

## **Minutes of the Seventh Annual General Meeting of Woodhall Spa U3A, held at 14:00 on 4 May 2017 in the Golf Union, Woodhall Spa**

### **1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Refreshment break was moved to the start of the meeting. It was noted that 72 members were present giving a quorum.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Marion and John Underwood, Jackie Henderson, Margaret and John Townend, Arthur Willis, Roger Reed and Rachel Stokes

### **3. Minutes of Previous AGM**

The Minutes of the AGM held on 5 May 2016 were tabled. *They were proposed by Barry Darling, seconded by Margaret Green and adopted unanimously.*

### **4. Chairman's Report**

This has been another extremely successful year for our U3A. The attendance at our monthly meeting is slowly rising as are our number of interest groups, more detail on this to follow. This success we at least hope, is in part due to the efforts of both our dedicated committee and of course our group leaders. No benefit though would come from the enthusiasm of any organising team without the active participation of you the members. Each of us have a part to play in our U3A.

#### Membership Numbers

For those who remember the decision taken by a show of hands at last year's AGM, to keep a maximum number of members of the Woodhall Spa U3A in line with the limitation of space in the Coronation Hall, and maintain a waiting list of those wishing to join, this principle remains, but with the additional space now available in the hall and our revised layout of chairs and tables we now have some additional capacity without jeopardising your comfort and safety. So based on the principle that, apart from one exception, we have an attendance at our monthly meetings of around 40% of our total membership, the committee have decided that by increasing our membership ceiling to 250, and using our average attendance, this equates to an additional 10 attendees at the average monthly meeting. Prior to renewals closing on the 28th April the number on the waiting list was 28. Now all of those 28 have or will be invited to join to fill the additional capacity and replace those members who, for whatever reason, have decided not to renew their membership for the coming year.

It is possible that as, not if, the population of the village continues to grow and if any future waiting list supports it, another U3A could be formed or if a new venue becomes available this U3A could expand our membership further.

#### Committee

The committee as elected at the 2016 AGM remains unchanged. Despite the request for volunteers to join the committee we have had NO nominations. For this forthcoming year this presents no great problem, but at the next AGM in 2018 it is imperative that we have new members join the committee, as service on the committee is time limited under our Constitution, and 6 out of 10 of the current committee will by then have served at least 3 years. I have deliberately used the word 'imperative' as although we are a thriving U3A with an enthusiastic membership, a growing number of groups and good attendances, at the AGM next year we have to replace committee members who have to step down.

Your committee members for the next 12 months will be:-

Ced Shurben (Chairman), Les Wylde (Vice Chairman and Newsletter), Val Shurben (Business Secretary), Arthur Platts (Treasurer), Lynn Noel (Membership Secretary), Geoff Noel (Minutes Secretary), Irene Derwent (Outings Co-ordinator), Mike Derwent (Asset Manager) Pam Fern (Group Co-ordinator) and last but by no means least Margaret Green (Speaker Organiser).

On behalf of the committee and you the members we thank Judy Binks and all her helpers in providing us with refreshments each month and Margaret Reed who has agreed to be guardian of our Website in place of Geoff Noel who has done such a fantastic job in setting up and running the Web page for us over the last couple of years.

#### Groups

Today we have 38 Groups, some more active than others. Some of our groups have more than 1 leader whereas some leaders have more than 1 group. The bottom line is that we have 34 of our members giving their time and energy and in many cases opening their homes for us the members. We owe them a big thank you. There has over the last year been some concern on the part of the Charity Commission that some U3A's may not be fulfilling the set criteria of an educational agenda. We Woodhall Spa have a good spread of group subjects both educational and recreational. We feel that most of our groups, even in the recreational category, do have some educational element. Do we ever stop learning from what we see or what we do, but mostly from each other?

#### Speakers

The last year has seen some ups and downs in the quality of our speakers. Some speakers come to us based on their reputation. But sometimes we have to take at face value what the speaker himself or herself tell us. We have found this is not always to be relied upon as a reference. This has absolutely no reflection on the time and effort spent by Margaret Green who endeavours to make every speaker worth our attention.

#### Newsletter and Web Site

We have all seen in the last year how the quality and professional look of our newsletter has developed. The content is of course down to what we the members submit for publication with the majority of the content provided by our group leaders. All members are free to provide an article or comment that they would like to share with the rest of us, albeit without any mention of personal beliefs in politics, religion or anything seen to be non-PC.

