

**St Austell U3A Committee Meeting
Tuesday 30th November 2021 at 10.00am
Venue: St Austell Arts Centre
MINUTES**

Present: Pippa Boardman, Jan Badger, Lucinda Davison, Ann Smith, Maryanne Thomas, Joan Hooper, Chris Crane, Chris Scott, Pauline Weir, Carol Folley (Minutes)

1. Welcome & Introductions

LD welcomed everyone. She explained her role with the Outreach team concerned with checking up on 'lost' members and monitoring new ones. CF explained how long she had been a member and what her new role is on the committee. She also runs two family history groups. PW said she had been a St Austell u3a member for about 3 years. PB joins the Committee from time to time as Honorary President – she also runs a Petanque group and may start a new Spanish group. JB said she is the Secretary and the 'go to' person. CC is responsible for the website, publicity and social media. JH joined St Austell u3a about 2 years ago before Covid and is running a Quiz group. CS is Treasurer; he looks after the funds and new financial procedures. He said there was some resistance to the new cashless system, but it is now running quite smoothly. MT is the Groups Co-ordinator and also runs the long walks, environmental and folk music groups. AS is the Membership Secretary.

2. Apologies for Non-Attendance

Apologies from Jenny Skipp and Sharon Wood

3. Election of Chair for the Committee Meeting

LD was proposed and seconded. All agreed.

4. Election of New Committee Members by the Committee

CF, PW and JS were all proposed and seconded. All agreed.

5. Trustee Declaration Form Signatures for New Committee Members – CS

Newly elected Committee members, as above, signed relevant paperwork, passed to CS

6. New Committee Members – Photo Permission and Photos for the Website – CC

CC needs permission for new Committee members for our photographs to be on website. CF said hers was already on it. PW and JH to send photo to CC.

7. Approve the Minutes of the Last Committee Meeting – JB & LD to sign

Minutes were approved and signed by JB and LD.

8. Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes

Outstanding from 29th October 2021. PAT testing still needs to be done. Card Readers – done. New members all done. Grant approved for St Austell u3a, will tie in with Open Day and Outreach, Flag, signage etc. LD said she'd changed her email to Gmail from BT to resolve receiving and delivery problems. AS still has problems with her Yahoo email, so will speak to PA to help sort out. CC asked that he be informed when sorted. LD needs to sort email problems out with JH. PB queried whether we could set up a closed WhatsApp group.

Donations of food for Christmas food parcels are going to Norma for sorting. Adding data fields for PPC purchase on Beacon is still outstanding - CS

9. Financial Update – CS

CS said that the account looks healthy. £14K+ is good. Wine group account balance is lower than usual. Over £200 has been spent on mailing out monthly newsletters and other information to members who don't have e-mail; the cost of doing this exceeds their membership fees.

Most people happy with the PPCs, a very small amount is spent subsidising each card transaction – 1.6p. Groups not running due to COVID are being subsidised at £6 per hour for each room, about £80 per month. JH said her group runs at a loss, JB said that Travellers' Tales is large so subsidises smaller groups as do other large groups. JH had to guarantee £20 per session at Patten Hall (the previous venue for the Quiz Group); it would be more expensive to move to other premises. Gift Aid forms will help funds as 3 years back payments from HMRC would be very useful; Committee to discuss its use if, and when, it happens. Mac users may find using the Gift Aid form difficult. New members already have the option to opt in for Gift Aid.

10. Brief Review of how the New Financial Process is Working – CS

New members are accepting the new system and most current members are quite happy. CC queried whether the system benefits the organisation and easier for members. Is the process easy? Members pay for PPC up front. MT will hold another Group Leaders' meeting in February to see how it is all going. CS said it was better to send any money by BACS rather than by cheque and use the codes as reference. Cheques can be scanned and sent to the bank. Group Leaders to let CS know when BACS payments have been sent.

11. Approval for Purchase of a 2nd Card Reader – CS

JH has been designated as 3rd person if needed, always useful to have another person to check. Second reader would be the same as the one used already - £99 + VAT – can be used for member subscriptions in January and other groups, for example, the Theatre Group. CS would order and try to get a Black Friday deal.

12. How the Website could be used for Archiving Some Documents – CC

CC asked if we have a system for archiving Minutes etc. Access should be for Committee members only. AGM should also be on the website. It would need to be protected by a password. PB said that legally archived material should be kept for 7 years. PB suggested uploading copies of the minutes for the last year. Paper copies to be kept in a locked area of the office and Agendas to be stored with the minutes. CC to let JB know which minutes he already has so that the gaps can be filled in.

13. Timeframe for Adding Membership Forms to Beacon for New Members' Email Addresses and Ticking the Gift Aid Box – JB

JB said she had checked all the Membership Forms back January 2021 and filled in the Gift Aid box on Beacon if this option had been selected by the member. Currently there are Beacon issues regarding downloading data on Gift Aid as Beacon is not recognising the Gift Aid poll. CS to speak to Pietro A

CS disclosed that there had been a user issue with Beacon, he had inadvertently ticked the Gift Aid box for every single member; the user error was resolved within 24 hours. JB said a time frame was needed for adding new members to Beacon as they cannot join groups until their membership application has been processed. JB suggested that ideally someone sits with AS to add the member to Beacon while she is sorting out the subscriptions. Someone is needed to step in for AS if she is not available.

