

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE U3A COMMITTEE MEETING

2pm on the 5th September 2022

Held in the Epworth Room at The Mint

Present: committee members

Frances Berry (Vice Chair), Steph Ward (Treasurer), Minna Egan (Secretary), Julie Crichton-Smith (Groups Coordinator), Dave Parsons (Beacon Administrator), Bill Cross (Minutes secretary).

in attendance

Daphne Andrews (Membership Secretary), Rose Gander (observing).

1. Welcome

Frances welcomed everyone.

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Vivienne Watson and Ray Schaufeld.

3. Minutes of the Committee meeting of 4th July 2022

Approved

4. Matters arising

Exeter School and u3a intergenerational learning

Awaiting developments in new term. Julie had asked the school about DBS check requirements and Julia Daybell at the school had said this may be necessary but that it may be possible for the school to approve people attending. We have had no further contact and Minna will contact her and report back.

Site Builders replacement website

Dave reported on TAT proposals to improve web site facilities for u3as using WordPress. WordPress would allow much easier up-dating of our website so that changes to group details, contacts and dates by group convenors would automatically up-date the website information and calendar. The committee agreed the change was desirable, that Option 1 in Dave's note (to adopt the TAT theme and basic site and build on that) was the right one and that resources would be needed to see it through.

Dave asked the committee to note his willingness to support the changeover but that he would not want to lead the project.

The newsletter item seeking interest from people with relevant skills to support this change had drawn a blank and so Trudi would be asked to re-publish the item, possibly redrafted by Julie and Frances, with front page prominence. Daphne commented that it seemed Exeter u3a members seemed to expect the organisation to run without their contribution, which isn't a sustainable approach. Julie will raise this issue at the October monthly meeting.

There was concern that the newsletter item would deter interest as it asked

anyone expressing interest to face up to significant responsibilities from the start and so Julie proposed she would seek interest from members in a computing group which would be invited to accept the migration to WordPress as an initial project. Agreed.

Steph would ensure that sitebuilder information was as current as possible before migration and Julie would exhort convenors to make sure their information was current.

Survey of new members.

Frances explained that the free Survey Monkey service had limited the numbers of responses she had been able to analyse but thought that most had been available to her. The committee thought the results had confirmed the understanding they had about the experiences and needs of new members, which would be helpful in developing our responses to them.

Open day on 22/09

One magazine had carried our notice and we have posters for distribution to community notice boards, shops, etc. Committee members took some to distribute locally. Frances suggested about 10 days before the event. Steph will place a notice of the event in 'my neighbourhood' type social media sites and Julie would put it on our Facebook site. Julie has recruited a good number of members and convenors to attend on the day, including by her Doodle schedule. Help with refreshments has been arranged. Dave will assess the location for a suitable wall on which to project our rolling news and if appropriate seek the current version from Hardy. Steph suggested we should schedule staffing for a membership sign-up table and would have 20 forms printed. Steph will have printed 50 copies of the redacted newsletter. Bill will complete the application form for the special grant from TAT for this purpose.

Bill had invited Exeter City Councillor Laura Wright, Deputy Leader and portfolio holder for arts, culture and corporate services but had had no response. Rose suggested that Councillor Martin Pearce would also be appropriate – portfolio holder for communities and homeless prevention. Bill undertook to send Rose a copy of his email to Cnlr Wright and to send it also to Cnlr Pearce.

Treasures Day

Bearnes still committed to this event which coincides with the presence at Exeter of a number of their specialists and which they regard as good publicity, as it will be for u3a.

Members needed to understand that this was not an event with an audience and only those with a timed invitation for valuation of their items should attend.

Committee members might be able to bring items for valuing if numbers appeared low.

Frances had asked Bill, and Bill had agreed, to attend as a reporter in order to be able to prepare a note of the event for PR purposes afterwards.

New members coffee morning.

The event on the 16th August had been a success with 23 attending. 11 members have signed up for the next one on the 27th September. These events should now be scheduled quarterly and the next would take place shortly after the January open day.

5. Regular Reports

Finance

Steph's report was accepted. She noted that the Mint is producing a new contract. After several years of constant fees they are asking for an increase of about 10-12% on current costs which would increase our costs by about £600 for the remainder of 2022/23. The committee agreed that Viv and Steph should sign the new contract.

Some controversy has arisen over the TAT's proposal that the increase in their annual charge should be set at an indexed amount and charged automatically. Amendments to this proposal for the TAT AGM will challenge this but were not available today for the committee's comment. The committee will be asked to agree wording to the effect of supporting proposals which agreed to the current proposed increase but not for the automatic annual application of the increase. Also that it should apply from April 2024. Minna would vote on line accordingly at the October AGM.

Speakers.

Vivienne's note was accepted. Steph and Frances would meet to take the Speaker Secretary role forward now we have two members who have expressed interest.

Membership

No candidates for membership secretary as yet. A role not easily shared but the holder can use help at renewal time with data entry. Daphne is willing to continue in this role but also hopes someone else can be found.

Groups

Penny Briggs is launching a luncheon club. 5 members have been identified for a Spanish group which will meet on the 21st September with a potential convenor. The committee agreed the venue fee. The convenors cafe continues successfully and a number have volunteered for the open day. Next meeting 10/10.

Devon Link

The committee noted Steph's report and the similar concerns about recruiting members to support the committee other u3as had identified. Dave volunteered to attend the workshop on Recruiting and Valuing Volunteers on the 20th September.

6. Holiday Notice.

It was agreed that committee members would notify the committee of dates when they would be unavailable for meetings or action because of holidays or other issues.

7. **Approve October/November draft newsletter**

The Treasures event date should be the 6th October. This item should include the text referring to the event being restricted to invitees

Frances would draft the committee's contribution and refer to the importance for u3a success of members' participation.

8. **Approve the revised member application letter**

The draft is a generic letter which Daphne adapts to the applicant in question.

There should be no reference to our u3a as a 'branch' of the u3a nationally.

The national newsletter is not quarterly. No need to mention its frequency.

The 22nd September open event needs to be described not as a monthly meeting but as an event to promote membership of u3a to the public.

The reference to 'other groups' should be to 'other u3as'.

9. **AOB**

Steph will up-date the group timetable.

TAT to be provided with Frances's telephone number for enquiries. E-mail enquiries via TAT already go to enquiriesu3aexeter@gmail.com which Viv has agreed to monitor.

Confidential item.

Rose suggested we should have available business cards with details of the u3a, its purpose and website which could be presented to members of the public interested in knowing more or in applying for membership.

Date of next meeting Monday 7th November 2022
2:00 pm Epworth Room at The Mint