

St Austell U3A Committee Meeting
Monday June 13th 2022, 9.00am
Venue: St Austell Arts Centre
MINUTES

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

1. Apologies for Non-Attendance

No apologies were received.

2. Election of Chair for the Committee Meeting

LD was proposed and unanimously elected.

3. Approve the Minutes of the Last Committee Meeting – JB & CS

CC said he would like to see the Committee Minutes earlier, within a week if possible so that what was said and who said it was still fresh in our minds. **CS** said he did not feel able to approve and sign the Minutes as he had some concerns, other Committee members also expressed concerns. It was agreed that Committee Members email their concerns to **LD** by the end of the week. **JS** asked if the minutes could be amended, **JB** replied that they could if there were inaccuracies, these to be noted on the minutes and signed off by **JB**.

There was discussion about recording the meetings so there was an accurate record, this was agreed in principle, the practicalities to be investigated – how to do it, where to hold the meetings, video and audio or just recording? **PB** suggested speaking to Jonathan A about the possibility of using the Theatre Sound Technician. **LD** to follow up.

4. Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes

LD said that some items were general so could be left for now. Item 16 the purchase of a mobile phone for Membership Secretary use; **CS** said this needed to be ‘pay as you go’ rather than a contract. **JB** reminded the committee why there was a need for the Membership Secretary to have the phone (National u3a’s Interactive Map for locating your nearest u3a). Item 21 – obsolete laptops, **CC** said he could wipe all content from the old laptops. There was discussion about what we do with these when wiped. If they are donated, they need to go to an educational charity or school. **LD** said to put this item on the next Agenda.

5. Financial Update – CS

CS said that we were only 2 months into the new Financial Year. **CS** said he had spent considerable time liaising with Barclays over the issues raised. Barclays had offered to donate £70 to him as recompense for his time spent. **CS** said he had refused the donation because, as a Trustee, he is not allowed to benefit financially. **CS** had asked that Barclays donate the £70 to our u3a main account; this was received within an hour. **CS** stated that following the message to all members regarding the closure of Barclay in St Austell the new procedures seem to be working well, he had only received one response from a member suggesting we move our accounts to Lloyds, **JS** and **CS** both felt this would not be an appropriate suggestion. **CS** said that going forward he would update the financial spread sheet and forward to Committee Members each quarter. **PB** suggested that **CS** and **JS** copy the rest of the Committee in on all their Treasury Communications.

**St Austell u3a
Bank Balance as at
11/06/2022**

Main	£16,917.49
Wine	£999.04
Theatre	£254.53
Business ME	£105.01
TAM	£2,809.23

6. Asset Register – CS

CS had sent a list of assets to Committee Members of all the items he had found last October. **PB** said that Assets should be capital acquisitions, not stock. **JB** asked **CS** what time period he used before writing down assets to £1.00; **CS** replied this was 4 years as he had been advised on a National u3a financial workshop. **CS** queried what was in the metal cabinet on the landing; **PB** replied that the cabinet had been donated to the u3a. **CS** said it is therefore capital equipment; **PB** replied that whatever is in the cabinet and the cabinet is more than 4 years old. **PB** also confirmed that the trolley for the big tables belongs to St Austell u3a.

7. Committee Approval for the TAM Accounts 2021/2022 – JS

JS had sent all information to Committee Members for TAM 2021/22. **JB** asked about previous years accounts; **JS** replied that she has them all. The TAM accounts for 2021/2022 were unanimously approved by the Committee.

8. Committee Approval of Application for Debit Card for the New TAM Account and Signing of Documents for this – JS

JS said she needed approval by the Committee Members for the application. **JS** asked **JB** if she needed a debit card for this account, **JB** she didn't unless **JS** needed her to have one. The application was unanimously approved by the Committee that cards be ordered for the Treasury Team of **CS** and **JS**. **JS** to collect the signatures needed for the application form.

9. Committee Approval for Closure of the Old TAM Account – JS

JS said she needed approval from the Committee to close the old TAM account – the Committee unanimously approved the closure of the account. **JS** said she needed signatures from some Committee Members to close this account. **JS** to arrange collection of the signatures required.

