

# Minutes of the Quarterly Committee Meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Caroline Haslett Room, Crawley Library, 15:00**

**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 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025 Committee Meeting**

These were approved with no amendments.

## **Agenda Item 3: Trustees' Progress Report as at 24th May 2025**

### **Section 2 Item 8 Friary Hire Contract**

The Chair announced that he had heard from Victoria Ashley that she would shortly send us a copy of a new pro-forma hire contract drawn up by Arundel Diocese.

There were no other updates to report.

## **Agenda Item 4: Purchases, Procurement & Contracts: Hiring an Office at the Orchard**

The Secretary drew the meeting's attention to the fact that, since the paper on this had been disseminated, it had become apparent that the sizes originally quoted for each of the two rooms were incorrect. They are 87 and 89 sq. ft, almost identical, instead of the 80 and 100 sq. ft stated on The Orchard's website. We will not know of the implications of this for the rental costs quoted until Toby Shaw, the Chief Executive of Crawley Community Action (CCA), returns from his leave on Monday. We hope also to receive a copy of the draft lease agreement then.

The following points were made in discussion:

- (i) Renting a room would give Crawley u3a an opportunity to establish a fixed address for enquiries and correspondence, and so would assist us in raising our profile across Crawley; being based in the same building as CCA would also help in this.
- (ii) The size and shape of the offices are not ideal, in that they are not suitable for meetings with more than two or more people. On the other hand, we are unlikely to find a room large enough for meetings at an affordable cost.
- (iii) Before making a final decision, we need to establish how an office would likely be used, and have some confidence that the expected usage would justify the cost, whilst bearing in mind that since we have never had access to an office before some potential uses may only become apparent once we do have access.
- (iv) There is potential to operate advertised Open Office sessions (for, say, one or two mornings/afternoons a week) to meet with potential and actual members – but we would need to be sure that we had volunteers prepared to man the office for these sessions.
- (v) If we were to go ahead, we would need to consider matters such as who holds keys to the building and office, the need to keep any documents including personal data (such as Gift Ad forms) under lock and key, the replenishment of any supplies required by a photocopier etc.

- (vi) Although the cost seems significant when stated as a % of the annual membership fee, the total commitment for an eighteen-month lease is low as a % of our current reserves (at the end of 2023/24 our unrestricted reserves were £24,666 and total reserves £45,034).

It was agreed that the next steps would be:

- (i) The Treasurer viewing the offices to assess their suitability for the equipment and financial material he is currently storing at his home;
- (ii) The Secretary to establish the costs for each office, to obtain a copy of the draft lease agreement, and to disseminate both to other Trustees;
- (iii) The Chair asking the Group Leaders at their meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June whether they would use the office on a regular basis and what for (e.g. storing equipment, photocopying, undertaking administration etc). An agenda item on the hire of an office at the Orchard is already included in the draft agenda for the meeting.

### **Agenda Item 5: 8<sup>th</sup> May Out and About Group Meeting**

A correction would be made to Item 41(i) of the notes from this meeting to make it clear that O&A Group Leaders (GL)s should send any notifications advertising spare places on their trips to all other O&A GLs.

It was agreed that no further actions on this topic would be taken for now.

### **Agenda Item 6: Term 2 Financial Monitoring Reports**

#### **1. General Operations**

- The 2024 Christmas Party actual costs have risen by another £300, to £1,842, due to the receipt of the bill for the entertainment;
- The change in the way in which the Third Age Trust invoices for Third Age Matters has delivered a one-off benefit of c£300;
- Excluding the Ruby Celebration event (which was always intended to be funded by reserves) we are expecting to broadly break even this year.
- No Gift Aid income, for either 2023-24 or 2024-25, has yet been included in the accounts.

#### **2. Groups**

- More of these groups are making a deficit due to reducing group membership. The high surpluses generated by a few groups more than offset the impact of these deficit.
- The recent increase in the sessional fee from £4 to £5 for Afternoon Exercising has resulted in the group breaking even for the last few sessions.

#### **3. Events and Trips**

- This shows a deficit because, whilst the costs for the Romney Marsh seasonal trip have been included, the income has not yet been received.

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

1. The Treasurer stated that the latest Charis Centre layout plans, showing the various Group displays and which he had disseminated to the Committee on Monday, would be discussed at the next Working Group meeting this coming Monday. Then they would be sent to the Group Leaders, who would then be asked at their meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June what resources they require to set these displays up.
2. Each member of the Working Group is taking responsibility for a room/display area, and will liaise with the relevant Group Leaders.
3. Given our next Quarterly Trustee Meeting is not until after the event, the Chair suggested the Trustees meet together in an Informal Team Meeting in late June or early July so that the Treasurer and Communications Coordinator could update them on preparations for the event.
4. The Communications Coordinator would shortly order 1,500 copies of the redesigned Crawley u3a general publicity leaflet, in readiness for ready for leafletting events in July, to be organised by herself and the Chair. The General Trustee suggested distributing leaflets to local care homes.
5. The two draft leaflets, created by Monique Tovey-Mansfield and advertising the Ruby Event, were passed around and the Trustees unanimously agreed on the one they preferred.

### **Agenda Item 8: Annual Review of Safeguarding Policy**

It was agreed that, given there has been no change to the relevant Third Age Trust guidance since our policy was agreed in May 2023, no changes were required. The Secretary would state a review had taken place on the policy document.

### **Agenda Item 9: 5<sup>th</sup> June Group Leaders Meeting**

The agenda for this was briefly discussed. As far as the Treasurer was aware there had been nothing done yet by the Portable Hearing Loop Working Group so this would be removed from the agenda. He asked the General Trustee (one of the members of the Working Group) to contact the other members of the Working Group to progress it.

Otherwise the proposed agenda was approved, and the Secretary would disseminate it with relevant documents the next day, 29<sup>th</sup> May.

*At this point the Treasurer left the meeting, with apologies.*

### **Agenda Item 10: Website Monitoring**

This was very briefly discussed. It was agreed it should be disseminated to Group Leaders.

### **Agenda Item 11: Feedback from New Members on their Experience of Groups**

It was agreed a few useful points had emerged from this exercise, despite the disappointingly low participation rate (c12%). A version would be disseminated to Group Leaders, to be referred to by the Chair when talking about new members being made to feel welcome. All references to the new members themselves, and to those Groups and Group Leaders subject to negative comments, would be removed.

*The meeting finished early, at 16:30*