

Minutes of Basingstoke – Old Basing U3A Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12th October 2017 at Christ Church, :

Present: Margaret Hayes (MH), Ian Stimpson (IS), Joan Carnell [JC], Marie White (MW), Harvey Wallace(HW), Vee Holliday(VH), Barbara Robson(BR), Liz Horner (LH), Linda Wain(LW)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Mel McMahon (MM)

2. **Minutes of last meeting held 5th Aug 2017:** these were accepted and signed by MH. The next meeting date was retrospectively manually corrected from 4th to 11th January. Matters Arising: Handbook errors were discussed and it was agreed to send a single notification email listing all corrections to errors to members. Learning: need a dedicated proof reader step before publication. VH volunteered to do this.

Action: HW to cross-check all published contact details with Beacon and send the all member notification email.

3. **Open Actions:** MH confirmed that all are completed.

4. **Chair Update:** MH was not able to attend a Regional Meeting but intends to attend as she recognised the importance to keep links with U3A groups, especially as contact has declined recently. She also recognised that our group is an important advocate for the Beacon system as most SE Region U3A groups are not using Beacon.

5. **Finance Update:** IS noted that we have 621 members currently renewed / newly joined. 83 have signed up for TAM with some discrepancy on amount paid, but this has been balanced out with the total monies paid. There are some cheques to process, so he estimated membership total is closer to 700.

IS also notified the committee that VH will manage the on-line banking role as MM wanted to only process cheque payments.

He said a member had requested for a summary of total in-out monies at AGM update, rather than all the budget details and this was an understandable request.

6. **National U3A Notifications:**

- annual CLA license from August'17 to August'18 renewal confirmed
- need to submit Charity Commission Annual Return by 31st Oct. This had come through at short notice as not aware, but will be done with help of ex-chair Alan Robinson.
- workshop on Interest Groups 1st Nov. in Nottinghamshire, MH is not able to attend but open to any other Committee member who is interested.

7. **Beacon Pay-Pal payment pilot:** both LH and HW confirmed that the pilot has gone very well with no issues. HW reinforced that due to the sensitivity of Beacon, all details MUST match exactly e.g. post code with gap. This will be made clear at roll out to all members for the 2018-19 membership renewal notification.

Recommended that pay-pal payment option should be offered to all members with clear instructions. Obviously non email members will need to remain on a cheque payment system.

The committee agreed that this Pay-pal switch should be actively encouraged with reinforcement messages at Monthly Meeting, AGM and separate emails. Renewal notifications should start earlier.

Action: prepare and bring membership renewal approach and rough drafts ready for committee review at January Committee Meeting. HW/LH

Membership Secretary Feedback: MH shared on behalf of MM with the Committee her feedback from this year's membership renewal. Concerns were:

- many members were not aware of which U3A group branch we are so cheque payment were made out incorrectly.
- many reported they did not get the renewal email. LH thinks the reason could be they are going to trash due to high security sensitivity by Beacon of spam avoidance e.g. any AOL emails are bounced as AOL have been bought out by another organisation. The Committee recognised this as a limitation but can be mitigated with active diligence from Beacon email senders by checking the send result to ensure they have been send and opened.
- no discount for joint membership of more than one U3A causing an element of membership disgruntlement. Alternatives were suggested, and it was agreed that this will be looked at in more detail when the membership renewal approach is reviewed by LH & HW.
- the issue to membership discontent expressed by a few in an unacceptable aggressive manner was discussed. It as agreed that some more work is needed on this, but as a first step and that MH will send a email to members reminding them of the Committees volunteer role and request membership support and understanding.
- errors on the Beacon membership listing. IS has volunteered to do a detailed cross-checked between renewal form and Beacon members data. LW to assist in this task. Simple changes will be made, and other discrepancies will be just noted for changes by the Beacon team. All discrepancies will be listed.

