

Aughton & Ormskirk U3A

Minutes of Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday 20 October 2009 in HQ

Present: Chris Jones, Pat McKenzie, Beth Blamires, Bill Evans, Ann Haskell, Stan Bryan, Carole Gray, Norman Williamson, Susan Watkinson. Trustees: Peter Sewell and Paul Thompson.

Apologies: Ted Morrell, Jeff Roberts, Edna Lally, Sandra Webster, Dorothy Harrison, David Blanchflower, Trustees: Alex McMinn and Andrew Beeston, Minute Secretary – Janet Jones

Chairman – in the absence of both the Chairman and Vice Chairman it was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously that Stan Bryan should be the Chairman for the meeting.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2009 were approved
2. Matters arising from the Minutes:
 - a) Christ Church Hall – the planned opening date is 14 June, the foundation stone will be laid next week. AGREED that Horizons will remain at the Village Hall from December – February (period of next newsletter)
 - b) Swine Flu updates – leaflets had been prepared by Alex and were in both HQ and AVH
 - c) 5th November, Speaker meeting, Action for Blind People, arrangements for refreshments had been agreed and posters were distributed. Flyers were already in circulation. Space on the car park for the large Information Vehicle had been agreed with the Parish Council.
 - d) Walking Groups and HF Holidays – deferred to November meeting
 - e) Risograph contract – we will continue without a maintenance contract. Discussion expanded into use of the photocopier vs Risograph for larger numbers of copies. Group Leaders must be advised that if copying over 20 pages then the Risograph must be used. This will lead to a training need (Group Support to discuss and arrange).
 - f) Raising funds for other charities – confirmed by Beth that if individual members chose to support a raffle for another charity then this is not a problem. Item to be raised at the Group Leaders' meeting.
 - g) Archiving materials – deferred to November meeting with suggestions for Index and appropriate storage systems.
3. Membership Report – Pat reported that we have had 39 new members in the last month, Egyptology course has generated eight. Four have renewed late and there has been one death. The next number will be 2566 and there are 1684 paid members (1683 to 31.12.08)
Regarding the £2.50 contribution from the local authority, there are specific forms to be completed so the suggestion that we could collect this information at membership renewal would not be possible. However, the renewal form could include a question about membership of other organisations and Pat will attend to this. She is preparing supplies of Membership and Gift Aid forms for the Group Leaders' meeting and will ask everyone present to take some.
4. Treasurer's Report – Chris reported that the financial situation remained unchanged. Some of the restricted funds may have to be returned because they have not been spent (work with home-bound). Willem explained that, although the technology is available, the home-bound do not seem to want to use it. This situation may change in the future. Chris expressed the view that the Scouts should be charging higher fees for the HQ building. This has remained the same for some considerable time and energy costs have risen sharply.
5. Committee Reports

Publicity – minutes of the meeting held 25 September were considered. The new leaflet was handed round and met with considerable approval. Plans for distribution are in hand. Succession planning – Sue will stand down as Editor in May 2010 and thanks were expressed to her. Bill suggested having an Editorial Board, also approaching the Creative Writing group for some input. Stan and Marjorie will undertake the newsletter distribution for two more issues, then retire. Thanks were expressed to them both for a great deal of careful planning and man-management. It may be necessary to review the distribution system but a 100% postal service would have a significant extra cost and there would be resistance from many members who like to collect their newsletter in person. AGREED that the distribution team should be approached to find out whether any one would consider taking on the task and that both "vacancies" should be advertised in the newsletter.

The issue of "notices" at Horizons being placed on the website was discussed. Willem asked that Group Leaders should be reminded on their responsibility to contact the Webmaster with notices of changes and last minute arrangements.

Social – minutes of meeting held 22 September were considered. 61 tickets have now been sold for the Christmas Lunch and many Group Leaders have requested booking forms for whole tables.

Resources – minutes of meeting held 30 September were considered. An error in the figure for subs was corrected to £24,854.

Insurance on equipment – short discussion on numbers of items and their value either replacement cost or insured value. When the renewal request comes in we must check total values. Willem advised that the computer team is planning to replace one third every year.

A question was asked about finding the cost of alternative premises – Beth said this was simply an awareness issue so that comparative costs per hour were known by Resources and by Group Leaders.

Group Support and Learning – minutes of the meeting held 21 September were considered. Most of the meeting and a subsequent one on 1 October had been sorting out details for the Group Leaders' meetings on 28 and 30 October.

Beth asked whether a training event could be organised for those wishing to use the new television screen.

AGREED that this should be done, to include training in use of both Risograph and photocopier.

Beth gave a warning about home prepared food.

6. **Special Projects** – in Alex's absence the only item to be discussed was the paper on Social Prescribing. Chris advised that he had raised the problem of taking a "reward" for offering a service. Alex was now re-thinking the issue and would report back to a future meeting.
Willem advised that a meeting had been arranged on 30 November at Preston with "Sandbox" a demonstration of the technology involved in an electronic communication system. The cost of the demo is £300 and he invited everyone to attend. He believes that social contact may be more important to many home-bound people rather than the content of a group session.
7. **New Members' Meeting** – it was agreed that the end of January onwards would be a good time for the next new members' meeting with the possibility of having a tea party rather than lunch. Peter asked whether the respondents to the last survey had been followed up. Ann said no, but it would be possible.
It was suggested that we should find out what existing members' want/would like to be involved in and that a 10% survey could identify such needs/offers. Publicity to consider this.
8. **Trustees' Report** – a meeting will be held on 21 October. Regarding the Constitution, a small group has met to consider amendments for the 2010 AGM and Andrew Beeston will present a report to the Trustees. Beth reminded members about the need to amend the period of grace after the end of a subscription year to tie in with publication of the spring newsletter.
9. **Secretary's matters**
 - a) Third Age Trust – the current mailing was mainly concerned with passing information to Group Leaders; the renewal of the Travel Insurance had been received. Sue will pass a copy to the Walking Group leaders and Walter Yates.
 - b) U3A events and activities – a short discussion took place on the problem of clashes between group activities.
10. **NW Region** – Ted had circulated details of a residential school in April 2010. Suggested that Margaret Handford might take copies onto her Travel table at Horizons, also that information be included in the newsletter and on the web site. The Group Leaders' email system should also be used to pass details to members.
11. **South West Lancs Network** – no meeting
12. **Any other business**
 - a) Norman mentioned the success of the short courses and expressed thanks and appreciation to David Blanchflower for his careful organisation. They had been well supported.
 - b) Norman asked for a decision on Horizons on Christmas Eve. The last Horizons before Christmas had usually been marked with free coffee and mince pies. AGREED that these should be served on 17th December with meetings on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve run, as happened last year, by volunteers.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 11.30 a.m. with thanks to Stan for taking the chair.