Our web page is another example of a professional appearance and content provided by our webmaster Geoff Noel. Geoff is standing down this year from these 2 vital roles that not only the membership have access to, but being our website it is our public face which Geoff has given the Woodhall Spa U3A. A face that I can say I'm proud to be part of. Thanks again Geoff,

#### Financial Matters

A subject that I will not spend a lot of time on as our most able Treasurer Arthur Platts will be providing his report shortly. Suffice it for me to say that our current finances are on a strong footing and the long term view to our financial stability for the next 12 months is assured.

#### The Future

As I said last year 'This is in your hands'. I'm sorry to have to repeat that there were no nominations for committee this year. This must change next year if we want to stay as an upward looking vibrant U3A. Please take this warning seriously, a committee needs new bodies with new energy and new ideas, to use the phrase 'sitting on your hands' will see our U3A in serious trouble. The sort of trouble that means we would have to close this U3A down and walk away. Please don't let this happen. I am confident in saying that all of the current committee both enjoy and get some satisfaction from our efforts. Please give some thought to your future service as a committee member for the sake of all of our members. Without new Committee members there is no future for Woodhall Spa U3A. *The Chairman's Report was proposed by Roger Reed, seconded by Rachel Stokes and adopted unanimously.*

### **5. Treasurer's Report**

It is my pleasure to present the report and the end of year accounts for 2016/17 financial year. Before looking at the detailed accounts let me explain some matters that some of you may not be aware of. Being a Charity the Charity Commission has an interest in our Main U3A account but has no interest in our Social Account, so far as we are aware, there could be some changes in the near future, Chairman Ced and myself are attending a Treasure's' seminar at the end of this month as we

understand that there have been some changes recently, but we do not as this stage know what they are.

Unless our income exceeds £25,000 per year we are not required to submit detailed accounts, only to confirm the total income and expenditure for the year. At the moment, if our income is under £25,000. We are not required to submit audited accounts unless our income or expenditure is over £1,000,000 so we have to have an independent examiner being a person having the requisite knowledge and practical experience, I am grateful to John Townend for undertaking this task very efficiently.

As you are aware those of you who are taxpayers can offer to agree to gift aid on your subscription. On this matter I understand that some are concerned about this, but let me reassure you that all I have to do, at the moment, is to give an aggregated total so long as the individual donation is a small amount and each line of the application has a total of no more than £1000, names and addresses etc. are not required. You will see from the accounts that income from Gift Aid is helpful and last year we received £434

This year Lloyds Bank has behaved itself and I have not had to write letters to the Manager pointing out their poor service, so no income this year!

I will now turn to the accounts, which you should have. When I took over as Treasurer 3 years ago our financial year was amended so that in future years we were working on the same period as U3A that is 1st April to 31st March each year with this in mind the accounts for that year were not shown as comparison with the 12 month period would not be helpful, but as 2015/16 year was for the new period I have shown the 2016/17 accounts alongside the previous year for information I have also shown the budget projection for last year, as well as the one for this year. I will refer to these later.

For further clarification I would remind you that last year I received clarification from Lynn Jonas, at U3A head office, how assets are shown in the accounts. The following was the advice given – If an asset is £500 or less it is written off in the year purchased, you do not have to show it separately in your accounts, you can, but normal practice is not to when the cost is £500 or lower.

Assets worth more than the norm should be depreciated over 3 years for equipment and 5 years for furniture.

When an asset has been written down it can disappear or you can show it as zero book value. I have taken the view to allow assets to disappear, but as I go through the accounts I will draw attention to the costs on small assets purchased during the year.

Turning to the Income and expenditure for the last year the income is £5,728.82 this includes the payment of Subscriptions for this year in the sum of £2,351.50 I have shown the balance as if this amount had not been paid in 16/17, so the income for the year is £4639. The income is shown in detail, the repayment of a loan some years ago to the Social Account has been received. The subscriptions for last year including the amount paid in 2015/16, my apologies for the typing error which I spotted last night which shows the date as 10/15/16! This reminds me of a quotation by Winston Churchill on Honesty – It is a fine thing to be honest, but it is also very important to be right.

I didn't spot when I proof read the document so I am being honest in admitting my mistake but didn't get it right, There were other typing errors for which I apologise.

Then we have gift aid, sale of an asset, repayment of the subscription float and finally the income from the sale of the U3A Calendars in the sum of £496, and also the sale of diaries.

