

BURTON ON TRENT U3A COMMITTEE MEETING -  
THE PRIORY CENTRE, STRETTON 9.30AM 4TH FEBRUARY 2025

# MINUTES

\* Indicates an Action Point (see below and separate Action Plan)

## 1. Welcome

*The meeting was chaired by Mike Payne.*

## 2. Apologies

*Valerie Bentinck (Events Secretary); Beverley Bhaskare (Minutes Secretary); Jane Hance (Publicity Officer); Alan Poore (Financial Assistant).*

## 3. Present

*Mike Payne (Chair, Welfare Officer); Neil Davenport (Vice Chair, GDPR); Kathy Hines (Treasurer); Linda Walker (Membership Secretary, Magazine Distribution); Jane Kent (Beacon Coordinator); Christine Davenport (Communications); Michael Bartlett (Interest Group Coordinator); Hugh Rodger (Secretary, Accessibility Officer); Glynis Lewis (Hospitality Team Leader).*

*Barry Appleby (Committee Member), resignation.*

## 4. Approval of minutes of previous meeting

*January Minutes were approved by all present, with the exception of item 5 A3) which was altered and agreed.*

## 5. Matters arising /Review of Action Plan

*(may be addressed in Individual Reports section).*

- A *EQUIPMENT NOT IN USE (Action Plan 7/1 5B): Policy to be completed and presented to Committee.*
  - i. *Continue action. \*(MP)*
  
- B *PAT TESTING (Action Plan 7/1 5C)*
  - i. *Action updated see Action Plan. PAT policy presented at this meeting: approval at March meeting. \*(VB)*
  
- C *PASSWORD SECURITY (Action Plan 7/1 5D)*
  - i. *Continue Action. \*(HR)*

***REPORTS: if a written report has been received for the meeting this will be indicated below. Minutes contain reference only to items discussed. If a member would like to see the Officer's full report, please contact the Secretary who will send it to them.***

## **6. Chair Report**

Written report presented.

- I. *Coffee mornings attended as usual*
- II. *Attended Group Leaders meeting and presented the principle of an annual fee. The meeting was lively and interesting with good input from everyone. A vote saw opinion divided roughly at 50/50 with a few abstentions.*
- III. *Held meeting with Chair of Melbourne u3a and discussed the growth of Burton on Trent u3a membership. Coffee Mornings were mentioned as a useful strategy amongst others. Reciprocal Membership has been offered; and a response is awaited.*
- IV. *Notification received from Barry Appleby that he wished to retire from the committee as of 1st Feb to concentrate on his*

*work as East Midlands u3a Council representative. This was replied to appropriately.*

- V. *For information, Rob Rowberry from Redditch u3a is the West Midlands Council representative: (the only candidate). Elections are to take place for membership of the u3a Board. We have 9 candidates for 4 places. Jean Jackson from Lichfield u3a is one of the candidates. Hustings take place on 5th Feb. A list of candidates is on the recent West Midlands newsletter together with their statements for your perusal. MP recommended four candidates, and he will register the votes: they are, Jean Jackson; Elaine Toms, Alan Russell and David Blanchflower. \* (MP)*

## **7. Secretary Report**

Written report presented.

- i. *Policies and Committee Role descriptions are due for an annual update. Committee was in agreement that a great deal of time and effort went into reviewing and rewriting them last year. It was decided that it would be more appropriate to update them every two years or as when circumstances require; or when recommended by the u3a Trust.*
- *Make sure renewal dates on policies and roles are altered accordingly. \* (HR).*

## **8. Treasurer Report**

Written report presented

- i. *Committee approved the proposal from the Treasurer that the magazine price increase should not be passed on to members.*
- ii. *KH proposed the trial of a new system of taking payments, by carrying out a test on 'the Square system using a mobile phone*

*to take card payments without a card device and assess reporting capability as part of that test.’ (see KH report for Committee).*

*The proposal to test the system was approved by Committee after some discussion.*

