

Aughton & Ormskirk U3A

Minutes of Committee meeting held on Tuesday 8 May 2007 in Scout & Guide HQ

Chairman: Geoff Maitland

Apologies: Alex McMinn, Jim Robson, Norman Williamson, Norman Platt, Ted Morrell, Dorothy Harrison, Carole Gray and Jeff Roberts.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming, in absentia, the three new members of the Committee. He advised members that, although Alex had resigned his Committee seat, he was entitled to receive Agendas and Minutes and attend meetings in his capacity as Chairman of Trustees, but could no longer vote. It was suggested that it might be better to avoid the Tuesday following a Bank Holiday as it was evidently not a popular date for the meeting.

1. Confirmation of Officers of the Committee: Chairman, Geoff Maitland; Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary, Ted Morrell; Honorary Treasurer, Jeff Roberts; Membership Secretary, Pat McKenzie and Newsletter Editors, Sue Watkinson and Alan Worthington.
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2007 were approved as a correct record.
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
 - a) 5th Birthday events/creative arts exhibition and funding – this was deferred again for Alex to action.
4. Annual General Meeting – 3 May 2007
 - a) The minutes had been prepared and circulated to the Committee. Any comments must be sent within the week to the Hon. Secretary, otherwise they will be agreed ready for approval at the 2008 AGM.
 - b) De-brief - Several comments and suggestions were made:- That questions could be put in writing and handed up to the Chairman of the day; that a roving microphone would be useful for questions from the floor; that the start time MUST be adhered to precisely; that the temperature in the church be at a reasonable level; that the Resolution to keep the subscriptions at £10 came too late (the Constitution paragraph 6(i) states that the Committee determines the level of subs and the membership confirms it). The Chairman was concerned that all the comments were critical and no thanks had come from the floor. However, the overall feeling was that it had been a good meeting.
5. Constitution – Geoff gave the background to the proposed changes (apart from the change to the Quorum at General Meetings, now amended to 100, not 20% of membership) and identified the major amendments. It was agreed that the whole membership must receive notice of both the date of the Special General Meeting and the changes proposed and that this could only be achieved via the newsletter. The suggested date of an extra meeting on 28 June was discussed and it was agreed that it might prove impossible to muster 100 members following a normal Horizons morning. It was then agreed that the Special General Meeting should follow the normal speaker meeting on the first Thursday in July (Geoff would be absent on that day) and that a single sheet detailing all the proposed amendments should be prepared and inserted in the newsletter, Ted had circulated a copy of the proposed Constitution and that approved in May 2006 was available on the website for comparison. Geoff asked that all Committee members familiarise themselves with the proposed changes, in particular the removal of the geographical references in the "Objects" clause and advise of any comments within a week. Geoff also informed members of the names of the present Trustees (Alex, Ted, Jeff and Norman Platt)
6. Trustee Report – a meeting had been held on 11 April, to which Geoff had been invited. In the absence of formal minutes he reported on the business of the meeting, which was largely covered in Item 5, but said that Alex was making a proposal for some more Trustees, not necessarily members of U3A. The Trustees believe that we must enhance our profile as at present we have four Trustees, three of whom are officers of the Committee because as a young organisation we must present a more impressive Board when making grant applications. The Trustees need to review the actions of the Committee and ensure good governance. It had been suggested that Jeff should resign as a Trustee and that Geoff take on the mantle of Chairman next May (he also resigns from the Committee from that date). Alex will be asked to present the names to the Committee as soon as possible (perhaps in time for the SGM)
7. Membership Report – There had been 1221 renewals in the month, next number 1778 and a total membership of 1543. Memberships must be renewed by the end of June and 322 members had still not paid. Pat asked for a reminder to be inserted in the newsletter and for Group Leaders to be vigilant in asking to see new cards, especially after 1 July. The Travel Committee is asked to ensure that Discovery checks up to date membership when bookings for holidays are made.

8. Treasurer's Report – In Jeff's absence there was no presentation of accounts. Pat reported that we had been awarded a Community Champion's grant of £390 for card-making equipment.
9. Sub Committee Reports
 - a) **Finance** – Minutes of the meeting held 30 April 2007 had been circulated. Bob paid tribute to Jeff as an excellent Treasurer but regretted the lack of feedback and continuity in Group Leaders' applications for funds. He felt that a more positive application process was needed. Clarification of the position with regard to approvals for spending was raised again and Bob confirmed verbally that the following rules applied: The Treasurer can approve spending up to £250; the Finance Sub Committee can approve spending between £250 and £1,000 but that all amounts over £1,000 must be considered by the main Committee. The Chairman asked that this statement be included in the next minutes of the Finance S/C for the avoidance of doubt. Alan asked that the slides from the AGM, which had incorrect headings, be corrected before being displayed on the web site.
 - b) **Social** – minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2007 were considered.
 - i) Events – the BBQ date and details were confirmed. A Risk Assessment is being carried out by Jim Costello.
 - ii) Welfare issues – No report
 - iii) Horizons – notes made at a meeting held on 26 April and a floor plan were considered, several new ideas were discussed. It was suggested that the Social S/C had responsibilities only for the meeting/greeting function and the Coffee Bar, but the Chairman pointed out that the Social S/C accepted responsibility a long time ago for the whole of Horizons; whether the Groups Support S/C has a role to play is for debate. Changes to the room layout could be considered as follows: re-arrange the tables so that the way in is free and position more visible tables for new members, Treasurer and Membership on the far wall (near the store); have just one large "information" table covering all group activities and information; move all "selling" groups into the smaller room. Book Sales must remain in the large room because of the location of storage but the Internet Cafe should be moved upstairs with just one laptop kept down for those unable to use the stairs. There was further discussion about the clash of Horizons with the monthly speaker and quarterly special meetings and it was agreed that a check would be made on the number who did not go over to the church on 7 June. No decisions were made and Geoff asked for feed-back on the suggestions as soon as possible.
 - c) **Groups Support** – Minutes of the meeting held 17 April 2007 (incomplete) were noted. It was agreed that there must be a deadline for the completed Group Leaders' Handbook, suggested as the end of June. Should the Constitution be included as an Appendix?

E-Learning – the paper presented by Alex to the AGM was noted

Internet Cafe – no report
 - d) **Publicity** – there had not been a meeting but Alan and Sue reported on the progress of the next newsletter due for distribution on 31 May. The competition for the best newsletter, organised by U3A HQ, needed to include an item about either the history of U3A or a story about "What U3A means to me". It was agreed that the latter would be included in a future edition (members will be invited to write in to the editors with their stories). It was noted that Alex was in Blackpool at a Retired Persons' Conference with a new display and leaflets and questions were asked about the cost of these items, also for Alex to present some feed-back on the event.
 - e) **External Relations and Sustainable Development** – the yellow paper presented by Alex to the AGM was noted.
 - f) **Travel** – Norman had suggested that he should be present when the minutes of the Travel S/C are presented.
 - g) **Premises** – no meeting had been held
10. **Third Age Trust and external items** – there were no items

11. Any Other Business

- a) A request had been received from Doreen McGiveron, who attended an outside group concerned with improving health and well-being in older age, for copies of the Contractors' List to be made available. Agreed that the list is for internal use only, that it cannot be made available to outside organisations nor placed on the website. Comments were made about the quality of some of the contractors included.

There were no further business and the meeting closed at 1150.