

Minutes of Basingstoke – Old Basing u3a Committee – 4 May 2023

Attendees: RM, TS, JV, PD, MH, DN, RF, EB (also minute taker)

1. Apologies

CV and JF sent their apologies.

RM confirmed that David Noble (DN) would be joining the meeting and that Anita Kirk had notified him that she no longer wishes to join the Committee.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

RF asked for the following changes to be made:

2nd page 3rd paragraph. Group Leader Convenor should be Facilitator.

Page 3 number 6 – group costs second paragraph. MH to ensure all literature and website are updated. MH reported that she has not been able to find a reference to single cost for all groups on the website. **Action: Mar23/10** RM going to check the welcome pack.

It was requested that, if anybody finds a reference about single cost they should make MH aware, if they are unable to change it themselves.

The rest of the minutes were approved.

3. Finance update

Gift Aid

TS has applied for what we believe we can get back on Gift Aid. We just need to keep encouraging people to sign off for Gift Aid if they pay tax. JV said she would add Gift Aid as a selected category and include it in the acknowledgment email that renewing members get asking if the information we hold on Beacon is correct. JV will also make the Gift Aid tick box more apparent on the enrolment form for new members.

Agreement on monthly fee

TS had submitted a proposed budget with a reduction of the membership fee from £45 to £38.

RF argued that we should maintain the current fee and improve the offering to members. The money could be used for external speakers in groups, Christmas parties, better food at picnics or events. The positive message to the members is that the fee would not be going up in line with inflation.

TS said our excess funds are larger than is acceptable for a charity and if we maintained the fee at £45, even with additional money for speakers and facilities for some new groups, our balance would continue to increase. PD confirmed the national guidelines say that if you build up excess funds then you should start reducing the fee.

By proxy, JF had asked to understand what is included in the budget for new groups. TS said £31K will be spent on venues this year. In next year's budget we have £35K which includes allowance for new groups and inflation. RF countered that if we need to increase groups by 15 we need to have an

additional £8K in the budget. TS agreed and said if those groups happen as planned, we will need to subsidise this from the excess funds, which is a positive as our aim is to reduce them.

RM suggested that we need to look at the issue differently. This should not be a question of us having excess money and asking what we should spend it on? Rather, what is our plan and what money do we need to achieve it?

MH raised concerns if we reduce the fee and then need to increase it next year. She suggested that if we see costs going up, we communicate more with members during the year. TS talked about the history from last year. RM confirmed the hike a few years ago seemed to be handled terribly, and agreed we need to keep members informed.

TS proposed £38 as the fee for next year. The proposal was passed by the majority and this will be communicated to the members in the AGM pack and the next Newsletter.

DN joined the meeting, and a vote was passed on co-opting him to the Committee.

4. Review of actions

Agreement to close all actions in the register highlighted in blue (request to close).

Aug22/18 TS explained we are only able to claim Gift Aid for meetings and administration (see discussion on Gift Aid above).

Sept 22/09 CV is involved and managing the event. The venue is booked. Close action and update in regular events section of agenda.

Oct 22/18 Discussion on insurance has taken place with Joyce Cook. She has stated to three Committee members that she only allows a person to take one taster excursion. The Committee debated the insurance liabilities for people undergoing tasters. TS is willing to debate with the insurer if we have issues. Item to close.

Nov22/06 A final statement to be used in the AGM if necessary. The handbook will not be produced as it changes too often, which is a positive sign of the health of our u3a and additional groups being made available. The leaflet showing groups should be highlighted and made available at AGM and Meet and Greet. Action to close.

Mar23/08 Information desk at Sherfield Summer fete is booked: further discussion to take place at Marketing sub-committee meeting. A gazebo is needed, TS to source. Action to close.

Mar23/10/ GRAP07 Ideas have come out of the recent New Members meeting. CV is producing analysis on what we should target and work with new Group Development Facilitator. Close March action and retain GR action.

Mar23/11 MH has checked and can find no reference to single payment on website. RM agreed to check the welcome pack.

Mar23/12 RM to meet with Group Leader to discuss the basis of the ukulele group and report back to the Committee. See minutes section on this group.

Mar23/14 As we have the money, groups can request **this** is a one off with no precedent being set and TS will assess.

Mar23/16 Margaret Hayes happy to do a one-off IT session but the Men Shed person is unwell. JV is waiting for Men Shed to discuss next Tuesday.

GRAPR04 Group Facilitator job description updated to include mentor scheme. Committee approved; action closed.

GRAPR05 New Marketing and Group Development job descriptions written and approved by Committee; action closed.

GRAPR12 New Events Facilitator job description written and approved by Committee; action closed.

5. Growth retention meeting feedback

As most Committee members had been at the meeting, those not in attendance were asked if they had any questions on the notes from the meeting. The actions and input will be reviewed in September alongside the Marketing Plan.

RM raised a question that DN had posed – what are we trying to achieve? It was reiterated that we are here for everybody, regardless of sex, race, physical or mental ability or social standing. However, we should debate this question with the new committee and EB will add to the September agenda.

