

AUGHTON & ORMSKIRK U3A EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Christ Church S & G HQ. 9.30am 15th December 2015.

Present: G Maitland (Chairman), C Barnes, V Bullen, L Bunner, L Burden, M Faza, D Glennon, I Grant, I Haskell, P Jones, D Latham, S Livingston, D Morley, G Roberts, I Smart, B Watkinson.

A McMinn was present for item on External Relations.

ITEM 1 WELCOME: The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting with a special word of welcome to Val Bullen and A McMinn.

At this point, the Chairman, recognising the presence of A McMinn, decided to deal with Item 5 on the agenda, External Relations.

ITEM 5 EXTERNAL RELATIONS:

A McM posed the question as to why we have External Relations. He pointed out that when our U3A started, we signed up to the objects and principles of the national U3A and this included building links with Local Authorities, Universities, etc. At the time when other organisations were declining, we needed the credibility to attract people with the skills and determination to develop the organisation. Newsletters were prepared and delivered to local doctors, libraries, churches, Lancashire County Council, etc.

Our credibility has been recognised by being able to attract quality lecturers, being invited to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, our magazine winning national recognition, etc.

What of the future? Alex indicated there are a number of threats. Universities are seeking to develop Adult Education and are looking for partners but they tend to dislike the informal methodology of the U3A. We need to be aware that "Active in Retirement" has developed as a breakaway group which could take away numbers. With the increasing bureaucracy, a widespread problem for U3As is to attract members to fill officer posts.

The Chairman proposed that the Publicity Sub-Committee consider how best to deal with External Relations in the future. He proposed that the Publicity Sub-Committee make recommendations.....ACTION PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE.

The Chairman thanked Alex for all his important work on our behalf and encouraged him to claim appropriate expenses.

At this point, Alex left the meeting.

ITEM 2 APOLOGIES: All members present except CB who sent apologies explaining she would be late arriving at the meeting.

ITEM 3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17th NOVEMBER 2015:

The Minutes of the meeting on 17th November were approved and the Chairman signed them as an accurate record.

ITEM 4 MATTERS ARISING:

The new web-site has been launched with Joyce Nolan as the new web-manager. Margaret Wiechers was presented with a gift for all her outstanding work as the previous web-manager. A letter of appreciation has been received from Margaret.

There was a suggestion to organise a get-together once a year to thank all the helpers at Horizons. LB and Alan Bonner to liaise in this. ACTION.....LB.

CB distributed name badges to Committee members to wear at Horizons.

A Bonner will organise a new rota for volunteers to set out and put away chairs at Horizons.

Lines identifying Disabled Access will be completed over the Christmas holiday. There is uncertainty as to who is responsible for the Disabled Parking signs in the hedge near the church.

IH has circulated copies of the revised Welcome Letter.

DL has passed the documentation on committee volunteers to PJ.

Places are available for Tai Chi enthusiasts at Brookside. To run another U3A Tai Chi group we would need to find a tutor.

PJ has completed the annual report for the Charities Commission and has sent them a copy of the Constitution. PJ will put in writing the requirements of the Charity Committee for future completion and will circulate a copy of the completed document.....ACTION PJ.

A copy of the Constitution has been passed to the bank.

The Chairman put agreed items in the magazine and in Enews.

Election issues at the next AGM will be an agenda item at the January Executive meeting.

A copy of minutes of "Go on West Lancashire Feasibility Meeting" have been passed to A McMinn. This was mentioned to Alex earlier in the meeting.

It is recognised that all correspondence must be acknowledged. Certain routine matters can be dealt with directly by the Chairman or Secretary and the Committee informed. Other matters will be referred to the Committee.

CB joined the meeting at this point.

The Publicity Sub- Committee is to consider how best to give approval in future to the content of the magazine.....ACTION PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE.

It was reiterated that commercial advertising in the magazine is not permitted.

