

**St Austell u3a Committee Minutes**  
**11<sup>th</sup> August 2021 – 2.00pm**  
**Via Zoom**  
**Meeting Chaired By Chris Crane**

**Present** - Chris Scott, Jan Badger, Chris Crane, Maryanne Thomas, Ann Smith

**Apologies** - Sharon Wood, Jenny Skipp, Lucinda Davison

**Elected Chair for the Meeting** – Chris Crane was unanimously elected as chair for the meeting.

**Minutes of Last Committee Meeting** - Approved. **JB** and **CS** to sign-off.

**Matters Arising from Last Committee Meeting** – JB confirmed that LD had called CP to see how she was and to ascertain whether she was going to continue as a Committee member. CP later sent an email to JB confirming her formal registration from the Committee. CS has removed CP as a Trustee. AS to confirm membership numbers starting from January 2020; all other items are on today's agenda.

**Financial Update as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 - CS**

Finances are pretty solid, the Main Account currently has a balance of £13,414.41p; outgoings during July were a speaker fee of £80.00p and the Zoom licence fee of £14.39p. One new member joined (£20.00p).

There were no transactions through the TAM account which has a balance of £3,322.23p. There have been problems with Barclay's paperwork. One set has been lost and two new sets have not been sent as promised. CS has found a set on-line and has printed these off. **CS** to post these to JB, **JB** to send these back to CS.

The Business Account, (other Main Account) previously used for membership has a balance of £10.03p this amount to remain in the account to keep the account active.

Theatre Group Account – current balance is £118.98p, this partly comprises money we pay for the website hosting (£9.06p) per month and some money left in the Theatre Account prior to CS taking over. Outgoings were £404.00p, for 27 members who went to the Starcrazy production.

Wine Group Account - currently £254.28p, the only outgoing, £88.00p was a refund to two members for Edie's lunch which has been cancelled

**Re-Opening - CS**

CS had spoken to the Heavy Transport Club at the beginning of the month; this is now a non-runner as the person who wanted us there did not get elected. CS had met with Jonathan A yesterday at the Arts Centre. Jonathan A informed CS that the Arts centre will not be

imposing any COVID restrictions on attendees. They will not be asking for proof of vaccination, negative COVID test or proof of immunity.

CS had been in touch with our Group leaders regarding re-starting and most of them had got back to him. Some Group Leaders on Beacon are no longer Group Leaders and these need to be tidied up. **Pietro A** to sort this out.

Work has started on the toilets under the stairs, but still need to be completed. There is a brand new higher toilet and hand basin and it is clean. The walls are to be re-plastered and decorated.

CS also informed us that the Arts Centre had been cleaned and smelled fresher than his last visit a few months ago. CS suggested to Jonathan A that the entrance hall and stairwell could do with improving as this did not give a good first impression. Jonathan A said the Arts Centre Trustees do have plans to improve the entrance hall and stairwell.

Jonathan A asked CS if he was happy with the rent. CS informed the Committee that we were getting a good deal and although the Arts Centre was not ideal, it was a base to work from. CS suggested that once we re-open we invite comments from members (to be sent to AS, Membership Secretary), regarding any concerns they have with the building and how generally they are finding things. Any concerns can then be discussed with the Arts Centre. AS asked what was happening with disability access. CS replied that the Arts Centre were currently unable to get anyone to quote, however they were determined to get this done at some future date.

CS informed us that it was preferable that the Arts Centre get permission from Cornwall Council to do these works, rather than insisting Cornwall Council do the work, which could result in a large rent increase.

CS recommended that we go back to the Arts Centre from September. Only two groups did not want to return to the Arts Centre, but two other groups now do want to use the Arts Centre. CS also confirmed that group member fees at the Arts Centre would remain at £1.00p per member. CS reminded us that we are the primary user of the Arts Centre.

AS asked about wheelchair access, CS replied that it was impossible to get anyone to do this at present and it was the same case getting someone to build the disability access toilets. The Arts Centre does however intend to make the building disability compliant and they have a grant for building improvement works. CC suggested that it may be in our interest to help the Arts Centre find someone to do the disability compliance works.

CC asked how many of our members needed disability access. AS said she didn't know, but she had received an enquiry from a prospective new member regarding wheelchair access. JB responded that we can't know if how many of our current members need disability access as we haven't seen all of them for over eighteen months. Some member's health may have deteriorated and some members may be waiting for operations etc.

The Committee agreed that we would restart groups/meetings at the Arts Centre from September 1<sup>st</sup>.