*There were several points of concern raised by members of Committee. This was balanced by the recognition, as mentioned at previous meetings, that the payment system needed to be modernised to take advantage of changing patterns of payment, while remaining open to all members’ personal choice of payment.*

*The following points were made:*

- *The current preferred alternative approach to collecting cash for a variety of fees including trips; lunches and membership is an app on a personal phone. Although a ‘card reader’ is mentioned in the report, the initial test will be on the effectiveness and efficiency of the app. (see KH report for a more detailed discussion of options and costs).*
- *The question of security, both at a personal level as well as for u3a finances is an important issue.*
- *The user’s phone may incur additional charges by app use. It was stated that these would be refunded.*

- *Card reading devices are not being bought initially; their purchase is dependent on the outcomes of the test on apps on mobile devices. (see KH report for Committee: request for 'up to £200 for a card reader with receipt print capability.' This was approved unanimously by Committee.)*
- *There are issues regarding membership details being carried on personal phones without members' prior agreement. ND provided guidance to Committee that 'u3a members need to agree to this use of their personal information'. This initial testing of the 'app on phone' system will need to have the agreement of the named members who are taking part.*
- *It was reiterated from the previous Committee Meeting that the system being tested was not an 'alternative' but an 'additional' approach: that it was giving people an option.*
- *Cost is a factor in the final decision. This was in response to the Treasurer's report for Committee which explored ways of dealing with these. This referenced mainly transaction fees and how Burton on Trent u3a might recover those by additional charges for members.*
- *Security issues should the owner of the phone become deceased. This was compared with the current paper based collection of personal information with cash.*
- *There were queries regarding receipts for payments and how they would be presented.*

*Committee were supportive of the proposal to test the efficiency and effectiveness of the new system. It was felt that by testing the system some of these issues could be evidenced in practice*

*There was a willingness by members to recognise that this approach was needed to modernise our payment systems and make them more efficient and effective.*

*While there remained some security concerns, past experience had shown Committee that there was a need to address the shortcomings of the current system. The proposed new system would help to address these. The evidence from the test proposal would produce good evidence.*

*iii. KH asked for an ‘indicative view’ of ‘increasing holiday payments by £5 to cover transaction fees for these higher cost items’ ( see KH Report for Committee). Discussion was varied with some members viewing this as a pragmatic way of dealing with the costs and balances that some Groups will always incur over time: while others thought it harder to justify on that basis.*

*iv. KH emphasised two points:*

*1. That these issues would be examined as part of the evidence gathering.*

*2. Any clarification of the above points or any new ones should be directed to her. She would be very happy to discuss them and provide additional financial information.*

## **9. Membership Report**

- i. 5 new members: 902 in total*
- ii. It was agreed that rejoining members did not need to fill out a form.*

## **10. Interest Groups Report**

- i. Minutes from the Group Leaders' meeting will go out to all leaders and the Committee.*
- ii. Approval for lunch was requested with provisional meal choice and numbers. It was agreed that those who attend who are not Group Leaders will pay for their own meal. One representative per group will be allowed, though that person does not need to be the Group Leader. The lunches were approved by Committee with a request for specific costs. The date of the lunch is 27<sup>th</sup> March. \*(MB)*
- iii. A new Interest Group is being set up: Padel. KH requested that a new venue contract be made priority. \*(MB)*
- iv. MB informed Committee that he would not be at Committee for a prolonged period that would be more than the three absences indicated in the Committee Regulations. It was agreed by Committee that since he was informing the Committee of his intention this did not qualify as an*

*unauthorised absence. Therefore, his place on Committee remained secure.*

## **11. Events**

*Written Report presented.*

- i. The March Talk and Tea event will be the RNLI: no speaking fee required.*
- ii. There was some discussion about the Talk and Tea events in VB's report and the item in today's AOB 20E.*

*VB highlights the problems regarding managing the hall organisation and the speaker as well as buying in, preparing and presenting refreshments at these events should Glynis not be available. MP thought that it was important to keep the principal of increasing the number of talks even if refreshments could not be offered. However, Committee thought that there was still a very good chance of providing refreshments by asking other u3a members for their help and experience.*

