

Minutes of meeting Monday 1st July 2024 10.00am Downham Market Town Hall

.SM (acting Chair) CD, FB, BG, LA, EC, SC, SH

Apologies

JC, TM, LE

The Chair welcomed the group. Minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Matters Arising

SM is to take over from TS as Beacon Administrator with TS as back up. The handover is planned for later this summer. Ongoing

There was a general group discussion around the role of Group Leaders. The group felt that there is a need for more transparency and better liaison particularly with the Treasurer. SM commented that new Group Leaders should be advised that this is the way forward but all felt that it would be unwise to do other than encourage present group leaders to engage. This topic was discussed at greater length later in the meeting.

Antivirus Protection

FB has sufficient personal licences to allow U3A the use of one at her expense. The Chair thanked her for her generosity.

Paperwork Shredding

This has now been done.

Hall Hire

CD has now booked the hall and meeting room until December including an extension of time for the Christmas party.

Liaison with other local u3A groups

FB has been in contact and a Fenland cluster has been agreed. Trips and events will be offered to all members in the cluster. In the event that a specific group has organised a trip, group members will be given priority. Wisbech U3A allow members of other U3A's to join one of their groups free of charge - general discussion ensued and the consensus of opinion was that associate membership was our groups preferred option for those wishing to participate in a Downham group. Chatteris are considering a French conversation group. General feedback is that the age of the membership is getting older and that there are more people with disabilities. There was a general group discussion as to assisting members to attend meetings and the need for emergency contact numbers.

Action Needed

SM to speak to group leaders to ensure they have this information and to encourage them to be more proactive in helping/maintaining contact with older members.

Pins for Committee

JC is dealing with this **Ongoing**

Downham U3A Pens

LA/SH obtained costings for these and passed to FB. FB was able to locate a cheaper source.

Action Needed

FB to place order.

Publicity

LA asked new members how they had heard of U3A and will continue this initiative. **Ongoing.**

BG requested a copy of the current poster.

Action Needed

FB to send

BG had also contacted CANVA regarding printing and has been told the U3A is not eligible due to being an educational facility rather than a charity. FB advised that this is an error on their behalf and is a customer service issue.

Action Needed

BG to speak to CANVA customer services.

BG also requested that he had all current groups correctly listed for his poster project. SM advised that JC has been informed that the Gardening Visit group will be discontinued as the current leaders have served for 2 years and have visited many of the local attractions. LE is proposing to set up an "active" gardening group. SM has produced some information for attendees to meetings clearly listing the current groups and it was agreed that BG could treat this as a reliable source.

SM has discovered that the group already has a Facebook page but that at the moment it is a closed group not open to the public.

Action Needed

SM to contact JB and advise that the committee would like the group open to all

SM to set up new Facebook Page for all local U3A matters.

EC/SC till need connecting to Beacon

Action needed

FB to pursue.

CD confirmed that all committee members plus trustees need to be on Beacon.

BG and TM will need group leader access

Action Needed

FB To arrange.

John Cowin is out of hospital although still unwell, as a consequence Carroll Cowin has had to resign as a committee member and her role as Group Co-ordinator although she wishes to remain involved as a RUG. The get-well gift was well received.

Chairmans Report JC

JC attended a meeting of Group leaders which was not well attended. Some interesting ideas were put forward including putting information re U3A in GP surgeries, Residents handbooks and the Friday free paper.

SM as Chair thanked EC for contacting local publications with a write up. EC was able to confirm that the items will appear.

The group discussed the need for lists of members of individual groups for comparison with membership records. SM stated that in order to do this she would need access to all Beacon records of members. The committee agreed to this request. All group leaders should be using Beacon.

It was agreed that non attending group Leaders should be contacted/visited by members of the committee and JC had provided a list. Most of the committee were happy to undertake this and the list was shared out.

Action Needed

All participating committee members to visit/contact their allocated groups as soon as possible to discuss closer working and ensure that Health and Safety, Safeguarding and other policy matters are being followed as well as general promotion of the U3A as well as ensuring that they feel supported by the committee and to ascertain if they require any help or information.

