Balsall Common U3A

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 3.45pm on Monday 22nd July 2013 at the Village Hall, Station Road

Present: Mary Dawson (MD), in the chair, Geoff Kennedy (GK), Peter Calver (PC), Sandra Heard (SH), Alan Buckland (AB) and Richard Davis.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Martin Richards.

2. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 22nd April 2013

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

(i) Asset Register

AB said that there was still a problem in establishing the whereabouts of the Asset Register. Gill Westlake had been unable to locate it amongst Peter's papers. MD suggested that Kevin McGovern may know where it was (MD later gave AB a copy of an asset register that she had found).

(ii) National Conference and AGM 2013

It was noted that MD and AB would be attending the AGM in Nottingham, but would not be there on any of the other days. GK said that he had a number of papers related to the AGM, which he would provide to the attendees. He added that there was still no candidate for the post of Trustee for the West Midlands Region, to replace Hillary Stringer, whose term of office had expired.

(iii) Pony Express

PC said that some 27 members appeared not to be on email and he tabled a list. For Out and About communications, he had delivered to homes in Balsall Common and posted them to more distant members. AB said that he had done the same with the membership cards that had not been collected at core meetings. After discussion, it was felt that, rather than maintain a separate list of volunteers, where it was necessary to make deliveries, these should be undertaken by committee members within Balsall Common and the post used for others. PC was asked to allocate delivery addresses to individual committee members, taking account of where they lived.

4. Reports

(i) Treasurer

AB said that the accounts remained healthily in balance. Peter Driffield had, as usual, undertaken the submission to the Inland Revenue to claim the gift aid tax rebate on subscriptions. As a result, we had received a rebate from the Revenue of £747. It was agreed that the committee would discuss the financial position further at the October meeting, as part of the consideration of the appropriate subscription fee to charge members for 2014/15.

(ii) Secretary

GK said that he had received a letter from Barbara Lewis, Chairman of the Third Age Trust, trying to drum up candidates for the West Midlands Regional Trustee. It was unfortunate that no-one was standing, but he did not think that there was anyone in the Balsall Common group that would be interested. The committee agreed.

He had replied to a national survey on interest groups, giving the number of groups, the number of subjects covered and the most popular (Out and About). On the question of the most unusual one, he felt obliged to say that there were no unusual ones.

GK reported that the U3A were running a Media Training Day on 1st October, in Birmingham. The committee did not feel the need to send a representative.

GK said that he had attended the Solihull Cluster meeting on 24th April. There had been more discussion about waiting lists. GK had said that Balsall Common do not operate one, but a number of those present did, against national advice. Some offered associate membership which he had said the national U3A opposed also. However, conflicting advice had been received.

(iii) Speakers Secretary

SH said that she had been asked by the Solihull Cluster to recommend three or four of our speakers and she circulated a list of seven possible names. The committee considered that all were suitable and left it to SH to decide which to forward.

(iv) Publicity Officer

PC said that four prospective members had attended the core meeting. He was continuing to publicise the U3A in the Solihull News, the Meriden Magazine (on line), the Parish magazine and the Residents Association newsletter. The deadline for copy for the next edition of the Bugle was 9th August, for publication in September; he was looking for suitable items. The photography group exhibition in the library was one suggestion. The photography group would also be exhibiting at the village fete on 18th September.

5. Replacement of Equipment

SH said that Steve Procter had referred, in relation to speakers, that the Windows XP Pro installed on the laptop was out of date. He appreciated that It would be expensive to replace and was used only occasionally. The committee discussed this and other equipment issues and concluded that no purchases were required currently. The position would be kept under review.

6. Other Business

(i) Raffle

GK reported that a member had asked whether they could sell raffle tickets at the August core meeting in support of a national charity. After discussion, the committee decided that it would not be appropriate; it would cause some disruption to the arrangements with the speaker and did not fit with the purpose of the meeting.

(ii) Chairman

MD said that her term of office as Chairman would come to an end in April 2015. Given the difficulties in finding committee members, she asked that thought be given to her replacement.

7. Date of next Meeting

Monday 21st October 2013, following the core meeting.