

**Minutes of Basingstoke – Old Basing U3A Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 5th June 2017 at Christ Church, Chineham**

**Present:** Alan Robinson (AR), Margaret Hayes (MH), Ian Stimpson (IS), Joan Carnell [JC], Marie White (MW), Harvey Wallace(HW), Vee Holliday(VH), Mel McMahan (MM), Barbara Robson(BR)

1. **Apologies for Absence:**, Liz Horner (LH), Linda Wain(LW),

2. **Minutes of last meeting held 6th March 2017:** Agreed, and signed by AR

3. **Open Actions update:** note, all other minuted actions from March meeting have been completed.

- Insurance Cover disclaimer for those in full time employment [MM]: MM meeting with LH shortly to create message to add to enrolment letter.

- Membership growth impact on groups [JC]: no action taken as yet; in future, to be included in overall strategy for growth activities [covered in section 9 below]

- Venue and date for special GL appreciation meeting [JC]: date is 23rd June and venue is Christ Church Shaftesbury Room. JC commented that out of 60+ GLs, only 12 have confirmed attendance so questioned value of providing lunch. It was agreed to downsize the appreciation gesture to cake with coffee.

- Dropbox support for Committee members having issues [HW]: HW has tested and advised Committee to just click through any warnings. VH now has new PC and MH will help with set-up. Continuing issues with opening links / attachments. As this was intermittent, the recommendation is rather than send the dropbox link, to just email notification when documents are available and folder name for the Committee members to self-direct to the drop-box location.

- Archive Dropbox account [HW]: HW has set this up, and has been lightly tested between him and AR. Full test will happen next week, when AR will be scanning all historic paper records. AR reminded Committee members that they can request any document from this restricted area at any time e.g. for the forthcoming 10 year anniversary, as there early photos and documentation there relating to this period. Note: access permission for Dropbox U3A archive account is restricted to Beacon Administrator, Chair and Business Secretary.

- Monthly Meeting Speaker details for new Yearbook [LW]: still open, LW to send once all speakers are confirmed.

- Draft Constitution communication to members [AR]: will be included in AGM pack [refer to section 10 below for full update on AGM preparation].

4. **Chair Update [Alan]:** AR's only update was AGM preparations [[agenda item 10], so meeting moved directly onto next item.

5. **Finance Update [Ian]:** IS handed out the current Finance Statement and walked the Committee through it, highlighting the following:

- £1.73K reduction of Venue Hire based on advanced payment arrangement IS proposed. However this year's Christ Church Chineham invoices are still not available, and hire costs have increased from Jan17.
- Income vs Expenditure Surplus equates to approximately £5 per member, so he has moved £4K to savings account to act as a 50% contingency fund which is an optimal amount.
- Bank account in a healthy state, being up by nearly £5K from last year.

- forecast shows an accrual of surplus cash which could be questioned by members at the AGM. The Committee needs to think about appropriate use of some of this surplus - suggestions made were paying more for quality monthly meeting speakers and replacement of the older assets.

AR noted that in view of this surplus which will be seen by members at the AGM, we need to expect and prepare a response for a request from the floor to reduce membership fees. MH confirmed she was happy to take any member questions on this matter.

**6. National U3A Notifications [Barbara]:** BR advised the Committee on the following. The information shared was confirmed as understood by all, with full details available on the National U3A website

- Copyright
- Massive open Online Courses [MOOCs]
- No grandchildren insurance for U3A events
- Licenses. AR confirmed that our U3A have purchased licenses for film and music. This activity is currently arranged by Chair and will be part of AR handover to new chair [MH] and Business Secretary [BR].

*Action: JC to take MOOCs details to the GL meeting. BR to email details across.*

**7. Beacon Update [Liz]:** HW reported on behalf of LH. Work started on paypal services with MM assisting with renewal and new member scenarios. After attending the Beacon conference, much discussion and careful consideration, IS & HW made decision is to delay a full go-live to 2018/19, and instead run the two systems parallel alongside a small t2017/18 membership trial. This decision to delay and trial run is based on three key concerns: 1) timing issues with large groups between PayPal and Beacon notifications of payment. This is a known bug and currently priority fix by U3A National. 2) analysis of payments 3) too high risk of payment rejection incidents.

HW noted that overall the Beacon Conference was useful and also gave positive reassurance on robustness for both the technical workings system and the sensible approach being taken for future strategy which is a model of modest support and limited development e.g. will NOT move to complex double accounting.

IS asked about Gift Aid Beacon status, noting that the present total is low at 609. HW advised that current work between HW, MM and LH on the addition of a joint membership membership class [see March minutes] will ensure Gift Aid can apply to both members rather than just one and be included in the Beacon analysis automatically.

*Action: announcement of the decision on PayPal roll-out delay at AGM. To agree in advance who covers this. [MH & IS]*

**8. Enrolment Day [Working Group]:** JC gave update on behalf of the working group. Proposals are to:

- an extra monthly meeting in August on 23rd Aug. and to hold Enrolment day on that day. Needs to be also approved by GLs. Benefit is that enrolment is known ready for start of early September groups. The Elizabeth Hall has been provisionally booked after checks of alternative venues.
- change room layout and arrange groups into Faculties - estimate is 11
- the extra space will enable new membership registration table inside the hall
- current membership renewals will be discouraged, but accommodated by provision of a box to post their envelopes. Concerns were raised on the closeness of the August date. JC proposed that she can take her proposals to GLs meeting to gauge their support and based on their reaction see if suggested changes could be put in place for this August. MM said how pleased she was with these proposed changes, and thanked JC & LW.

