

Aughton & Ormskirk U3A. Minutes of Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13 November 2007 in Scout & Guide HQ, Aughton

Chairman: Ted Morrell.

Present: Beryl Campbell, Carole Gray, Dorothy Harrison, Pat McKenzie, Chris Procter, Jeff Roberts, Bob Roscoe, Susan Watkinson, Norman Williamson, Alan Worthington. Alex McMinn (Chairman of Trustees) was in attendance.

Apologies: Geoff Maitland, Norman Platt, Jim Robson

1. Chairman and Honorary Secretary's Offices - A letter of resignation from membership of Aughton & Ormskirk U3A had been received from Geoff Maitland as he had obtained full time employment. His resignation as a member and as Chairman were accepted and many congratulations offered. Ted would write a letter of appreciation on behalf of the Committee. It was agreed that a gift would be presented at the Christmas Lunch (Geoff is attending as a guest of his wife). The office of Chairman now being vacant, it was proposed, seconded and AGREED unanimously that Ted Morrell should be Chairman of Aughton & Ormskirk U3A until at least May 2008 and possibly until 2010. Sue Watkinson was confirmed as Honorary Secretary of Aughton & Ormskirk U3A for the same period. She asked that she be relieved of the task of Minutes Secretary as soon as possible. As a Committee vacancy now exists, Ted proposed that Alex McMinn be co-opted, although he is on his one year break. This was AGREED.
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2007 were amended in 8ii(i) by changing the date to 12 December and the venue of the meeting to the Scout & Guide HQ, they were then agreed as a correct record.
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
 - (I) 5th birthday plans - Alex asked that other members become responsible for arrangements. Ideas so far included Tony Crimlisk organising musical events, a cruise on the Royal Iris, other rolling events from April to October. Chris asked whether the Social Committee could be involved and, following a discussion, it was proposed by Jeff Roberts, seconded by Carole Gray and AGREED that an independent Committee should be formed with a representative from each of the other Committees, plus co-options.
 - (II) Carols by the Choir - this is still to be finalised between Chris Procter and Ken Tinnion.
4. Trustees Report -
 - (I) The sudden resignation of Geoff Maitland left a vacancy for Chairman of Trustees from May 2008 (further decision on this was deferred).
 - (II) Ray Sim and Andrew Beeston have examined the problems surrounding the Constitution, in particular the objectives clause (to offer to the wider community the benefit of skills of the members), and had decided to reappraise the original Constitution, based on what our members want and with notes on the relationship between the Executive and the Trustees. The accounts for 2006-07 would now be submitted with the names of the original four Trustees. (NOTE - Aughton & Ormskirk U3A became a member of the Third Age Trust on 16 September 2003.)
 - (III) ^{new board} The Trustees will meet on 27 November, and the CVs of the new Trustees will follow.
5. Membership Report - Pat reported that we have now passed Member No. 2000 (Angela Marshall from Halsall). Since the last meeting there have been 38 new members (on five Thursdays), one death and one renewal. Paid members total 1617 and the next number to be issued is 2008. Ideas were put forward for the presentation to the 200th member (Alex will seek to involve the Chairman of WLDC in either December or January).
6. Treasurer's Report - Jeff presented the monthly statements and answered questions. Travel Commission - John Makinson had failed to give Norman Williamson any information about commissions due for 2007 although it seemed ^{not yet} that some would be forthcoming; there would also be commission from the New Year trip to Alsace.
7. Committee Reports
 - a. **Finance** - There had not been a meeting but questions of finance had been raised informally following the Group Leaders' meeting, as there had been no time for questions:-
 - i. which monies had funded the lunch? - Jeff reiterated that all funds collected by Groups belonged to U3A and stressed that we must address the "preciousness" of groups with their funding,
 - ii. can tutors, who are also members, receive payment? - the discussion entered a wider sphere with questions raised about payment of tax and National Insurance, Public Liability insurance, the disparity of rates, the degree of professionalism needed, the importance of pump-priming new groups and courses. It was AGREED that all Groups must feel integrated into U3A and that new Groups must be better initiated; that Jeff should design an expenses sheet requiring a signed statement from the tutor about self employment, tax, National Insurance and PL Insurance. FURTHER AGREED that the Group Support Committee should discuss the whole matter further. Jeff suggested that we might consider grouping activities into "Faculties" and arrange for smaller meetings of related Groups; perhaps a "New Group Leaders' meeting" on an occasional basis. It was also AGREED that we must not put undue weight on comments from the few dissatisfied people.