*Therefore, it was decided that:*

- Pat Chamberlain should be contacted at the Coffee Morning\* (MP)*

*An additional point was raised regarding the information on wifi systems.*

- Clarify the references to wifi. Is the problem at St Mary's or the Priory? \*(VB)*

iii. *VB has made excellent progress with the PAT testing (see report for Committee). The policy is to be deferred to the next meeting\*(VB)*

iv. *VB has completed the First Aid certificate and would be pleased to attend an Event as a First Aider if she is available.*

**12. Accessibility**

*Written report presented*

i. *Further information to member at Reading Group re hearing aids*

ii. *The loop purchased with the approval of Committee has been successfully tested at Riverside Church and will be again before the AGM.*

**13. Beacon**

i. *Nothing to report.*

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**14. Website**

i. *BJ attended the Group Leaders' Meeting to present information on updating Interest Group information on the new website . A written report backing up this presentation was sent out following the meeting.*

**15. GDPR**

i. *Nothing to report*

**16. Communication**

*Written report presented*

- i. A busier month*
- ii. No telephone calls*
- iii. An example of a member's query*
  - *KH to speak to Cineworld about u3a concessions for Burton on Trent. \*(KH)*

## **17. Publicity**

- i. Nothing to report*

## **18. Newsletter**

- i. Nothing to report*

## **19. Hospitality**

- i. GL agreed that it was very difficult to manage Riverside refreshments and clearing up afterwards without additional help. The tables, which are very heavy, were a particular concern.*
- ii. She was not able to be present at some of the planned Talk and Tea events because of long planned holidays.*

## **20. Any Other Business**

**A.** MP discussed the outcome of the discussions at the Group Leaders' Meeting. Afterwards, in discussion with other members he was aware that people did not fully understand the intention of the annual membership fee. For example, it was not clear to some that members would not pay session fees if the new annual membership was introduced.

He had also given some thought to the need for a referendum which was also raised at the meeting.

Committee discussed whether the proposal to introduce a new Annual Membership fee now had agreement to be raised at the AGM since it had already been presented to a wider group of members.

It was observed by some members of Committee that it was very difficult to arrive at a decision regarding the advantages of the new fee without full details of the costings. This made it hard to recommend as a Committee Member to the wider Burton on Trent u3a membership. In addition, it seemed as if some members had more knowledge than others on which to base their decision.

It was clear from comments that Committee Members were at different stages of agreement with the proposal. It was also apparent that a variety of reasons and priorities affected their current positions.

Committee noted that the financial statements supporting the proposal had always been available and that the Treasurer had been willing to provide information as required. However, some members requested more specific financial information at this point in time to help them arrive at a final decision. This was readily agreed to by the Treasurer.

Finally, it was observed that it was not possible to be entirely predictive about the first year outcomes in particular. However, the position of those in favour of the proposal was that Burton on Trent u3a was in a good position considering its current financial security and the amount of advance planning that had been put in place.

In his summing up of the discussion the following points were raised by the Chair and agreed by the Committee:

- The final approval to present at the AGM is to be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee in March. This would meet our aim of following a staged and careful consultation before recommending the final proposal to the AGM.

- Members should take advantage of this period from now until then to examine the budget figures that have been available throughout. The treasurer will provide and answer any queries around these and any additional items during this period.
- B.** Volunteers for the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee were not forthcoming. It was suggested that an arrangement around a possible new annual membership fee could be an attractive way of celebrating this event. However, it would not make sense to pre-empt this item. Therefore, it will be discussed at some future point when there is a clear decision on the new fee proposal. Setting up the subcommittee was also deferred.
- C.** Voting for West Midlands region was raised in the Chair's Report.
- D.** ND summarised the issues around the recent scamming, raised by VB by observing that the scammer was not using MP's actual email address.
- E.** Talk and Tea item was discussed with the Event Officer's Report above.
- F.** New members for Committee: CD requested a different wording to that which was in the Action Plan as this would be more suitable for attracting members to the Committee posts.  
\*(CD)
- G.** Invitation to take part in PhD research. This is a request from a student from York University: CD will disseminate this information. \*(CD)
- H.** This was noted and one referral had been made to Events and the History Group already.
- I.** The item on Induction information was deferred to the next meeting. \*(HR)