*Decisions:*

- *proceed with restructuring with GLs approval, but postpone movement to August date to 2018, after discussion with the GLs and finalising at the committee.*
- *membership renewals should not be made at enrolment, with members wanting to renew to be directed to a corridor post-box. Members needs to be made aware of this with active membership communications via GL cascades and an all-members email [BR can assist JC with this bulk email].*

**9. Strategy for Growth [Margaret & Linda]:** MH gave an update on behalf of LW on the new-members welcome lunch. Whilst actual turnout was disappointingly low, the invite response level was reasonable [50%]. Request was for two sessions, earlier in year then a feedback session. Most had heard about U3A by word of mouth rather than leaflets. A full report sent by LW will be placed in the Committee dropbox folder.

*Action: JC to announce thoughts for new ideas at Monthly Meeting and GLs meeting.*

The Committee then talked through further growth ideas, the key ones being:

- collect existing members feedback. The GL and Monthly meetings would be ideal for this.
- try to match talk topics at Monthly Meetings to stated interest. Maybe even having a specialist topic group, an approach used by other U3As.
- a review of Monthly Meeting approach,. MW felt they had become rather 'bleak' and came up with suggestions to create appeal for the wider membership, especially those who don't currently attend. The Committee talked through options, but it was agreed to wait until MH's chair position starts in September. MH assured everyone that she already has ideas for positive change to the Monthly Meeting that will create appeal and support our U3A growth.

*Actions:*

- *Committee members to consider options for Monthly Meeting changes which they can share at a Committee meeting later in the year once MH is in the Chair role.*
- *JC to ask at the June GL meeting for any suggestions for change for our monthly meetings.*

**10. AGM Preparation [Alan]:** AR summarised what is needed to be ready for our 12th July AGM:

- promote attendance to ensure that the 120 member quorum is met.
- prepare the pack that needs to be emailed to all members in advance to the AGM [e.g. Committee structure.] mail-out to members

It was agreed to not include the Communication Committee role in the Committee listing as this role cannot not be defined until the Growth Strategy considerations have been completed.

The Committee supported to change the order of AGM session and the talk, with the AGM being held at start to maximise forum total, with Linda re-arranging the arrival time for the booked speaker.

*Actions:*

- *Committee members who take TAM to bring their copies of the magazine.*
- *All to promote AGM attendance at Monthly Meeting & the subsequent notes, GLs meeting, and Committee Members by word'n mouth.*

**11. Handbook [Harvey]:** HW said that green is the new U3A colour, and the Handbook is close to completion bar ten responses from GLs for their programme information. They will be reminded by email and JC will do a reminder the GL meeting. The changes HW proposed are:

- index of Groups to be by Faculty.
- a reminder on each page that printed details might change and members need to positively use the website for group details as the year progresses.

- Post codes will be included for all listed locations.

Note - the schedule spread size can't be changed as requested, as the size adjustments did not work.

HW concluded that overall readiness was in good shape, but Handbook publication has to be held until after AGM as need Committee member listing confirmed.

*Actions:*

- AR to send last years electronic file and one-pager from Chairman for HW to include in the Handbook.
- JC to send HW newly merged Art Group [see Committee Member updates.]

## **12. Committee Member Updates/Feedback [All]:**

- BR, VH, IS, JC none
- MH shared that LW wants to step down 2018/19 from Speaker role but happy to remain on the Committee. MH has invited her to consider the Vice-Chair role, and as long as this was in the acting capacity, this change could be a Committee vote at any stage of the academic year.
- JC advised that as no replacement leader had come forward, the two art groups will be merged into one with special help within the group for any beginner.
- HW was happy to report that Michael Thresher tournament went very well. BR noted how hard working yet cheerful the U3A food & drink volunteer team were throughout the busy day, putting across a positive image for our U3A group to the many other U3A members, who were there as our bridge-player guests.
- MW reported on two items: 1) The Regional Volunteers meeting in London. The main focus was education considerations and the need to create new groups when a U3A group total membership grows. 2) The Hook WellBeing day. This was not worthwhile for us to support in the future as attendance was down from 2016 event [parking issues as day moved to a Saturday] and also low U3A interest due to mismatch with audience interests. However, one positive aspect of this day was making a useful CPR training contact, which JC intends to follow-up on this for a future GL meeting. AR noted that a learning for any such similar promotional event we want to attend, was that National leaflets is not enough, and suggested a one-page handout specific to our U3A.
- MM reported on membership growth, with more new members than non-renewals, in spite of membership fee increase. She did however have a 'mysterious' new member [no. 1908] due to illegible handwriting for all his details!

## **13. AOB:**

- JC shared the information that Rose would likely retire at 80. The actual timing of this needs to be checked and considerations for replacements for French and Spanish. The Committee noted Rose's high contribution to the Language groups and her departure will create a large hole.
- IS proposed to include 2018 diary option with membership renewal. After discussion and Committee vote, it was agreed not to do this.
- MM asked two questions: 1) TAM invoicing and how reconciled with Beacon listing. IS suggested she sends him the Beacon TAM spreadsheet when he gets the invoice each March and 2) can membership card be changed so year font is smaller than membership number, as many members have given their numbers as 2017. HW advised that membership card fonts are fixed and can only be changed at National level.
- IS shared the Lydia Knight funny story.....setting a jovial mood for the final 5 mins of the meeting!
- AR invited the Committee to join him for a farewell lunch after the AGM meeting, 12 noon on 12th July at White Hart Hook. This was happily accepted by all.

14. **Date of next meeting:** 1st August, Hannah More Room, Christ Church, Chineham.

*Action: IS to book room.*