Capitation to National Office – the suggestion that any person who becomes a member of more than one U3A should pay only **one** Capitation Fee of £2.50 (perhaps rising to £4 to include postage of U3A News) was discussed. It was AGREED that it would be too complicated administratively to do this and A&O U3A would charge a flat subscription to ALL members.

~~There was further discussion on reduced income for 2008-09, the return in December to reserves of monies held on deposit and various grant aid, including the £2.50 from WLDC for anyone living in West Lancashire, age 60 or over and not claiming through any other voluntary organisation. TED – Alex talked about Lancashire Partnership, the GATEWAY, and Life Long Learning – is this relevant to the minutes???~~

b. **Social** – Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October had been circulated:

(I) Events – Christmas Lunch – over 250 guests would attend with individuals being welcomed. Group tables could be seen as divisive and exclusive. Coach transport was now available at a £5 fee. Congratulations on the smooth re-organisation were offered to the Social Committee. A Barn Dance was being considered for February/March. Ormskirk school had raised its fees substantially to £180 for four hours. *Revised*

(II) Welfare issues – Several cards have been sent but no progress of visits/lifts to meetings. *DVDI JMMH*

(III) Horizons – The revised layout seems to be settling down but Newsletter Distribution Day will need further changes to accommodate the extra tables in the large room. Further concerns included the proliferation of "notices" (once only); use of Fairtrade products (not available readily through wholesalers) and the need for helpers to put away chairs tidily. ~~Suggested that Stan Marsters contact his chair teams to ask whether they could stay for the full morning.~~

c. **Groups Support** – Minutes of the meeting held 11 October were considered, the resignations and new members were noted. Carole outlined problems of communication and frustration at the lack of time for questions at the Group Leaders' meeting. Handbook now distributed to most Leaders (Alex has copies for all Trustees). Under this heading Sue introduced a paper by Beth Blamires, now a member but formerly the Chairman of the West Lancs Twinning Association. This had been produced following an informal meeting called by Jim Robson and Geoff Maitland with the aim of establishing a "Cultural Exchange" Group or Committee. Norman Williamson was concerned that he and Claire had not been invited to attend. Mention was made of an International Association of U3As and there was general consensus that more people should become involved in all Committees, with overlaps to ensure passing of information.

d. **Publicity** – Minutes of the meeting held 30 October were considered, the resignations and new members were noted. Alan explained further the request for a 16-page newsletter to be produced, due to the amount of material offered for publication and the growing numbers of groups. The additional cost would be around £640 (printing and postage) for the December and March editions. This was agreed.

e. **Travel** – Minutes of the meeting held 29 October were considered. Norman advised the following holiday bookings:- Ireland 18, Madrid full (41), Cornwall 8, Austria 3. The Cornish holiday is now open to neighbouring U3As; the Austrian one clashes with the newly arranged walking holiday. He requested more cooperation in fixing dates. It was AGREED that the Travel Committee should take on this role, but with a gentle hand and on a one-to-one basis with Group Leaders. It was AGREED that a Wall Planner would be useful and that this should be permanently displayed in the upstairs office and on a board at Horizons, complete with pen.

f. **Premises** – Geoff Maitland and Marion Wilson had visited St Anne's Social Club but no prices were as yet forthcoming.

8. **Special Projects** – Alex McMinn

(I) External Relations – Alex requested a representative on U3A Lancashire Link. Peter McCormack was proposed and will be approached by Ted (Peter may be asked to join the Executive Committee on a co-opted basis). Burscough, Oxtown, Bootle (North Sefton) are now all registered U3As. He also reported complaints about National "U3A News" in content and style. This may merge with the bulletin "Sources".

(II) Sustainable Development – Norman Platt had agreed to organise Forum meetings; Fiona Taylor, Audrey Coney and Sue Watkinson had already made a start on the U3A wood at Gorse Hill with a tree planting day on 8 December; Margaret Wiechers would deal with Fairtrade issues.

(III) E-Learning – Willem Wiechers was now leading the development of this group. He hoped to issue a brochure in the new year and to make the upstairs office available for eight half day sessions each week. Jeff stressed that booking the upstairs office for other meetings was now very important.

9. **Third Age Trust and related items** – Ted advised that ~~new Circulars~~ *its recent (insert date)* are now displayed on the U3A web site. Dates of Executive Committee meetings in 2008 were deferred to the next meeting due to lack of time. *agreed (as per Ted)*

email of 13: