Balsall Common U3A

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held at 4.00 pm

Thursday 6th April in the Downton Room, St Peter's Hall.

Present: Jim Melville (JM), Alan Buckland (AB), Richard Drake (RD), Mary Dawson (MD), Lynn Brinkworth (LB), Jan Baylis (JB), Peter Calver (PC), Martin Richards (MR), Len Tomnie (LT).

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence: JM welcomed John Peat (JP) to the meeting. Apologies from Margaret Burleigh (MB)

2 .Minutes Secretary

AB agreed to be Minutes Secretary for the meeting.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 2nd February

a. Minutes were approved
b. Matters arising

i) PAT testing – RD has agreed to meet Steve Procter who holds the majority of the electrical equipment to both assess the testing required and, where necessary, carry out and record any appropriate testing/inspection. This will be undertaken at the same time as the annual accounts review.

ii) Insurance – Nick Carter was satisfied that the insurance requirements for the U3A Big Band/Swing Division appeared to be adequately met by the cover provided by the U3A Insurance Policy.

4. Correspondence

Significant correspondence received:

- U3A Annual Returns for capitation and circulation of Third Age Matters and U3A Sources. RD and PC to agree figures.
- MPLC licence for film showings
- Notification of U3A Conference and AGM in Nottingham 29th to 31st August

5. Reports

a.Treasurer: RD had prepared draft end of year accounts. No 1 Account had a balance of c £4400 (compared with £5312 in 2015-2016). This difference was largely accounted for by expenditure on the 10th Anniversary Tea and on equipment. U3A capitation fee was not included in the closing balance.
No 2 Account remains healthy with some £1400 attributable to groups and some £400 in reserve. Most groups are in credit. Jazz had a small deficit and RD had already spoken to Nick Carter about this. Painting also had a deficit resulting from an historical double billing when the group had moved from BRG Hall to the Village Hall. Since this was not the responsibility of the group, this deficit would be cleared out of reserves.

The balance for two defunct groups – Finance and Singalong – had also been transferred to reserves as had the £185 loan paid back by the MahJong group.
The Committee thanked RD for producing a draft set of accounts at an early stage.

b. Secretary: Moving communications online (Attachment 2 in Agenda). U3A National Office, as part of the process of moving more communications online, had suggested the creation of generic email addresses whereby the role rather that the committee member's name is used in the email address. It was agreed that locally, for use within Balsall Common U3A, discrete addresses should be established for Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Speakers' Secretary. PC would set this up and would also check on what limit there was on the number of addresses so that the facility could be made available to groups and other committee members. These same addresses could be made available to U3A National Office.

c. Speakers' Secretary: LB reported that she had almost completed the programme for 2017/2018. There were three remaining spaces, with enquiries out for two of these. It was agreed that the U3A Swing Division should be invited to cover one of the vacant slots. The Fire Service, Trading Standards and RoSPA were mentioned as 'recommended' presentations.

d. Membership and Publicity: PC reported that current membership was 313, 6 of whom are associate members. The Membership Analysis (Attachment 3 to Agenda) showed that almost 80% of members come from the Balsall Common/Berkswell/Meriden CV7 Postal Code area.

A new membership form would be required for 2017/2018.

e. Groups' Coordinator: MD reported that four 'brief reports' from Group Coordinators were outstanding for the AGM Report. The new members' coffee morning appeared to have been very successful, with 32 people attending.

Several new groups had started:

- Current Affairs - The second group was now up and running.
- Gardening - The inaugural meeting on 29th March had been well-attended. A committee had been formed and an initial programme had been agreed.
- Ramblers short walk group - There will be 'sample' walks of c.3 miles on April 24th and May 3rd, led by MR and RD respectively.
- Luncheon Club is full. This had been announced at the earlier Core Meeting. Peter Driffield would be happy to talk to any member who might be interested in forming a second group.

6. Annual General Meeting

Action dates (Attachment 4a to Agenda). These were agreed.

The Chairman's Review, Groups' Coordinator's Report and Treasurer's Report (<u>not</u> including the accounts) to go out with agenda for AGM as soon as possible after 4th May. PC to circulate. Returning committee members must submit nomination forms (this was done for those present at the meeting – JM, RD, LB, JB, LT and JP.) All nominations for committee must be submitted by 4th May.

Draft Agenda (Attachment 4b to Agenda) Delete Item 10 – Other business. Action JM

Annual subscription proposal (Attachment 4c to Agenda) PC proposals for £8 sub for existing members and £16 for new members was agreed. We were able to reduce the subs for existing members from £10 as we were still holding significant reserves in No 1 Account. These exceed the U3A Trust guidelines of reserves of approximately 6 months' expenses. It was agreed that it may not be possible to maintain the £8 figure indefinitely and, as in previous years, it would be stressed to members that it would be subject to annual review. It was agreed that these proposals would be presented to the AGM for agreement. RD would prepare a Reserves Policy for consideration by the committee.

7. Beacon System workshop

JP reported on the Beacon System Workshop held on 16th February and attended by JP, MR and AB. Beacon provides a range of online facilities for handling membership, finance, groups and communications, as well as online services for members. It appears to be a robust, secure system hosted on an outside server. U3A groups are progressively adopting the system. Help is available to migrate information across to the new system and to deal with initial set-up issues. It was felt that we would need to run Beacon in parallel with our existing systems (essentially membership database and financial information) for a period. The committee agreed in principle that we should pursue adoption of the system. JP distributed a Beacon : Application to Use form for review and, where possible, completion, by members. This would be discussed in more detail by members at the next committee meeting.

8. Sound System in St Peter's Hall

JM and LT had met Father Peter Thomas. He was very keen to install a sound system in St Peter's Hall and had received a quote for £3324 to carry out the work. This would require funding from several sources. RD believed that contributions could be sought, amongst others, from Berkswell PC, Balsall Common PC, the Berkswell Charity and the Lions. It was agreed that Balsall Common U3A would be prepared to make a donation of up to 25% of the cost. JM and RD would hold further discussions with Father Peter.

9. Solihull Cluster

a. Meeting 1st February (Attachment 5 to Agenda) Membership numbers and subscriptions for U3As in the Solihull Cluster were noted.

b. Meeting for Secretaries and Treasurers 4th April. This was a new meeting and RD had found it quite useful. Balsall Common would host the next meeting in July.

10. Balsall Common Festival

It was agreed that we would not take part.

11. AOB

- Security of information systems. To ensure that information was always available and backed-up, it was agreed that PC and JP should both hold copies of the membership database and that AB and RD should hold the finance database.

- Future committee meetings. Some committee members said that it would be more convenient at times to hold committee meetings in the evening rather that immediately after Core meetings. JM to check with Jackie Tomnie on availability of Westlake Room in evenings between 6 and 8pm, for dates after the AGM.

12. Dates for committee meetings

These were confirmed for 11th May and 1st June after core meetings (Downton Room.)