CS reminded the Committee that if any member spends anything up to £100 they must let him know within 24 hours and send him a scanned copy of the invoice/receipt even if a personal credit/debit card cheque or cash is used for the purchase. If a larger spend is required, **CS** said Committee Members should seek approval from him in advance.

10. Formal Committee Approval for Purchase of USB Hub for use with the Two New laptops – LD

LD said that the new laptops were now being used, however there were insufficient USB ports for a data stick, wireless mouse, printer or any other devices requiring a USB port. The Committee unanimously approved the purchase of the USB hub.

CS said he felt approval was not required as it was expenditure below the approval of £100, further the purchase was covered by the Grant fund for IT equipment which had already been approved.

11. Committee Approval of 2020/2021 Year End Accounts – CS

CS said he had not heard back from Barry S yet. **CS** said that as he hadn't had any comments back from the Committee he was assuming that the accounts were OK for approval. **JB** said she would not be able to approve the accounts due to a lack of transparency in both the process and the spread sheets. **CS** asked **JB** why she hadn't sent him any queries. **JB** replied that she had spent considerable time going through the accounts which had generated a large number of queries; hence her decision regarding a lack of transparency.

CC said we need to hear back from **BS** before we can approve. It was suggested that this item be moved to the next Committee Meeting.

12. Committee Approval of 2021/2022 Year End Accounts – CS

As above, **JB** said she would not be able to approve these accounts due to a lack of transparency in both the process and the spread sheet.

13. Re-arrangement of Information and Tabs on the website – JB/CC

JB said that this had been arranged in response to Group Leader requests. The comments had been received from Group Leaders as part of the review of the Best Practice for Facilitating Groups document. All the risk assessment forms have recently been re-designed by National u3a so these have been added. COVID Risk Assessment Form 14 (previously Form 19) is no longer required so this has been removed. The Best Practice for Facilitating Groups document has also been added. **MT** to inform Group Leaders regarding the changes so that they are aware of what is on the website and where things are.

14. Trustee Code of Conduct – JB

JB informed the Committee Members that if they wish to stand for election at the next AGM, they need to sign and date the Trustee Code of Conduct document to confirm their agreement as per the Declaration on page 2. **JB** requested the return of the signed forms at the next Committee Meeting. **JB** to ensure the return of the signed and dated forms is recorded in the minutes.

15. Disciplinary Procedure – JB

JB informed the Committee that she was handing out copies of the Disciplinary Procedure so that members were aware of the procedure should it need to be implemented.

16. Committee Roles and Responsibilities – PW

PW asked if Committee Members were required to do certain things, setting up tables/car parking etc. She said that if one was not able to help then they might feel they have to apologise. **LD** said that no one should feel they have to apologise if not able to do some things and **JB** agreed. **JB** said that two people are needed to put up the large of the tables which is why help is asked for. Committee Members and Members do offer to help setting up and clearing down if they are available and able. **CC** said that the u3a is a shared experience – many do not give – they just take! **MT** suggested members could be asked in a Newsletter to help at start and finish.

17. Ramp Usage – CS

CS said that it would be best to speak to items 17 and 18 as one. **PB** and **CS** had attended an Arts Centre Trustee meeting re disabled access. Subsequently they attended a site meeting with Sandy F and Tremovah Industries to look at disabled access. Tremovah said they would issue a report and recommendations to Sandy F and copy **C**; it appears that no report was ever received by Sandy F or **CS**

CS was approached by Sandy F and Jonathan A on 27th May with a request to attend a meeting on 30th. It was called to discuss the next stage of works by Cormac to provide disabled access. **CS** explained that he unfortunately had a prior appointment. **CS** and Sandy F discussed numerous options and it was clear that they were singing from the same hymn sheet.

Post meeting CS spoke to Jonathan A. Cormac as the employer had asked the contractor to submit quotes for various works – to include disabled ramps to the theatre and the main entrance to the centre. Further the contractor was asked to price works to the main GF wc, to include the removal of the internal wall and widen the doorway to the wc / washroom. It was suggested that the works would be completed this calendar year subject to the costs being acceptable.