We then look at the Expenses, which I will go through with you. Annual Capitation fee is based on £3.50 for members of this U3A. You will note the amount spent on Equipment, Web & Software, you will realize that no item is worth more than £500 as the total is under half of the max allowed for writing off individual purchases. The Easy Internet Solutions is the cost of the software for Margaret Reed who has taken over this work from Geoff Noel. We understand that you can't transfer this software from one person to another. The mailing cost of the U3A publication is again a charge against your subscriptions.

You will also note the cost of U3A Calendars of £422.05 which shows a profit on the sale of calendars of £73.95 the committee felt that it didn't want to benefit from this very successful exercise by the Painting Group and decided to donate to the Painting Group £75 to enable them to pay for a professional painter to give the group advice. These were so successful and the group will be producing a similar Calendar for next year and these can be preordered with the diaries later this year.

Because there had been an increase in the hire of Coronation Hall I recommended an increase in subs from £14 to £15, I do not propose or anticipate any further increases in the foreseeable future, I would prefer to have a small increase now rather than a larger increase in the future. Had we not resolved the maximum numbers allowed in Coronation Hall then we would have faced a considerable increase for any special meetings and this would give us a difficulty as the only large room is at the Petwood and the cost of this would have been exorbitant. The rent for the room that we hold our committee meetings at the Museum has also risen.

EXPENDITURE: - Printing costs are shown as £171 plus the printing of the News Letter but we were not invoiced for March Newsletter until this month. Room hire includes the use of Coronation Hall, The Golf Hotel for the AGM due to another election and this is why we are here this afternoon with another election in Coronation Hall, but fortunately the next General Election is not on the 1st Thursday in the month. Our annual capitation to U3A was paid in the last financial year. The total for various items of equipment was paid in the sum of £207.15 and the Internet Solutions was £65.69. The other large expense is Direct Mail costs for the U3A magazine. Committee expenses are slightly less than the previous year. Speakers, I think we have had good value for our money in the Speakers booked by Margaret Green in the sum of £526 plus a donation of £50 for the speakers who talked about the work of the Advance Driving Team from Lincoln.

Refreshments at the Monthly meeting are higher due to the cakes made for the Queen's 90th Birthday celebration, taking all the expenses into account and the income for the year shows a difference of £3029.49 between the balance on the account at the 31st March 2017 of £5719.82 you will note that under expenses I withdrew a sum of £20 for petty cash and taking into account the balance of petty cash at the end of the previous year and the purchase of stamps there is a balance of Petty Cash of £19.72 of the stamps bought the value of those remaining is £4.40 @ 55p each. As stated there is no value in Assets as discussed earlier?

Before dealing with the Social Account I will go through the budget for this year.

This budget was prepared before our last Committee meeting on Monday, 24th April, when we decided to increase the maximum number of members to 250 this will increase the total subscriptions to £3750 and a possible increase in gift aid. I have put gift aid in as £450 being a small increase on last year's income. A cash float for the subscriptions of £90 being paid back into the main account.

It is difficult to know just how successful the calendars will be this year but have assumed that there will be some increase in the number ordered and the income has been set at £500. The U3A diaries are always well received and I have assumed no increase in the cost of them, but if the cost to members does increase, this will be known before you pre-order them later this year.

As mentioned earlier the amount for membership Subs will be higher with the increase in numbers agreed by the committee, gift aid is always difficult to budget for, last year I budgeted for the same amount received in 2015/16 this year I have increased it by a further £30 but this may increase with an extension to the number of members joining. I have increased the amount of income from the sale of Calendars, and assumed a similar amount for the sales of U3A diaries.

On expenditure I have increased the amount for printing costs just in case we have some unexpected costs, the U3A capitation fee is what has now been paid for this year, but with more members we will next year have a higher amount to pay. For equipment, Web and Software I have left this at £200, direct mail costs are based on information I have received, which is based on the number posted last year, but this in 2018/19 will increase with a possible increase in membership this year. I have increased the budget for speakers from £500 to £600 other expenses are shown with a slight increase from last year's. I have included a contingency sum of £500 as per last year's budget, in case we have another increase in the hire of Coronation Hall, there is a slight increase in the cost of Calendars this expenditure shows a total of £4,916 being an excess of expenditure over income of £326.00 the anticipated balance on the bank account is £5,393.82 at 31st March 2018.