ITEM 6 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

A communication was received claiming that the correspondent and others are concerned about the lack of information in the Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings concerning the decision-

making process. The correspondent claimed that there is insufficient detail about the discussion which takes place and the voting results when the Executive Committee makes decisions.

This Email was discussed at length by the Committee. It was recognised that the emphasis in the Minutes should focus on decisions taken and not on the details of the discussion by which the Committee arrived at a corporate decision. The members of the U3A had elected the Committee members to take decisions on their behalf and the Minutes are the mechanism by which these decisions are communicated.

The Chairman will draft a response and circulate prior to issue.....ACTION CHAIRMAN.

ITEM7 FORMALISATION OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS:

The Chairman proposed that a log or index of decisions taken by the Executive should be established for easy reference. The index would identify the decision taken and the date of the relevant meeting. The Secretary and DG were asked to begin work on this task.....ACTION PJ and DG.

It was reiterated that Sub-Committees make recommendations for ratification as a resolution by the Executive Committee.

ITEM 8 GROUPS AND EXTERNAL VENUES:

The question of the charge to be made to certain groups using external premises was referred to the Finance and Resources Sub-Committee. It was requested that they make recommendations based on financial considerations. The Chairman offered to attend the next sub-committee meeting.....ACTION FINANCE AND RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE.

ITEM 9 TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer had circulated a financial statement for the past month.

DM will follow up whether computers have been purchased for specific purposes for Committee members in the past.....ACTION DM.

It was suggested that the Secretary should have a designated laptop.

Usage of the photocopier was discussed.

The Finance and Resources Sub-Committee is to consider and make a recommendation about whether we should have a professional firm of accountants to audit the accounts.....ACTION FINANCE and RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE.

The Finance and Resources Committee was asked to make recommendations on the principle of paying expenses and also on the issue of reasonable limits as to how much delegated authority should be allocated to the Treasurer for paying bills.....ACTION FINANCE and RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE.

ITEM 10 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT:

IH reported that numbers were very healthy. He had circulated a detailed breakdown of numbers of members year by year since 2003-4. We have 30 more members than this time last year and 20 have joined in the past month.

IH had circulated information about the Beacon on-line database. IH and BW had attended a presentation in Lancaster and registered interest in moving to this system for our membership data. It is hoped to move on to the system in February.

IH had also circulated a paper entitled "Standing Order-Processing of Membership Records".

In response to a question about the title "Standing Orders", IH pointed out that it refers to how we implement the Constitution. Possibly we need a better title?

ITEM 11 QUERIES ON SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The Publicity Sub-Committee will meet on 13th January.

L Burden reported that the new web-site has been launched and the new Web Manager, Joyce Nolan, will attend the January Executive meeting to explain this development and answer any questions.

The Minutes of the Learning and Group Support Sub-Committee had been circulated in advance of the meeting. A new member's meeting will be arranged. Thanks were expressed to the Musical Theatre group for the superb production of "Bob Cratchitt Retired". Numerous congratulatory communications had been received. Unfortunately only 291 people watched the production over three nights which was disappointing. Consequently, the production has made a loss. A final income and expenditure account is to be submitted to the Finance and Resources Sub-Committee as soon as possible.....ACTION SL.

The Group Support Sub-Committee is short of two members and will use Enews to advertise for volunteers. PJ offered her services.

The Carol Concert had an audience of 168 and was a great success. It was recognised that the dates for Speakers Meetings and the distribution of the magazine should not clash.

The Minutes of the Finance and Resources Sub-Committee meeting on 1st December had been circulated in advance of the meeting. DM was asked to give an update on the issue of Spanish groups in January.....ACTION DM.

ITEM 12 SECRETARY'S NOTICES:

PJ had received paperwork from TAT and would circulate it to the various groups. She will put information relevant to members such as a legal helpline update on Enews. PJ will donate a gift she has received to the raffle at the Adelphi gathering.

ITEM 13 AOB: There was no AOB.

ITEM 14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 19th January 2016 at 9.30am at S&G HQ.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.