PB mentioned the acoustic cloud (sound insulation) approval; **CS** said that he had taken the opportunity to speak to staff at Heligan with regard to the cloud. He spoke to 2 members of staff who worked on the booking reception at both Heligan and Eden pre and post Installation of the clouds. They both held the view that there was no disenable benefit-noise levels were still excessive. **PB** said that there were other sound insulation systems available to deal with excess noise and that the acoustics in the Assembly Room continued to be problematic and needed to improved. **CS** said it may be necessary to increase the fees if all the items mentioned were done, (the access, toilets, and if the arts centre provide sound deadening to the assembly room) as Cornwall Council may increase the rental charged to the Arts Centre.

CS said that ramps could also be used for u3a activities outside the Arts Centre. **LD** said there must be a check regarding insurance cover for this. **JB** said there should also be risk assessments carried out for other venues. **PW** said signs could be used advising members to use at own risk. **MT** said there could be a generic risk assessment which could be adapted for different venues. **JH** asked if u3a has a risk assessment for the Arts Centre. **JB** said yes but it needs updating to include the new Fire Evacuation signage when it is in place. **LD** asked for a copy of the Assessment, **JB** to action.

18. Discussion with Sandy F (Arts Centre Trustee) – CS

See Item 17 above. **Note from JB**; it was suggested that discussion on this item was curtailed due to Sandy F being within earshot. **CS** commented that there was no need to as he was just updating the committee (as indicated in the minutes for item 17) of information provided to him and **Sandy F** was fully conversant to the information, he was not asking the committee to make any decisions.

19. Improving our Professional Image – The Way Forward – All

LD asked **CC** to start as he had instigated this Agenda Item originally. **CC** feels that the Committee and our u3a is amateurish. **LD** asked for examples. He said that communications from members had not always been answered as the recipients of the communications had not always responded. He felt that collectively we were not “on the ball” and this did not reflect well. **LD** suggested that we should aim to respond with 24 or 48 hours. **CC** said this

doesn't always work if people are away or on holiday. How to enthuse members? **CC** said that it had been hard work getting marketing information for the website from some Group Leaders about what their groups were offering. Where it had been received for example a video from the Tai Chi group and interesting information from two of the Book Groups about the books they are reading, members and potential members have a much richer idea about what the group is offering. **JS** suggested we ask members what we can do to improve things as it is their u3a not just ours. **JB** said there is an expectation that the Committee does all the organising. **PB** suggested Committee Members visit the groups and talk to them which might provide useful feedback. **JH** said in her previous u3a they had the same problems – the same people doing all the work. **JH** said that visiting the groups may help them understand and change their approach. Too many feel it is a “them and us” situation. **PW** said some only join a specific group and nothing else but should not be made to feel bad about it. Some don't even read the Newsletter – they are not interested. **PB** said members shouldn't take everything for granted. Members should know what happens behind the scenes to enable them to join and attend. A “get to know your u3a” was suggested, the best way to do this to be discussed.

MT said it should not be up to the Committee to continually support groups. **JB** said some group need help; particularly newer groups who will not have received previous procedural communications from **CS** or **MT**. **MT** said that members need to be reminded about changed procedures at monthly meetings. **PB** proposed a vote on Committee Members visiting groups going forward, this was agreed by the Committee. **PB** reminded everyone about Interest Groups giving a presentation at the Christmas Meeting as they had done in the past. Those present who remembered the presentations said they had been good fun. A coffee morning at Heligan or Wheal Martyn were also suggested as a meeting venue. **JH** asked if it was for help or advice. Group Visits to go on the Agenda for the next meeting. **JB** to add as an Agenda Item.

20. Proxy votes at National u3a's AGM on 6th October – JB

JB said date for the National AGM this year was the same date as ours, and the date had been decided using the same criteria as us (date when there was the best chance of a quorum attending). As none of St Austell u3a Committee would be available to attend **JB** has arranged for the Company Secretary to be the proxy for our votes. **JB** to update the Committee on the Resolutions we will be voting for when these are available.