8. Enrolment Day Feedback: Collectively agreed and summarised as:

- went well overall and allocation of small rooms worked, despite some reservations at first with the small room groups enjoying having the less open, quieter space.
- new membership system and special room for MMc worked well.
- there was some crowding on stage, but this can be easily resolved next year with the popular groups being allocated a table on the main floor rather than on the stage.
- parking notification is needed so next year GLs will be asked to park in church and members encouraged where possible also park there.
- a welcomer is needed, and a parking monitor is needed.
- the large table plan at reception worked well. Suggestions made to build on this by adding promotional U3A leaflets and reinforcement of our ethos on this highly visible board.

JC confirmed that membership and informal group leader feedback has been positive. Learnings were that more can be done with visual displays / examples of artistic group creations. JC will encourage artistic group leaders to bring along examples of their work for net year. She will ask for formal feedback at the GL meeting 26th Oct.

Note: MH is not able to attend this GL meeting, but will provide a chairperson report . This will also be sent as an attachment to the GLs meeting minutes.

9. Committee Member Updates [All]:

- **MH:** put a call out for Committee role support: 1) need replacement for LW Programme Secretary Hook Meeting role starting form September as LW is moving to assisting with the Beacon data check work, and will move into the Membership Secretary role as MM wants step down this year. MH asked Committee to consider who might might be suitable for the Programme Secretary Committee role.

2) need deputy chair on a temporary basis. MW agreed to take this deputy role on for this year.

- **IS:** has placed £4,000 into reserve account as this takes it up to the optimal level of £12,000. However this earns very little interest so proposed that some should be invested in a 3 year notice fund which have better returns.

Action - IS to investigate and will report back at next Committee Meeting [Jan'17] with recommendations.

- **LH:** attended the Beacon national meeting and disappointed that will not have a User Group to work with the programmers on bug fixes / enhancements.
- **VH:** none
- **MW:** had two updates: 1) Regional Meeting which she attended on behalf of MH. Recognised that our group is out on a limb as not part of the groups that attend the regional regular meetings. MW recommended that we should get more involved. Benefits examples are: the forum which plans the Regional Summer School, sharing problems, general support for initiatives [disability being one of them, called U3A Plus]. More volunteers wanted. IS asked to be included in Regional Treasurers meetings. 2) Christmas Meeting - concerns expressed by the tea team for the wine glasses. Agreed to buy disposable wine goblets.
- **JC:** dementia membership responsibility watch-out. Recommended using preformed membership cards. Unanimously agreed to do this with LW with given full support by LH.
- **HW:** none
- **LW:** shared outline plan for the Christmas Members Monthly Meeting. A few adjustments were suggested which LW took note of. It was agreed that table size would be the large ones rather than the small.
- **BR:** flagged that due to falling health of her parents she will need back-up support at times. MH will co-ordinate and BR to contact her in the first instance.

10. AOB:

MH - wants to repeat the new-members session and proposed to do this in at the November meeting [8th]. Committee Members were encouraged to come along, be introduced and be there to answer questions, promote the U3A ethos.

MH - need to get the loop hearing system active for the monthly meeting for those with reduced hearing. This might involve some reasonable expenditure which the Committee supported.

VH - issues with Dell laptop [Windows 95] which is so old it is not even on the Asset Register which is still being used by some groups. There is also another computer kept at Christ Church. Ditto for screen and projector missing off asset register. A replacement is wanted. VH gave HW a list of which groups use this equipment.

Action - HW to follow up with the Group Leaders and make necessary purchase.

LW - management of GL announcements at start of Monthly Meetings. MH wants all announcements to be done through her and any GL needs to provide her with the information before meeting start.

BR - as Monthly Meeting notes will now be sent soon after meeting, rolling through the National U3A notices to the next month, BR suggested that LW sends the details of the talk to all members as a separate email closer to the meeting time.

Action: LW to advise the Red Cross contact that only leaflets can be left rather than him coming put his request personally at meeting start

Date of next meeting: Jan 11th 2017