The Chairman also feels that the committee need more help with larger events and will arrange for a "sign up" sheet to be available at the monthly meeting which will be announced at the next meeting

Vice Chairmans Report SM

Nothing to report

Treasurers Report CD

The financial statement had been circulated prior to the meeting. All committee members confirmed receipt and there were no queries. Memberships are now all paid for this year so no further income is anticipated. There is a need to check on visitors to U3A activities to see if they are exceeding their agreed non-member entries to events.

Action Needed

SM to check the group members' lists.

The new machine has now been purchased and due to delay CD was able to obtain a higher specification model for a budget model price of £34.80. The signing in team will need training on the use of the machine but no firm plan was set at the meeting. PayPal is still available.

CD requested an up-to-date list of committee members and trustees

Action Needed

FB to provide.

There is a need for a co-signatory for authorising payments. SM is happy to do this as long as the invoice has not been raised by her group. The consensus is that invoices and payments should always be approved by two separate officers.

The invoice for the get-well gift has been authorised for payment. The group were in full approval.

Business Secretary FB

Microsoft 365 is available through the U3A if required.

There will be a need to elect a new Business Secretary as FB wished to step down. The post was suggested to EC but EC was not keen as she is not particularly skilled at IT! SH was asked but she is unwilling to accept trustee status for personal reasons.

FB is hoping to have some rebranding materials in time for the meeting on Monday 8th July.

There will be a meeting with siteworks as Group Leaders have reported problems but no date has been set yet. There will be no going live until all is ready for presentations to and approval by the committee.

Action Needed

FB to set up meeting.

FB will be away for the 8th July meeting. SM and LA will cover allocating the raffle tickets. The fire safety advice will need to be read out.

Action Needed

JC to speak to caretaker to ensure hearing loop is activated.

LA needs her U3A email set up

Action Needed

FB to arrange.

FB is sending out the East of England U3A bulletin today (1/7/24) by email.

Membership Secretary SM

22 members have lapsed membership and there are 2 new members. The total membership now stands at 233. There was a general discussion on the topic of helping people to get to meeting with lifts etc. The group suggested that JC raises this at the monthly meeting SC suggested it could go in the newsletter as well.

Action Needed

JC to raise issue / appeal in newsletter.

Speaker's Secretary LE (absent but info left with group)

There have been some changes to the planned schedule of speakers. The Rock Choir have been booked for Christmas 2025. Freshers day will be 9th September. FB has already contacted local papers e.g. Lynn News with this date.

Action Needed

EC to send her copy to BG.

EC to advise Watlington Gossip of Freshers date.

There may be a shortage of helpers for providing refreshments on Monday 8th. EC and SC have offered to help if needed.

SH is taking over from Carroll the monthly meeting refreshment duties and ensure that refreshments are available at the committee meetings.

Action Needed

SH to collect supplies etc from SM over the weekend.

Minutes Secretary EC

Nothing to report

New Members LA

No report but would like some more new members packs

Action Needed

FB to supply.

Health and Safety SC

No report

The monthly free raffle prize will be tea and biscuits this month

Action Needed

CD to purchase

There was a general discussion about encouraging members to attend committee meetings and to encourage new members to join. A formal discussion was deferred until the new term.

AOB

SM has arranged welcome and group information signs for display

BG queried if any group which says it is full should go on the publicity information. The consensus was that group leaders may have a waiting list system or perhaps consider making two groups so yes.

There was a robust discussion as to whether group names really reflect the activity- however it was agreed that the Group leader has the right to name their group and this should be respected.

Christmas Arrangements

SM is to discuss this further with JC. A subcommittee meeting is needed

Action Needed

To be pursued at next meeting

CD advised that the Singing for Pleasure group had performed at Barbara Foster's memorial and that thanks had been expressed and the contribution well received.

SM has asked Jose if he would consider setting up a Spanish conversation group.

The meeting was closed at 12.08

The next meeting will be Monday 2 September 2024 at 10.0am Downham Market Town Hall

Signed

Dated