

## **Minutes of the Exeter U3A Committee Meeting**

**2pm, 4 October 2023**

**Held at the Mint**

***Present for the meeting:***

**Committee members:**

Bill Cross (secretary), Ann Harper (minutes secretary), Steph Ward (treasurer), Julie Crichton-Smith (co-groups coordinator, co-vice chair), Anne Barwell, M J Morgan, Annabel Nater, (co-groups coordinator), Ian Murray, Dave Parsons, Steve Fabian

### **1 Election of Chair**

The committee agreed that Steph should act as Chair for this meeting

### **2. Welcome**

Steph welcomed the committee members.

### **3. Apologies**

Terry Ancell

### **4. Minutes of 7 September**

The draft minutes had been circulated prior to the 5 October meeting. They were agreed unanimously subject to a typo error correction and the addition of 'if needed' after Point 9 Actions: MJ to assist in set up and 'Steph to be announcer at the beginning (not the end) of the meeting'

*Matters arising:*

All actions had been completed other than point 9 Action for Steph – the removal of Nella as a signatory completed but the process for adding Julie as a signatory is still ongoing.

### **5. Approve T&Cs for new website**

The T&Cs were not yet ready for approval. If they arrive before the next committee meeting Bill will liaise with Dave re any annotations and then send out to committee members with the request that they agree to their being signed or otherwise.

*Actions:*

*Bill and Dave:* to liaise regarding T&Cs and to send forward to the committee to determine whether or not to accept the terms and conditions. If approved by email they would be signed and returned to the Third Age Trust as required.

*Bill:* to include on next month's agenda

## 6. National AGM resolutions and agreed votes

All committee members had received a copy of the Third Age Trust's AGM papers for their meeting on 18 October 2023 before this meeting. Steph ran through the proposed items which we could vote on and asked for the committee's decision:

### *Resolution 1:*

To receive and approve the minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting

Committee decision: Abstain

### *Resolution 2*

To appoint Goodman Jones LLP as the Auditors and to authorise the Board of Directors to set their remuneration

Committee decision: Agree

### *Resolution 3:*

Now that the u3a has in excess of 1000 u3a's, with the South East Region representing around 20% of the National figure, we request that the organisational review of the Third Age Trust is mandated to consider a mechanism to give greater status and input to smaller networks/clusters. Proposed by Hastings and Rother u3a and seconded by Hailsham and District u3a

Committee decision: Abstain

### *Resolution 4*

*This Annual General Meeting calls on the Third Age Trust to: 1. Adopt as a key strategic priority an increase in national u3a membership to at least 500,000 by the end of 2028 2. Implement regular and substantial national promotional activities that enable this goal to be achieved 3. To report on the implementation and impact of promotional activities at Board meetings and in Annual Reports Proposed by Royston u3a and seconded by Tring u3a.*

Committee decision: Against

## **Actions**

*Bill:* to vote on our behalf.

## 7. Review of monthly meeting 27 September

Before the Ann Widdecombe talk, the committee were contacted by email by roughly 80 people: approximately 47 people did not want this talk to go ahead; about 25 people said it should go ahead another 8 were neutral on this subject.

On the day itself there were roughly 180 people in attendance, 6 of whom were people who had stated that they were against the talk going ahead. Once Ann Widdecombe had started her talk, 3 of these people quietly got up and left the room. There were a number of questions asked at the end of the talk one of which addressed a comment AW had made in the past about homosexuality. AW explained that she had been misrepresented on the point and the audience were enthusiastic about her response.

There was a discussion about how and if the committee should now continue correspondence on this matter with the Exonians. The general feeling was that the meeting had gone well, the Exonians had been respectful in how they demonstrated their disapproval and the hope was that this particular issue could now be laid to rest.

The decision was that the usual newsletter article covering monthly meeting speakers would go in with no reference to the controversy. In addition, an email to the Exonians would be sent out thanking them for expressing their views politely. Also see point 8 for further involvement of the Exonians in drafting the speaker policy.

## **8. Speaker policy review**

Steve gave a briefing on how the speaker team works in setting up and deciding on the monthly meeting speakers. Despite the fact that there is a considerable amount of organisation and work involved in this, the procedure works well. The committee agreed that a working party should be set up to formalise the speaker policy based on the Charity Commission's and Third Age Trust's guidance.

Ian and Bill volunteered to be on the working party, Steve would ask the other speaker team members (Fran, Rachel and Jean) if one of them would like to be on it (Steve abstained himself) and we would ask the Exonians if one of them would like to be in the working party. It was also agreed that we should ask the general membership if anyone would be interested in participating in order to identify one person to represent them.

### ***Actions***

*Steve:* to speak to speaker team

*Steph/Bill:* to send out email to general members and the Exonians.

## **9. Response to Third Age Trust Intervention in Ann Widdecombe's talk**

As the Third Age Trust had been contacted by the Exonians directly, it was felt that no further action was required from the committee.

## **10. Response to general member's email regarding the hurtful comments made by the Exonians United**

Julie had sent a draft response to the committee before the meeting and it was agreed that this would be sent with the addition of a comment that he should approach the Exonians if he wanted to see the correspondence (as stated in the Exonian's newsletter article).

### ***Action***

*Steph:* to send out the email to the general member after committee members had agreed to it.

## **11. Committee membership and roles moving forward**

Each committee member stated what their view was for themselves in the future. Steph, Julie and Dave will be standing down from next year's AGM (although open to supporting their replacement if needed for a little longer). Both Steph and Dave may have people ready to step into their roles. Annabel, Ann H, Ian, MJ and Anne B (all new committee members) happy to continue in their roles and prepared to assist those members who currently have specific roles in some of their duties. Steve and Bill would like to continue in their current roles.

There was no one who currently felt confident in taking on the role of Chair so it was agreed that Julie would act as Acting Chair until the 2024 AGM with other people taking on some of the chair's responsibilities.

### ***Action***

*Bill:* to add Julie to the Third Age Trust as acting chair.

*Bill:* to add future of the u3a committee to next month's agenda

## **12. Any other business**

Bill had sent out an email regarding the Devon Link zoom meeting on 17 October to ask if anyone wanted to attend.

### ***Action***

*MJ:* will attend the meeting if time allows.

End of meeting 4pm

**Date of next meeting Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 2pm, Rowe Hall at the Mint**