21. Speaker for our Christmas Meeting on 1st December – JB

JB asked if we wanted a speaker for the Christmas Meeting or were we going to have entertainment. It was decided we would have entertainment again. **JB** said she had contact details for a good speaker and needed to know what dates to offer him – this now to be February or March. **JB** to liaise with Mark S when he returns from holiday. **MT** to alert group leaders about the proposed Christmas event.

22. Committee Meetings – Dates and Times Going Forward – LD

LD said we need to set out dates for the future and perhaps use different days. We should attempt to complete everything in advance before the AGM. **PB** asked whether we need a July/August break and then resume in September. Do we need an AGM planning session separately? – It was agreed we do. **JH** suggested 6 weeks to end of July and then September. Monday 25th July was agreed for the next Committee meeting to be held in the Assembly room at 9.00am. **PW** suggested putting in Newsletters when Committee Meetings will occur so members can let the Committee know of any issues that need raising. A 'by when' date could be added. For the 6th October AGM, it was suggested that a run-through could be held

on the 5th October. Other dates agreed were an AGM Meeting on Friday July 29th (9.00am) before the Coffee Morning and a Committee Meeting on Monday 5th September at 9.00am.

23. Groups Update and Update on the Events Sub-Committee – MT

MT said that groups were going well. She has spoken to Helen about the Events Team being a group for all members. She will set up a group for them and help her to learn how to use Beacon so she can send out information. She will have a core group and can add others members. **CS** said group leaders were gradually coming on board regarding new Treasury procedures. Wild swimming will have a meeting soon for those interested. **JB** added that Anthea McW was previously a swimming teacher and had previously held lifesaving certification and she was happy to renew this if required. The group would require a detailed risk assessment including an Outdoor Event Risk Assessment.

24. Procedures – MT

MT, CS and **JH** had created a flow chart and notes, (see additional sheets prepared by the sub-group). **MT** said we need to follow up on new members before they leave the session. **LD** said it depended how many helpers were attending each session. It was thought that there are too many small cliques in the bar which makes it difficult for new members to join in. **LD** said we need a new members table so that a Committee member or a volunteer can sit and chat with them. **MT** said we need to plan well in advance, not just the month before. **MT** suggested 6 months ahead and in a diary. **LD** suggested we need a year planner. **MT** said we all need help with professionalism. We should look back at what has gone well and use in planning. **LD** said to put this on the next agenda.

25. COVID Update – JB

JB said there was no longer any need to use the COVID General Risk Assessment (Form 14, formerly Form 19). **JB** added that we still all needed to be cautious as positive COVID cases were on the rise again.

26. Any Other Business

PB said we need to up our search for a new Chair; we need to think about how to do this and create a plan. **PB** suggested the best way to do this was to talk to members at the Coffee Mornings or Speaker Meetings. **JH** was pleased meetings were downstairs as she found it too stuffy upstairs. **JB** said all that the windows were locked at the moment because of the scaffolding. **JH** had spoken to **NW** about taking car registration numbers/names following incidents of rudeness.

PW asked about Frank W's health, **JB** and **AS** gave her an update.

CC said meetings were too long – now 3 hours. **LD** said she had wanted two hours, but it was becoming very difficult to get through everything. **JH** said we need to start promptly. **LD** suggested time allowance for each item. Social prescribing needs to be chased up. **MT** suggested putting it as an agenda item.

CC said there was a need to find someone who can cover his role.

CS said there were some issues with Beacon which Roger J had reported – **JB** to investigate **JB** said one member had asked if her mother, who is an u3a member elsewhere, could attend a social event whilst she was in Cornwall for her holiday. **JB** said she could if there was a spare ticket and she wouldn't be taking a space from a St Austell u3a member. National u3a confirmed she would be covered by u3a Insurance providing she brings proof of membership along (membership card, email etc.).

JB said that new and not so new members had asked for a copy of the Speaker Programme to be included in the Welcome Leaflet. **JB** to speak to Mark S

LD thanked all and reminded everyone to send comments on the minutes from the last meeting to her by Friday.

There being no other business the Meeting ended at 12.05 pm.