

# Minutes of the Quarterly Committee Meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Caroline Haslett Room, Crawley Library, 14:00 – 16:30**

**Attending:** Chair (Jim McGough), Vice-Chair (Alan Rew), Secretary (Margaret Lloyd), Treasurer (Graham Friday), Communications Coordinator (Sue Parker) and General Trustee (John Williams).

## **Agenda Item 1: Apologies for absence**

None

## **Agenda Item 2 Approval of the Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 Committee Meeting**

These were approved with no amendments.

## **Agenda Item 3: Trustees' Progress Report as at 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025**

Recent updates to this were given as follows:

### **(i) Section 1 Item 2: Venue Strategy**

The Chair explained that he would not be contacting the author of the draft report "Rooms for Hire in Crawley" in the near future and so we would use the existing version, annotated by the Chair, for dissemination to the 10<sup>th</sup> March Group Leaders meeting.

### **(ii) Section 2 Item 5.7 Indoor Pickle Ball & K2**

The Treasurer stated that, although the team at Crawley Borough Council responsible for overseeing the contract with EveryOne Active had informed him that the K2 management should have responded to him directly on the issues he had raised, he had not so far heard from them. There had been a further incident the previous week indicating disconnect between K2 management and their staff, in which hockey players had been allowed to practice in the nearby courts to the pickle ball games, constituting a threat to health and safety. The Treasurer had made a complaint about this to the duty manager.

### **(iii) Section 1 Item 1.3**

The Chair stated he would arrange, by the end of this week, for the potential volunteer to meet with the Seasonal Trips and Speaker Organiser, Liz Tennant.

## **Agenda Item 4: Purchases, Procurement & Contracts**

### **1. Portable Hearing Loop**

It was agreed that the decision on whether to buy one or not would be postponed until after the following:

- (a) We ask Group Leaders at the 10<sup>th</sup> March meeting which of them had received complaints from group members that they could not hear sufficiently clearly;
- (b) We ask those GLs who do use a hearing loop how their auditory experience at the 10<sup>th</sup> March meeting (the Charis Centre does operate hearing loops) compares with that at the Friary (which does not operate hearing loops, though at his recent meeting with the Friary Office Support the Chair had recommended that they install one)..

If we do decide to purchase a portable hearing loop then we would need to determine how it could be accessible to all Groups who need it.

## 2. Updated Leaflet

The proposed spend was approved. The Communications Coordinator will circulate the draft design leaflet to the Committee before sending it to the printer.

### Agenda Item 5: Policy on Supporting Other Charities

It was agreed that Crawley u3a would support other local charities, in terms of allowing them to advertise their services and volunteers in our Newsletter and Facebook pages, and at events such as Monthly Meetings, Coffee Mornings and the Ruby Celebration Event, provided this can be absorbed into existing resources i.e. does not use funds or the time of our own volunteers which would otherwise be applied to our own Charity objects.

The point was made that if we assist other local charities and organisations in this way, then they will be more inclined to help us, for example by hosting our posters and leaflets.

### Agenda Item 6: Term 1 Financial Monitoring Reports

The Treasurer stated that no concerns had been raised in relation to the Term 1 General Operations report, which indicated a favourable outcome. On the Activity Groups report the following “stand-alone” groups (for which revenue must cover costs) were running deficits:

#### (i) Short Mat Bowls (Mondays) and Short Mat Bowls (Wednesdays)

Despite efforts, attendance at both groups was still very low, particularly for the former. Moreover, closing the groups would present the problem of what to do with the bulky equipment, as St Pauls could not be expected to continue to provide storage space once the activity ceased.

**Decision Agreed:** To continue operating both groups until the end of the current financial year (31<sup>st</sup> August 2025) whilst continuing to market the activity and to demonstrate the sport at the Ruby Celebration Event in the hope of attracting more members. The situation will be reviewed again once the Group activity year-end monitoring report is available.

#### (ii) Afternoon Exercise

Each session requires 18 members to be present to cover costs, but the average attendance is between 15 and 16. There is a hard core of around nine who attend every session. Moreover its existence has resulted in eight new members to the u3a.

**Decision Agreed:** The Treasurer, as Group Leader, to increase the fee per session from £4 to £5, which would mean an average attendance of 13 to 14 needed to cover costs. He would also make it clear to the Group that unless sufficient members attended sessions the Group would close. . The situation will be reviewed again once the Group activity year-end monitoring report is available.

Two Groups in the St Paul's group are losing money, though because overall the St Paul's groups are running at a surplus this is not such an immediate problem from the financial point of view. These two groups are Art Appreciation (AA) 3 and Folk Dancing. The Chair would visit AA 3 shortly to discuss the situation with its few remaining members. Folk Dancing would be encouraged to perform at the Ruby Celebration in the hope of attracting more members.

### **Agenda Item 7: Ruby Celebration Event**

The Committee approved the proposed date of 30<sup>th</sup> July for the event, and agreed to leave operational decisions to the Working Group (which included three Trustees), provided it reported back on a regular basis.

The Treasurer estimated the overall cost could be in the region of £3,000, with £1,200 on rent, £800 on catering and the balance on other costs such as advertising and the transportation of equipment.

The Communications Coordinator stated the date would be announced in the March Newsletter and on the website. She would create a Beacon group for the working group so she could start to arrange meetings.

Although the event was intended primarily as a celebration event for current members, it was hoped it would also increase our profile across Crawley and recruit new members to the u3a, and attract more members into Groups experiencing low numbers.

### **Agenda Item 8: Position of Out and About Groups at February 2025**

It was noted that there was a lot of information to absorb in this report. The Secretary would go ahead in arranging the proposed meeting of O&A Group Leaders, both current and potential, and would also invite the recent Groups Coordinator, who had compiled the section in the Group Leaders handbook on O&A Groups.

The Communications Coordinator stated that most of the enquiries she received from potential and actual new members on Groups involved either the Out & About or Walking (including Ambling) groups.

The general point was made that in future, when new members joined more needed to be made of the fact that the u3a was a self-help organisation, and that all members would be expected to contribute themselves in some way rather than just passively enjoying what was offered.

### **Agenda Item 9: Group Leaders Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March**

The agenda for this was discussed. The Secretary would disseminate the next draft agenda within the next day or two, with the intention of disseminating the final agreed version to GLs on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

### **Agenda Item 10: Review of the 2024 Membership Renewal Process**

There was no time left to discuss this; the Secretary asked any comments to be forwarded to her.

### **Agenda Item 11: Next Trustees Progress Report and Quarterly Meeting**

The proposed dates were agreed.

*The meeting finished at 16:30*