14. Using a Free On-line Email Verification Service to Check New Members' Email Addresses such as <https://www.verifyemailaddress.org/#> -JB

JB said the email verification site is very good. Member's emails should be checked at time of joining, possibly by the person adding the new members to Beacon, so that inputting an incorrect email address does not further delay processing the Membership Form. JH offered to help with new members; a queue often builds up early.

15. Speaker Co-ordinator Role – JB

JB said that Mark Stephenson has speakers booked until June 2022. He can only commit to doing the admin side of the job as he will sometimes be away so needs people to host speaker meetings as required. Some members would like to see the presentations on Zoom so they can join from home. Technical support would be needed to set this up. MT queried whether this would be legal as some speakers might not be happy re copyright. CS said that National u3a have talks that are free on Zoom. CC to talk to Mark S and Jonathan A. CC said we would need a video camera. Stuart Bradley has offered to teach members how to use Zoom. It should be easy to check in advance which speakers would be willing or not to have their talks on Zoom.

16. Disability Access and Air Purifiers at the Arts Centre – CS

CS said that nothing had been done yet regarding air purifiers. PB said a builder has seen the accessibility works required and quoted. National Trust has portable ramps costing about £300 so feasible to arrange, these would however need permission as Cornwall CC own the building.

Air purifiers – Roger J and MT have updated since the last Minutes. Fresh air from open doors is too cold. LD has checked initial costs and running costs. JB said it was not a huge expense particularly as lives could be saved and post-COVID they would still be of great value to members with breathing difficulties. Committee would need to know the portability of the purifiers and the practicalities of them. Would it be possible to share with the Arts Centre Players? Committee agreed a good idea in principle to purchase. MT to speak to Roger J, PB to speak to Sandy French.

17. Membership Renewals in January – CS

CS asked how best to set up the renewal session. We have 2 card readers. PB thought it would be automatic to move members to a new year if, for example, they joined in November. If the data does roll-over satisfactorily, new membership cards should print off correctly for the end date. LD said we should be ready before January as it was time consuming printing cards and separating them. PA needs reminding to connect laptop with printer for cards and leaflets. CS hoping that the majority of members would use BACS for renewal payments. CS said any bank print offs needed to remain confidential. LD needs

membership cards for when members pay. CS said that payments by BACS took 72 hours before they were cleared. LD suggested putting that in the next newsletter.

The Committee decided to move this Agenda Item to a meeting specifically for the Membership Renewal process. It was agreed that this meeting would be held at 9.30am on 7th December at The Arts Centre.

18. An update on Group Leaders' Responses Regarding Website Content – CC

CS had sent out an email explaining a need for good ideas to improve our groups. It is our 'shop window'. Send on what we do each session. Market it ourselves. **JB and MT** are writing a Best Practice Document for distribution at the next Group Leader's meeting in February, this will include update the Groups web profiles.

19. Christmas Meeting Update – JB/LD

Lots of support. Thanks for decorations various members have made and given. Norma J to help organise decorating the Arts Centre. JS to organise refreshments. JB and LD to be in early to set up. MT hosting the Christmas entertainment. Any mince pies left over to be donated to the Norma and Shirley's Christmas Food Parcels. CS said Karen S is struggling to recruit more 'meeters and greeters'. Suggested a request for volunteers went in the next Newsletter. Use urn and slow cookers for mulled wine. Extension leads would be needed, Committee members to lend these. JB has donated a bottle of wine. AS to buy wine and be reimbursed. Need 12 bottles of wine and oranges and lemons. MT will make muslin bags filled with spices.

20. How do we know who has bought a PPC or used Gift Aid? Can this be logged on Beacon so that Reports can be downloaded? – JB

JB said that Gift Aid can be noted on Beacon. PPC needs to be sorted – not just on paper. **CS** to speak to Pietro A

21. COVID Update – JB

JB said she was keeping up to date with the situation. It may be mandatory for members to wear masks or face coverings going forward.

22. Setting up a Review of all processes to ensure that they are Fit for Purpose Going Forward – CS

Committee agreed to move this Agenda Item to the next meeting.

23. Update on South West Regional Zoom Marketing Conference – CC

CC said the meeting was interesting. Problems with volunteers. Need ideas such as a stall outside a supermarket etc. CC has put his name down for a regional working group.

24. Date for Next Committee Meeting and Taking Down Christmas Decorations (Tues 4th Jan?) – JB

Agreed Tuesday 7th December for a sub-committee meeting on the Membership Renewal Process. Taking down of decorations, Tuesday 4th January (if OK with Jonathan A). Thursday, 6th January for membership renewals followed by a committee meeting at 12.30pm. Bring lunch!

25. Any Other Business

CS asked about Group Attendance Records. CC and JB informed him these were available to download from our website.

PB suggested it would be useful to have a “happy to help” group for new members so they could take them to different groups or coffee etc. LD said this is what the Outreach team does. JB available to talk to new members in the quiet room on Speaker Meeting days and at Coffee Mornings.

JB asked CC (on behalf of Pietro and Kathryn) to remind members to bring their own cups for coffee and tea, by adding a note in the Newsletter

PB said the AGM date needs to go in newsletter.

LD thanked everyone for their hard work and wished all a Happy Christmas.