CS to write to all members regarding re-opening and electronic payments and will let them know that although the building is not ideal, despite a thorough search there is nothing else available that would suit our needs and financially it is very beneficial for us to be there.

JB requested that CS include a note in the email that access to the upstairs rooms was via a substantial staircase. CS mentioned that there is now a third small room available upstairs, which needs re-decorating. This was previously used as storage for the Theatre Group.

CC asked when CS would be sending this email, so that he could include a note in the Newsletter that it was on its way. CS replied that he had still to get hold of a couple of Group Leaders, but he was planning to send it out next week.

AS asked if CC could put a note in the Newsletter that prospective members can join at the monthly meeting or the coffee morning.

### **Emergency Contact Details – JB**

A request from Roger J; Roger follows a National u3a Facebook group, where general opinion was that it would be a good idea if members wrote their emergency contact details on the back of their membership cards. If there were an incident, particularly at an outdoor event, the Group Leader would then have quick access to emergency contact details if needed. MT said she could add this to the Longer Walks Risk assessment form. The committee agreed this was a good idea. **CC** to add this to the Newsletter.

### **Zoom Hosts for the Monthly Speaker Meetings - JB**

JB reminded the Committee that we only had one more Zoom Monthly Speaker booked (September); Carol F has agreed to host this meeting. **CC** to give Carol full instructions on how to do this nearer the time.

After September we have nobody booked, either in person or via Zoom. CS said it would be good to have an in person speaker in October, CC reminded us that nobody had volunteered to organise this. JB said she was happy to send the September speaker details to Carol F, but after this she wanted to step away from any involvement with speakers due to the amount of paperwork that will need to be dealt with following the re-opening of the Arts Centre.

CC suggested that if we don't have a speaker for a month or two, someone may step forward. JB said that Norma J has a file of potential speakers and is willing do a handover to anyone who volunteers. JB added that it would be worthwhile asking around when we are in face to face contact with more members as the personal approach may work better. **CC** to add a note to the Newsletter, that without a speaker secretary we won't have any speakers.

JB asked for confirmation that we wouldn't be holding an in person September monthly meeting as we have a Zoom speaker booked, but that we would hold the coffee morning on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September. CS confirmed that our catering team were ready to re-start.

CS said that he was now a key holder for the Arts Centre, but needed to do an audit of the building keys. CC to add a note to the Newsletter that we are conducting an annual review of key holders and to request that any member who holds a set of keys contact CS by email.

### **Review of the St Austell u3a Accessibility Policy**

JB informed the Committee that had been no changes to the National Accessibility Policy, so therefore there were no changes to our policy; we just needed to review it.

The Committee approved the policy. JB to re-date the policy, add a new review date for a year hence and send the Policy to CC so that the website can be updated.

JB informed the Committee that next month the Data Protection (GDP) Policy and the Privacy Policy were due for a review. If we are going to use Gift Aid this needs to be included in the policies and members need to be informed of this change. JB informed AS that the Gift Aid option will also need to be added to the Membership Form.

CS proposed we use Gift Aid and the Committee voted in favour.

### **Cashless Groups – CS Electronic Payments – CS**

CS informed us he was going to merge these two agenda items together. CS let us know that had received three responses to the email he had sent out to Group Leaders and all three were fully supportive of the move to Cashless groups and Electronic payments. CS reminded us that the Treasury Team would still be accepting cheques.

CS let us know that prior to him taking over the role of Treasurer, some Group Leaders would hold on to payments for up to six months. Using the Pre-payment Cards will mean we will have the money up front and we will be able to keep a check that only current members are attending groups. CS showed us an example of a Pre-payment card he had designed and informed us that the Membership numbers would need to be added manually and that he has obtained quotes from local printers to produce the cards.

CS reminded us that going forward using Membership numbers would become the norm for any payments. For BACS payments, the Membership number would be used followed by a code, for example, PPC for Pre-payment card or LD for line dancing.

CS asked for Committee approval to purchase a card reading machine for £150.00 which has printing capability and includes a dedicated 3g phone link. The only other costs would be a 1.69% per transaction fee and printer rolls. The Committee approved the purchase.

CS also asked for Committee approval to get the Pre-payment cards printed. The costs were £97.00p for 5,000 cards or £170.00 for 10,000 cards. The Committee approved the printing of 10,000 cards.

