Balsall Common U3A

Minutes of the 5th Annual Meeting held on Monday 18th April 2011 in the Village Hall

There were 63 members present and Anne Santos chaired the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence had been received.

2. **Minutes of the AGM held on 26th April 2010**

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

4. **Chairman's Review**

Anne Santos welcomed everyone to the meeting. She said that the group had been operating successfully for four years. She was now stepping down as Chairman, although she would remain for a year as a co-opted member of the Committee. When the group was set up, she hoped that it would lead to good fellowship and the enjoyment by members of each others' company. She believed that that had been achieved. Membership had risen to 188, prior to the end of the last membership year. There were 24 interest groups and the last year had seen a number of new ones formed. This showed that the group was developing and thriving and learning from each other, which was what the U3A was about.

Anne said that change was inevitable and essential: no organisation could stand still, otherwise it would stagnate. The committee had been undertaking a project on Looking Forward, which fell in line with the national U3A approach, to ensure the group was able to adapt and to carry on effectively when most of the committee stepped down, as required, after five years. The committee had been temporarily enlarged through co-option, to allow for the introduction of new members and to shadow the existing roles.

There was now an excellent website, thanks to Peter Calver and the use of name badges had been successfully introduced for core meetings. She thanked the members of the committee for their hard work and support and the group co-ordinators for the great work they did in ensuring that the interest groups ran.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

Peter Westlake said that 160 members had renewed their membership up to the time of the meeting. There had been 11 resignations, which was not unusual and no response had been received from 10 people, which, unfortunately, was also not unusual. They had been written to again and any who had not responded by 10th May would be taken off the list of members. The diary cards, which also confirmed membership, would be issued at the next core meeting.

Peter said that, normally, the audited accounts would be presented to the meeting. Unfortunately, a combination of the early date for the meeting, twelve days after the end of the financial year and his being unwell, meant that there had been insufficient time for the auditor to verify the accounts. They would be presented to the next core meeting. The auditor had verified the transaction statements and a copy of that was available for members.

One of the requirements was that all monies should go through the Treasurer. However, common sense was applied. The group operated two accounts- the No 2 account covered money raised from interest groups and the No 1 account, everything else, including subscription income. The no 1 account had a balance of £2,965 a significant increase, although the current fees had just been paid in. The no 2 account had a balance of £1,600, which was high- he usually looked to have £1,000 balance for eventualities. Groups were requires to be self-financing, but there was a significant amount of money in the account- Questers and Bridge, for example, had produced large surpluses. Consideration should be given as to what to do with the money.

Different groups operated in different ways. Some used members' homes and paid for coffee/biscuits. He did not get involved in those transactions.

Kevin McGovern asked why there were such large amounts of money in the two accounts and whether the subscription should be reduced. Peter Westlake said that he did want around £1,000 in the no 2 account; this had grown a little. In relation to the subscription, the committee did not consider it sensible to reduce it only to have to increase it again. Peter Driffield said that originally grants had been obtained, with Kevin's assistance, to help with equipment purchases. These would not be available for replacements and it was important to have sufficient funds available to meet demands.

6. Election of Executive Committee

Peter Driffield said that one nomination, duly proposed and seconded, had been received for each post on the Executive Committee. These were as follows:

Chairman	Mary Dawson
Vice Chairman	Sheila Burdett
Treasurer	Peter Westlake
Secretary	Peter Driffield
Committee Members	Richard Davis
	Geoff Kennedy
	Pam Moss
	Martin Richards

The duly nominated and seconded individuals were elected by the meeting to the Executive Committee, without opposition.

Peter Driffield said that there were, in addition, some co-opted members, to help with the transition and the full committee membership would be available on the website.

Mary Dawson took the chair.

Mary said that a huge debt was owed by the group to the outgoing Chairman, Anne Santos. Without her hard work and dedication, the Balsall Common U3A group might never have started. The Executive Committee felt very much that her contribution should be formally recognised and she presented Anne with a framed Certificate, recording her achievement. In addition, the Executive Committee had agreed to appoint her as Life President of the group. The meeting agreed to the appointment and members showed their appreciation of her efforts. Anne responded appropriately.

7. **Proposed New Constitution**

Geoff Kennedy said that, as the outgoing Chairman had said, the Executive Committee had been making arrangements to help to ensure the effective functioning of the group, as most committee members would reach the end of their term in April next year. One of the tasks was to update the Constitution in the light of four years' experience. The draft expanded it where necessary and put the sections into a more logical order. The aim was to have the flexibility required for an organisation run by volunteers, whilst providing arrangements for proper governance.

The main changes were in section 6, the Executive Committee, where the management role of the committee was set out. In addition, the role of vice-chairman was deleted with a minimum, rather than a maximum for committee members. The term of office would reduce from 5 years to four. Because of this, it was intended that the constitution would operate from the date of the 2012 AGM. The committee had felt that five years was too long, but recognised the need to retain experience and the difficulty faced in trying to recruit new members.

Kevin McGovern asked why the limit had not been reduced to three years, as members were elderly and often had health problems. Geoff said that the committee had considered a number of options. Given that four years was a maximum, they felt that it struck the right balance.

The meeting agreed to the proposed Constitution unanimously, meeting the required two third majority.

8. **Other Business**

As there were no other points of business, the Chairman closed the meeting.