FEBRUARY ACTION PLAN: 4/2/25				
date	ref	action	member	closed
7/1 4/2		Review requirement for Health Certificate. Produce Role Description.	GL GL	
7/1 4/2	5Ai)	Management of equipment not in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write policy</li> <li>• Send out list of current unused equipment to membership. This has been adapted to 'advertise equipment to members through the newsletter in March'</li> </ul>	MP  BJ	partial
7/1 4/2	5Ci)	Secretary to arrange secure second source for all relevant items after meeting with KH on 7/1/25 Finance Beacon and Absolute information in place to be secured with Secure File in Secretary and Treasurer laptops. Interest Group Leader and Committee Laptop passwords still to be collected. Request sent out to Group Leaders and Committee Members 16/2	HR  HR	Partial  done
7/1 4/2	5Bi)	PAT testing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with JF re best date</li> <li>2. Messages via CD and BJ</li> <li>3. Check policy font and present at next Committee in March</li> <li>4. Cost estimate to KH?</li> </ol>	VB CD BJ  HR VB  VB	ongoing
7/1 4/2	5C	Publicity Officer to contact BJ regarding the best option for renewing banners as he is aware of options and the current requirements: see also site: u3a Brand Centre, for options. (KH has emailed address) Report to Committee in January	JH  BJ/HR	
7/1 4/2		New Membership Secretary Role Description Make minor adjustments: re present at Committee for Approval	LW/KH  LW	partial

7/1 4/2		Colour coded windshields to be purchased for individual use of Riverside microphone.	HR	
7/1		Bring ideas to Committee about how best to celebrate our 15 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Raised at Group Coordinator meeting on 23/1 and subsequently by email to all Interest Group Leaders by MB on 27/1.	Committee	Done
4/2	20B	See also AOB for Committee Meeting 4/2/25. Sub Committee arrangement deferred to after March ie after decision on new Annual Fee. AOB April	KH  HR	Done  done
7/1	5A	Subscription Change Proposal to be presented at Group Coordinator Meeting See item 20A Minutes and Interest Group Leaders' meeting minutes.	MprP/MB	done
7/1 4/2	7i)	Send out cycle of policies and role descriptions. Dates to be altered.	HR HR	done
7/1	7iv)	Contact BJ with quiz dates for website	HR	done
7/1 4/2	20.C2 20I	Send u3a Trust Induction Pro Forma to Committee members Agenda March	HR HR	Done done
7/1 4/2	20.C4 20F	Send communication to members alerting them to upcoming vacancies on Committee. Altered communication agreed	CD CD	
7/1 4/2	20.G2 16iii)	Clarify entry requirements at Uttoxeter Cinema Item clarified by email to personnel at the cinema with advice Query concession for Burton on Trent u3a membership access to Burton on Trent Cineworld	CD  KH	done
4/2	6v)	Register votes for West Midlands Council election	MP	
4/2	10ii)	Present full lunch costs for approval to KH and Committee	MP	
4/2	10iii)	Present venue costs contract to KH for Padel	MP	

4/2	11ii)	Contact P Chamberlain regarding volunteers for providing refreshments at Events: probably at Morning Coffee Meeting.	MP	
4/2	11ii)	Clarify the wifi requirement for the Priory and St Mary's	VB	
4/2	20i)	Include Approval of new Membership Fee on Matters Arising March: continuing consultation	MP	
4/2	20G	Send out invitation to take part in PhD	CD	

**The meeting finished at 12.30.**

**The next meeting is at the Priory Centre Stretton DE13 0HE**

**March 4th 2025**