that cheques could possibly be collected, although the Membership Secretary could use her discretion as to how often these were processed and wait until there was a batch to be paid in.

5. Membership Secretary's Report

The Membership Secretary produced a report summarising current membership status, with a total of 1253 of whom 827 are current. There have been 5 new members since October. It was suggested in the discussion that we ask new members how they heard about the U3A as it is unknown how many of them join via word of mouth and how many find the branch by other means, such as the website.

There are over 200 members without email, 595 have provided email addresses. There was a discussion on how these members may be reached in the absence of a printed Newsletter. The Committee will continue to seek a Newsletter Editor in the hope that someone will step forward to help engage those members who are effectively out of communication.

6. Groups Liaison Officer's Report

At present there is not much activity to report, although some Group Co-ordinators have been encouraging their groups to keep in touch via email or other means. He feels that people are ready to re-start normal activities as soon as they are permitted to do so.

7. Speaker Secretary's Report

The Speaker Secretary gave an update on future plans which are affected by uncertainty on when the physical meetings will be able to re-start. It may not be possible to plan into May for instance.

Another potential problem is that the Community Centre is booked long term for vaccinations with no end date agreed. Chairman suggested the University or Church might be able to help with a meeting room and thus provide a venue.

8. Webmaster's Report

The Webmaster reported that some users have been deleting the Spam folder, and asked that this not be done but instead to move potential Spam into that folder. This will allow the system to recognize future spam messages.

The web site needs to be moved to a new hosting service due to the pending retirement of the Speaker Secretary from his company.

Research has been done to identify a possible company to host the site in future. The chosen company would be able to transfer the site over once the service is purchased, and there is an option for email and Word Press which is currently used for editing pages. It is likely that Round Cube could be continued with the new provider as they do support that.

The Treasurer confirmed that costs would not be an issue and that whatever arrangements are necessary can be made as soon as possible.

The Committee thanked Roland for his support with the web site up to now, and he confirmed that he is willing to help with the transfer process.

There was some discussion on the alternative membership system Simple Membership which has the option of moving the membership database online, with members able to access their records and update/renew, and makes it easier for the Membership database administrator. However, it was decided to explore this further at a later stage once the web site had been moved onto the new host web site.

9. Third Age Trust – U3A Logo

The Third Age Trust (TAT) has carried out a “re-branding” exercise resulting in a new logo and accompanying publicity materials which can be accessed from their branding site. This was briefly mentioned at the National AGM with very little discussion taking place. However, it has been confirmed during discussions on their online “Keeping in Touch” forum that, as independent charities affiliated to the

TAT, branches are able to decide for themselves what suits their branch. The TAT has emphasised that U3As should not attempt to change their legal identity (for example Bank details or Charity registration) as part of this process, just the logo and publicity materials.

The Committee agreed that they were happy with the existing logo, and that there would be a cost implication in changing any publicity materials, so it was decided to leave things as they are.

10. Email Ethics

The Membership Secretary sought clarification as to when to use particular email addresses, for example when to use “all-GCs” or “committee” and who would receive those messages. The Webmaster confirmed it was not necessary to add any extra people to messages as the “all-GCs” went to the Committee automatically.

Clarification was also sought with regard to such items as Insurance details being sent out, and it was confirmed that these should be forwarded as appropriate. For example, if wine was spilt at a meeting in someone’s home then the U3A Insurance would cover them, so it may be relevant for them to know that.

She mentioned a GC asking if it’s possible to make the Membership Secretary display name on email to show “U3A Membership Secretary” as this particular person was a bit unsure whether it was a spam or not. The Webmaster said this would be looked into and amended as appropriate.

11. Newsletter

The Chair said she thinks a Newsletter should be sent to members not on email, by posting to them to keep them in touch. The Treasurer would be able to post these if they were sent to him. It would not be appropriate to ask an external company to produce a Newsletter as they wouldn’t have access to any of the information.

However, as there is no news to send out at present, it was decided to leave this for the time being and look at it again once we are able to meet again.

12. Vacancies/Shadows

There are still vacancies for a Vice Chair and Newsletter Editor, and the Treasurer requires a shadow, these will continue to be publicised, perhaps mentioned at the Open Meeting online.

13. Relaunch of Buckingham U3A post Covid – ideas for National U3A day on 2nd June

The Committee will consider what activities might be appropriate and suggest these at a later meeting.

14. Any Other Business

Membership Secretary asked whether it is possible to access a recording of the Open Meeting held on Zoom, for those who couldn’t attend. The Speaker Secretary confirmed that this is not possible as the copyright of the talk is held by the external speaker.

The Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 22nd February 2021 at 10 am via Zoom.

Charity No. 1177534