**CS** to draft an email to members letting them know how the Cashless Groups and Electronic Payments methods are going to work, to inform them that the methods have already been trialled already by two of the larger groups where the process has worked very well and that the methods have been voted for unanimously by Group Leaders.

CS also let us know that he may need a third person to authorise BACS payments if he and JS were not available.

### **COVID Update/Groups Restart - JB**

JB had sent all Committee members a copy of the latest National u3a guidelines. From these guidelines the Committee needs to decide if we are going to impose any additional measures over and above government guidelines and if we do we need to let our members know what we have decided and why.

CS said he thought there were three options here:

- No conditions
- We impose conditions
- We give best practice advice

MT asked if it could be best practice but down to the individual groups to decide. JB replied that any decision we make needs to apply to all members, so it can't be done on a group by group basis.

CS asked if we can give best practice advice to all members and mention their personal responsibility (as per government guidelines), which would include not attending if you have any COVID symptoms or have been in recent close contact with anyone who has had a positive COVID diagnosis.

CC expressed a concern that if we imposed conditions the Group Leaders would be expected to police these.

JB said she was against imposing conditions, but in favour of giving best practice advice, which may need to be amended and updated going forward and also encouraging personal responsibility.

JB reminded the Committee that none of the additional measures mentioned in the document needed to be in place for u3a insurance compliance purposes. The committee agreed that we would not be dictatorial.

**CC** to upload the latest COVID guidelines to the website.

MT offered to do a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of a best practice email to include personal responsibility, CC reminded us that we need the best practice document in place by September 1<sup>st</sup>. JB suggested that as part of best practice we remind members to bring their membership cards with them. **MT** to send the draft to JB and CS next week.

JB informed the Committee that all groups re-starting at the Arts Centre need to submit Risk Assessment Forms for Committee approval.

JB let the Committee know that PB was stepping down as Group leader for the Outreach group and that we would need the Outreach group going forward to contact new members and current members who don't re-appear at groups/meetings. PB had contacted LD to see if she wants to take over the group. **LD** to come back to us by the next Committee meeting. JB offered to help out with the Outreach group if needed and said we may also need other members to join the group to do some of the telephone work.

### **South West Region u3a Research and Shared Learning Workshop - JB**

JB attended an interesting South West Region u3a workshop on Research and Shared Learning. There is a huge amount of support available from National u3a for anyone wanting to undertake any form of research project and JB offered to be the contact point for anyone who wants to run or join a research project. **JB** to let members know about these National u3a initiatives later in the year.

JB let the committee know that a couple of the current/proposed research projects were Family History focussed, one of which Carol F has already been participating in on a personal basis, this project will feature in the September issue of the TAM magazine. The other project is Family History through Photography, which is currently awaiting funding from two universities, one in London and one in Leeds. **JB** has spoken to Carol F about this project and will let Carol know more about this project when the funding is in place.

There is a current project called Slow Ways which is walking paths that link villages and towns to check that they still exist and to monitor whether they are passable or not. Roger J is aware of this project.

During the Breakout Group session there was a general discussion with other South West Region u3as about Research projects and the willingness of members generally to volunteer for anything. General consensus was that many members have become very passive and unlikely to volunteer for anything, going into a sit back and receive mode rather than an active and get involved mode. The good news is that those who are active and get involved get far more out of the u3a than the passive members.

Nationally there is now a general trend for members to only join a group where everything is organised for them – theatre, outings etc.

## **AOB**

CS informed us he would get the pre-payment cards printed in blue, CC and JB suggested that this blue should be u3a blue.

CS to process payment for the Copyright Licence which expired 1/08/21.

JB advised AS that she needs to get the Membership Form and Welcome Pack for new members up-to-date. **JB** to send AS/LD a copy of the latest sample Membership Form from the National u3a website.

AS asked about Newsletters, were they publicly available? CC replied that the current Newsletter was but previous Newsletters have been archived and were only available via a log-on which most members didn't have, this can be changed so that the archived Newsletters are publicly available and CC can archive anything we need archived. The Committee agreed to re-visit this at a later date.

MT offered to give a Monthly Meeting talk if we needed her to.

JB advised she would not be producing any group leaflets yet, this to be a discussion with the Groups Co-ordinator at a later date when things have settled down. JB said her preference was for members to get this information from the website, CC agreed.

JB informed CS that she was now able to attend the Mid and Far West Cornwall u3a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> August

JB – the next Committee Meeting will be Wednesday September 1<sup>st</sup> 10.00am at the Arts Centre, to include a pre-start inspection of the building.