Other items that were in the meeting were discussed. For the monthly meeting it appears that the staff car park at QMC is not a workable solution. However, we should ask QMC to inform us when additional car parking is available such as the student car park when students are on a break. Pass action to new Events Facilitator **Action: MAY23/01**

6. Update on AGM preparation

The following roles were agreed to ask for nominations: Chair, Vice Chair, Business Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Group Facilitator, Group Development Facilitator, Data Analyst, Marketing Secretary, Events Facilitator, Systems, Committee Member.

The Committee agreed to use Zoom for the AGM. EB talk to Alistair Craig for agreement to run the logistics and provide RF with names to send out the invite. After the meeting the Committee will review how many attended via Zoom to decide how we go forward next year. **Action: May23/02** EB to ask for Committee input if we use Zoom in 2024 based on numbers provided by RF/Alistair.

We need at least 83 members in attendance in order to be quorate. EB has set up a strong speaker so we are confident this will be achieved.

7. Group update

New Member meeting - The meeting was well attended, and the Committee felt the use of the questionnaire had been a good way of compiling data. It was reconfirmed that word of mouth is our best member recruitment method. We received feedback on value for money and the satisfaction of u3a. All very positive. A piece of information no longer captured on the membership form is how people heard about us. JV confirmed that since this was taken off last year, she has been mailing new members to ask how they heard about us, so some data is available if required.

A number of new opportunities for Groups came out of the meeting, e.g. cribbage, wine tasting, bowls. Intermittent IT courses are also being investigated. We also received input on other groups

members would like to see, which includes modern music. In the future, having these conversations proactively and then working with the potential ideas through to delivery of a new group would be the remit of the Group Development Facilitator. EB raised concerns about having wine tasting where people travel by car, but RM did not see this as an issue.

Group leaders meeting RF confirmed this is on 9th May and 29 GLs are coming plus Committee members.

Meet and Greet - the arrangements for this are underway between CV/JF and RF. It was agreed we need to extend the QMC booking from 1.30 to 1pm to allow set up time. TS will contact QMC again.

Ukulele situation - several Committee members expressed misgivings about the way it is being run. Verbal feedback has been about the new GL charging members for lessons. It was agreed that RM should find out what is happening. **Action: Mar23/12** RM to meet with the GL and then report back to the Committee on the conversation and the Committee to agree way forward with this group.

PD asked the Committee to remember that we should not put undue hurdles on people to set up new Groups if we are going to hit the group growth we require.

TS updated the need of the ukulele group for stands. Both TS and Liz Horner have music stands. MH is going to recover those from Liz but none should be passed to the GL until the Committee agrees the future of this group. **Action: May23/03** MH to recover stands and then once decision is made on this group all stands should either be stored or passed to the group.

Picnic We have a venue that will be suitable for all weather. Because of parking, Natalie has been made aware we will need more parking attendants to help people carry chairs.

Other

RF reported that Needles and Pins has now split into two, the second group meeting in Hatch Warren Community Centre.

The ongoing debate for the monthly meeting venue will be passed to the new Events facilitator – EB to update actions.

Tony asked for all expenses to be submitted by the end of the month so that they can be included in this year's accounts.

8. Marketing

General update – no major updates. The key activity is to start the process of producing a Marketing Plan for the September meeting.

It was agreed that we should make details of the Meet and Greet clear on the website. RF will action this. Overall advertising for Meet and Greet will be part of the Marketing sub-committee meeting. **Action: May23/04** MH to provide an update

Poster distribution EB reported that with the help of Committee members, posters are up in the following locations:

Tesco – Chineham, Lychpit, Town

Sainsbury – Town and Hatch Warren

Morrisons

Café in the Park - Beggarwood till November

Library – Town till July due to fee of £10 per month. Covered by EB
Viabes Craft Centre
Christ Church Chineham
Popley 1 Community Centre
Sherborne St John
Sherfield Village Hall
Brookvale

EB asked for help distributing them further and Committee members took several posters. A discussion took place on the need to ensure we place them in less affluent communities. The following places are suggested for further posters:

Popley 4 Community Centre and/or convenience store
Oakridge Community Centre
Buckskin Community Centre
Winklebury Community Centre
St Peters Church – South Ham
Library – Chineham
All group venues
New Sainsburys in Hook

If anybody has any other ideas, please let EB know and identify any that have been successfully placed so that other people do not duplicate effort.

If we are visiting any of the above and find posters missing, or old posters still in place, please take appropriate action.

Business cards CV suggested at the growth retention meeting that we should produce business cards available to hand out, by Committee members, to improve marketing. It was not proposed to have the names of Committee members on the card. This was approved by the Committee. **Action: May 23/05** Marketing sub-committee meeting to design and arrange printing asap.

9. AOB

The national u3a has asked for a database of names that want the monthly update emails. EB to upload Committee members except MH, JV and TS.

JV confirmed that our membership number is now 837, of which 135 are new members.

TS proposed that we allow groups to meet in August as we have the money. It was not agreed in meeting, but this should be communicated at GLs meeting.

TS confirmed we have the bill for Beacon and it will be paid this month.

MH said that the u3a marketing banner has been mended but needs careful handling.

Next meeting is at 9.30 – 12.30 on July 6th at Christ Church Chineham