

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 9 December 2008 in HQ at 9.30 a.m.

Chairman: Ted Morrell

Present: David Blanchflower, Beryl Campbell, Carole Gray, Ann Haskell, Chris Jones, Chris Procter, Pat McKenzie, Norman Platt, Jeff Roberts, Bob Roscoe, Sue Watkinson, Norman Williamson. Alex McMinn was in attendance.

Apologies: Beth Blamires, Stan Bryan, Jim Robson, Alan Worthington, Andrew Beeston (Trustee)

Welcome – Ted welcomed everyone to the meeting and then advised that Jim Robson had sent his resignation from the Executive (and Groups Support Committee, Local U3As Group and Lancashire Link) following an exchange of emails. It was suggested by David, supported by Sue, that the resignation should not be accepted as Jim believed that he had been put in an impossible situation. However, it was then proposed by Jeff and seconded by Norman P that the letter of resignation should be accepted. A majority voted in favour of this and **the resolution was carried.**

1. Minutes of meeting held 11 November 2008 were approved as a correct record.

2. Matters arising –

- a) **Rebuilding Christ Church** – plans are still on track for a start after Easter, with the toilet block being demolished in three days starting 15 December. Arrangements had been made for alternative premises where necessary.
- b) **Speaker on Volunteering** – Jeff reported that contact had not yet been made with Debbie Hill of Lancashire County Council.
- c) **Market Towns Initiative** – Sue explained that this body had now become “The Ormskirk Community Partnership”. It would accept nominations from organisations serving Ormskirk and district: U3A would be invited to make application in due course. The new Chairman, (also a member of U3A) Brian Pready, had asked whether some advice could be given on how to grow a successful organisation. AGREED that Sue should invite him and his new Committee to attend one Thursday morning to meet members.
- d) **5th Birthday** – Ann and Sue had prepared a short paper (entitled “Lessons Learned”) on their experiences with organising the event and the lessons they had learned in the process. Others mentioned that it had been too ambitious to fill the entire week and that perhaps individual ongoing activities could be considered in future, e.g. a display in the Ormskirk Library. Good results from the celebrations were that 60 new members had been enrolled and a quarterly Tea Dance would be organised in future.

3. Speaker Meetings and dates for Executive 2009 – Alex reported on an excellent attendance for the Susan Greenfield lecture, which had been much enjoyed by everyone. The Mind Gym leaflet, which had been handed out in Church, had been paid for from restricted funds (£200) and the cost for the speaker was one night's accommodation at West Tower. She had asked if A&O U3A could become involved in a research project with her and had been asked to speak at the Third Age Trust AGM and Conference in September 2009. There are problems in loading the DVD of the lecture to the web site and individual DVDs would be available at £3. Sue suggested showing the lecture again towards the end of January in the Scout HQ. Alex had now booked speakers for February, March and May. The topic will be included again on the Agenda for January with a discussion on the brief for the “Speaker Meeting” group.

Sue had circulated dates of likely meetings of the Executive for 2009. Ted requested, for personal reasons, that the meetings be brought forward to the first Tuesday. This was AGREED but would involve a different venue and Alex agreed to find an alternative.

4. Membership Report – Pat reported that there had been 23 new members and 1 renewal in the last month, making a total of 1683 paid members. 2323 would be the next number issued. **AGREED** that from 1 January 2009 subscriptions be reduced to £6 for the remaining three months of the financial year. Ted reported that he had issued invitations to the 150 most recent members for lunch on 30 January at HQ. Lily Bunner had agreed to provide a light buffet lunch (this as an individual and not on behalf of the Social Committee). It was **AGREED** that £2 per head will adequately cover the costs.

5. Treasurer's Report – Chris gave a summary of the accounts, balances held are:

Current Account -	£7,859.05 (General account)
Deposit Account -	£16,915.38
Bond -	£5,000.00
Groups Accounts	£6,108.17

Consideration was given to the budget for 2009/10. Newsletter costs will increase by around £250 per edition from February, Gift Aid income is down, contributions to Third Age Trust will rise during the A&O financial year. Subscriptions may have to rise and a decision will be needed for the next newsletter to be distributed at the end of February. The dead-line for the information will be around 7/10 February so the Finance Committee will recommend and the February Executive agree on the figure.

6. Committee Reports:

a. Social – Ted expressed thanks to both Wendy Wilkinson and Chris Procter on their retirement from the Social Committee. Norman W would be taking over as Chairman from 1 January. Christmas Lunch – 305 tickets had now been sold and travel arrangements were in hand.

b. Finance – Jeff reported that the Awards 4 All application was almost complete but that the Wireless Receivers for Travel Groups were too expensive to consider (£9,000). A Voice Enhancer was suggested as an alternative. The application includes plasma screen TV, bowls, a digital scanner, portable projector screens. There was some

discussion on the number of voluntary hours included in the application (Beth to give further information on her return). Alex advised that Lancashire County Council (Community Development), the West Lancs Primary Care Trust (Well-being issues) and Age Concern were all interested in supporting projects. He asked that everyone consider the future needs of A&O U3A and suggest projects based around the targets of the funding bodies. In answer to a question he said that joint applications with other U3As were not really manageable due to the tight accountability rules surrounding all grant funding.

d. Groups Support – following a discussion about the White Paper on informal adult learning and the growing emphasis from Third Age Trust on more rigorous learning activities, it was AGREED that an item be included on the January Agenda to draw up guidelines for a Discussion Forum to meet following the publication of the White Paper in February. This could include the purpose of the Groups Support Committee and developing ideas for more academic learning. Ann asked whether the Healthy Ageing Conference had been cancelled – yes, it would be held elsewhere in the north-west. Sue agreed to take on contact with neighbouring U3As and Jeff agreed to be our representative on Lancashire Link. Stan Marsters will be approached by Ted to continue with the Chair Rota in 2009. Ted will also contact all members of the Groups Support Committee to ask whether they wish to continue their membership.

e. Travel – the minutes from the meeting held on 24 November were presented. A meeting had been held with Suzanne Miller, Travel Agent, although she may be of more help to the Holiday Group. 36 were booked on the Bruges New Year holiday and just two on the spring holiday to Holland. No date had yet been fixed for the September holiday, nor had a destination been agreed. Alex said that he had been asked to organise a trip to Geneva and Annecy with visits to the United Nations and Red Cross HQ. He was advised that there is already a Gardening Holiday arranged from 11-14 September. Further discussion will take place between Alex and Norman W.

f. Publicity – no meeting. The increased cost of the newsletter had already been covered in Finance.

7. Special Projects

a. E-Learning was struggling to get away from basic instruction and guidance and onto real on-line learning. The Internet Café is used regularly. The new tele-link group is working well.

b. Awards and representation – The Queen's Award will be housed at the WLDC Chairman's office. The British Urban Regeneration Association has been in contact with Alex regarding a further award. Age Concern has the contract for the new Information Gateway – this will be housed in their offices in Moorgate, Ormskirk. Alex will retire from CVS Trusteeship at the end of 2009 (this is a U3A position). Representatives may be needed on other bodies.

8. Lancashire Link activities – nothing to report. Alex and Jeff will take this item forward

9. Third Age Trust – the optional property cover is due for renewal. Jeff and Chris will deal with this.

10. Any Other Business – there was no further business and the meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.

Chairman

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 13 January 2009 in Scout & Guide HQ starting at 0930