## SOCIAL ACCOUNT

I will now turn to the Social Account, which I have said before that the Charity Commission has no interest in, but this might change, as stated earlier we are to be advised about certain changes being made as the Charity Commission is tightening up its rules.

You will see on the reverse side of the accounts for the Social Outings, the statement Balance at the beginning of the year is highlighted in Yellow in the Sum of £2382.90, however this amount includes an amount for a visit/s at the beginning of the last financial year of £1,882 giving an opening balance of £500.90 also the balance as the 31st March 1017 is £3130.85 this again will have some income for trips booked for this financial year, but this will be analyzed in due course. I will now deal, for your information, the income and expenditure for various outings during the year, this is show on the screen, just in case you can't see the detail I will go through these you will note that there are small losses on some outings but again some profit on others the total profit is showing a balance of £117 95 this goes towards meeting the costs of the hire of the Methodist Church and other incidental expenses. So the message is that the Outings Group are not making huge profits but just covering the costs of the visits and incidental expenses in connection with running the Group. I hope that this clarifies the position for you.

*Ann Barton proposed and Judy Binks seconded the acceptance of the accounts. **The accounts were adopted unanimously.***

### 6. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts for 2017/18

John Townsend was proposed as Auditor for next year's accounts.

*Proposed by Ian Ramsey, seconded by Lynn Noel and **agreed unanimously.***

### 7. Appointment of Executive Committee and Officers for 2017/178

#### The Officers are:

Chairman – Ced Shurben

Vice-Chairman and Newsletter – Les Wylde

Treasurer – Arthur Platts

Business Secretary – Val Shurben

#### The Members are:

Pam Fearn (Groups Coordinator)

Geoff Noel (Minutes secretary)

Lynn Noel (Membership)

Mike Derwent (Assets Manager)

Irene Derwent (Social Group Representative)

Margaret Green (Programme Secretary)

*The members and officers were proposed by Christine Willis, seconded by Peter Ellis and **unanimously agreed** by the meeting.*

### 8. Other notified Business

#### a. Groups

The past year has not only seen us welcome more new members but has also seen us pass the 35 mark in terms of the number of groups that we offer. We now have 38 active groups. Particularly encouraging is the continuing variety of new opportunities added to the list - to learn a new language, take up dancing, become computer experts, tackle brain teasers, enjoy singing together for fun or to 'green up' our walks by using the bus to the start point. New groups that have started in the last 12 months include, listed alphabetically: Aviation, French 2, Home-Computing for Fun, the Quiz Group,

Scottish Country Dancing, Singing for Pleasure, Spanish and the Supper Group. Having eight brand new groups just shows that our members are keen to try all sorts of new experiences.

Groups have also organised highly enjoyable trips away, the Five Mile Walkers had a wonderful holiday in Derbyshire whilst also walking all over our beautiful county. The Aviation, Bird Watching, Gardening, Church Visiting and Woodhall Wanderers have also ventured far and wide. And all these in addition to all the wonderful trips and excursions organised by our hardworking Outings Group. Our monthly newsletter continues to profile and celebrate such group activities very successfully.

Once again, I would like to give my sincere thanks to all our Group Leaders – the unsung champions – who work so hard to maintain all the groups on offer. They are at the centre of our organisation, and by volunteering to share their interests they give members a chance to gain new skills and knowledge, and to make and meet friends new and old –they make Woodhall Spa U3A what it is. To recognise their huge contribution to the success of our U3A, all group leaders were invited to a “Thank You” Afternoon Tea at the end of last year which was very well attended and enjoyed by all.

Thirty four of our members are Group Leaders and surprisingly, and bravely, some of them lead more than one group. Margaret Cole, Irene Derwent, Barbara Haines, Michaela Moody and Geoff Noel all manage to lead 2 or more groups, an amazing achievement considering what busy lives we all lead. Please accept my apology if I have missed anyone off this list.

The past year saw two of our longest-serving Group Leaders, Pat Budge and Christine Willis, step down from their roles in the 5 Mile Walking and the Gardening Groups. They leave their respective groups in excellent order and, after a period of some uncertainty as to their successors, in capable hands. We owe both Pat and Christine a massive vote of thanks for the sterling work they each put in over long periods.

Finally, the success of the organisation relies on the ideas and enthusiasm of its members, and with that in mind, I would like to encourage anyone who has an idea about future groups or activities to suggest them to me and we can look into making it happen.

- b. Thanks were proposed from the floor to the Chairman and committee members for all their work.

The meeting closed at 15:26.