

AUGHTON & ORMSKIRK SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Christ Church 10.30am 5th November 2015

On arrival, members were checked in off a membership list and given a voting slip. The meeting required at least 100 members to be present. The Chairman (Geoff Maitland) announced that there were 156 members present and the meeting had a quorum. More members joined the meeting before the formal proceedings began.

Apologies had been received from Doreen McGiveron, David and Bettina Fairclough, Lily Bunner, Joyce and Stephen Turner, Michael Conlon, Elaine Maitland and Pearl Webster.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting. He thanked Alan Bonner and his team for overseeing the administration of the meeting, the Working Party who had drafted the clauses in the Draft Constitution covering the Trustee Body, Willem Wiechers and his Committee for their crucial work in overseeing the drafting of the proposed Constitution and the current Executive Committee for their support in finalising the Draft Constitution being presented to the membership at this meeting.

The Chairman began the formal stage of the meeting by outlining the history of the various Constitutions in operation since 2004 and how, as a consequence of irregularities in the voting system over the years, the 2004 Constitution was the only valid Constitution in operation for our U3A. It had been legitimately amended in 2014, the number required for a quorum being changed from 20% of the membership to 100 members. In 2014, at the AGM, members voted for the incorporation of a Trustee Body in a new Constitution and for a working party to be established to deliver it. In response, a Draft Constitution had been produced and was now to be accepted or rejected by the members at this Special Meeting.

One amendment had been received proposing the removal of the sentence "There is no limit on the number of terms that may be served" and replaced by the sentences "No one can serve more than two terms. Service as an Executive Committee member under previous constitutions counts as service under this constitution". The proposer Bernie Handford and the seconder Willem Wiechers spoke in favour of the amendment. Comments were invited from the members and the Chairman explained the background to the current wording. A vote was taken on a show of hands with the result being:

107 for the amendment. 49 against the amendment. 4 abstentions.

The Chairman declared the amendment carried and would be incorporated in the Draft Constitution.

The Chairman asked members present to consider the Draft Constitution as now amended and if the members voted to accept it, it would then replace the 2004 Constitution as our new Constitution. He invited comments from the members. A full and open discussion took place, mainly on the issue of a separate Body of Trustees, with members expressing their opinions on various elements of the Draft Constitution. Every opportunity was given to members to explore and seek clarification on a whole range of issues and to express their personal response to the Draft Constitution.

Following the lengthy discussion, the Chairman thanked all who had spoken. He explained that a proposed change to a constitution ranks as a special resolution requiring a two-thirds majority for it to succeed. A vote would be taken using the voting slips already distributed. He read out the wording of the motion and asked members to vote:

“I agree that the new Constitution for Aughton and Ormskirk U3A dated 4th September 2015 (with any agreed amendments) be adopted”.

Result of the ballot was:

117 in favour. 35 against. 1 abstention. 1 spoiled ballot paper.

The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Once the result was announced and having thanked all present, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.52 am.

Bill Watkinson proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman for his excellent chairing of the meeting.