



Northumbria Region u3a

Zoom Committee Meeting

18th November 2022

From 14.00 – 16.35

Present: - Cecilia Coulson (CC), Ann Carr (AC), Peter Barnett (PB), Malcolm Wilkinson (MW), Mike Wallace (MMW), Mary Dunning (MD), Ted Watt (TW), Mary Barlow (MEB).

Apologies: - Sandi Rickerby (SR), Mary Dunning (MD).

Welcome: - Cecilia welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting: - They were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising: -

AC asked about the Trust Volunteers and CC pointed out that Regional Committee Members are to be called Trust Volunteers in the future so they can claim expenses and be covered by insurance.

DM initials should read MD in the Three Year Plan.

EDI refers to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. A copy of this policy will be issued to all u3as shortly.

Events – The Grace Darling event on 8th December was cancelled.

Reports: -

Chair (CC): - Report Circulated. CC notes that she was unwell and therefore unable to go to Alnwick u3a as arranged.

AC is requesting that u3as when changing chairs, secretaries etc., that they inform her as soon as possible after the event. Forms are on the website and an email address is important if they wish to receive regional news etc.

Facebook. CC is looking into setting up a page for the Region and has been given a contact name of someone who may be able to assist and is looking into this. Wendy Dale of Tynedale said she would approach the member that set up their new Facebook Page. I'm still waiting for a reply. CC to provide an advert for the website and Messenger for help with the Facebook Page)

Business Secretary (MEB): - CC came to MEBs house with old minutes and newsletters that she had been given. The minutes have been put into date order and are in the process of being scanned.

The old Newsletters are being held as an archive and it was noted that even as far back as 2010 there was a call for more members to come forward and join committees.

Finance (MMW): - The Lindisfarne Gospels had a surplus of £67.30 and the committee agreed that this money should be made available to the Events team for future use. It seems the surplus came about because of the price charged for the event.

The Charity Commission have now received the annual returns.

MMW has arranged to provide TW with the finance spreadsheet so he can provide answers to the committee should he not be available. It was discussed whether TW needed access to Beacon but MMW pointed out that the spreadsheet was the most important document at the moment. PB pointed out that there are four main users of Beacon himself, AC, M Brown and Mike Cook and if it was found necessary that TW have access in the future that this could be arranged. The committee was in agreement with this.

MMW confirmed that he is using Beacon as well as the spreadsheet for accounts and will be providing Alan Swinburn with an assessment of Beacon.

Events (MW): - Kelvin Rushworth has provided a report which has been distributed which included an assessment of the events held this year.

Arbeia, South Shields was well attended despite the atrocious weather.

Lindisfarne Gospels – There has been excellent feedback.

National Glass Centre, Sunderland – The team are looking at using this venue in July 2023.

The committee agreed with the suggested events for 2023.

Communications (PB): - PB is in the process of updating the website and contacting two possible helpers.

There is no definitive list of u3as using Beacon and that such a list would be beneficial. It was agreed that asking u3as if they use the system could be done via a newsletter or when asking for subscriptions.

To date only one u3a has asked for access to Paul Martinez PowerPoint.

A new Network run by Jane Mathieson (South Durham and Border Treasurer and Business Secretaries) has been added to the Networks page on the website. An email has been distributed and PB has had eight replies and CC one all of which have been forwarded to Jane.

PB noted that there is still an item on the website asking for assistance with the Three Year Plan and asked if this could be taken down. CC confirmed it could.

Messenger (MEB): - TW has provided an item for the next edition of Messenger called Painting with Light by Harry Brenkley of Seaham and District u3a who is willing to provide further articles. This is much appreciated.

The next edition of Messenger is planned for 14th March 2023.

Regional Trustee (SR): - SR is unable to attend and CC stood in for her. CC and SR have a monthly Zoom meeting.

Designing a World for Everyone a presentation by Prof Jeremy Myerson will take place on 30th November 2022. Information on this has been distributed.

Feedback on Quarterly Meeting: -

The questions and answers from the Workshop have been distributed to the committee. Kelvin Rushworth will be leading a discussion on this at the December Workshop at the Discovery Museum.

There were what appeared to be some unreasonable comments on the papers.

The dietary requirements of one member were not met and a refund given. Suitable wording will be included on future questionnaires of what is available ready for the next face to face meeting which will possibly be the AGM in April.

The caterers from the previous meeting in July have still not provided an invoice. It was noted that unfavourable comments were given to them regarding the food they provided. It seems that firms can still request payment for up to six years after an event.

A Grant Scheme for Equipment: -

This item was held over from the last meeting as MMW was unable to attend. There was £4k put to one side pre Covid for a Summer School which did not take place. Could we use some of this money and how would such a scheme work?

The Jesmond Legacy details were discussed but unfortunately members were not on the group who dealt with this and therefore have no details of the system used. It was noted that monies only went to two u3as although others applied.

CC pointed out that some u3as have little in the way of funds which they can use for equipment.

Could we afford both a Summer School in 2024 and to put a Grant Scheme in place? Do we have the resources to run a Grant Scheme?

Some thought such a scheme would be unfair although MMW pointed out that financial details could be requested to bolster u3as request for a grant.

To reduce the monies held could we reduce our subscriptions? MMW pointed out that reducing the subscriptions by £1 would only mean that it would reduce our income by just over £40 per annum and that in itself was not a solution.

Would members provide MEB by 29th January 2023 with their thoughts on how they see such a scheme working e.g. loans, grants and eligibility.

Updates: -

Speakers List – Ongoing.

Three Year Plan – Ongoing but an overview of the work done to date was given. It was noted that this needs to be fluid with the restructuring of TAT.

Quarterly Meetings – CC has been provided with a report on why these meetings are considered necessary.

What is the purpose of these meetings and are they reaching the majority of our members? It was noted that these meetings are not restricted to committee members.

Do we want workshops and speakers? Do we need a new format?

Do we need focus groups in the area?

CC to send members of the group possible topics for discussion.

A further report was requested on suitable dates, venues and speakers.

Restructuring the u3a

CC provided the committee with details of a Zoom meeting she attended with various members from the region. This will also be discussed at the December 16th meeting.

The role of Regional Trustee is onerous, and it is proposed that the workload should be reduced. It is proposed that some Trustees who prefer to remain on the board will do so while others will concentrate on their regional work.

It is envisaged that the EGM planned for March will be postponed.

It was felt that the u3a movement is being led from the top down and not from the bottom up.

CC confirmed that John Lloyd had spoken to Liz Thackery after our Regional October meeting regarding the regions feelings and will ask John to provide an email for this committee with bullet points of what was discussed and the outcome.

The Wall: -

CC to send the committee an email she has received with details of the National Event on 10th May 2023.

CC has agreed to lead a Creative Writing Group.

Workshop Discovery Museum 16th December

This will take place between 10.30 and 12.30 then it is proposed that the committee go for a Christmas Meal. A venue is being sourced. The Persian Restaurant has been suggested.

Any Other Business

A meeting to discuss the next Quarterly Meeting has been arranged for 13.45 on 6th January 2023. The date of the Quarterly Meeting may change to allow our speaker Alan Walmsley to attend. It is intended that this should be a Zoom meeting.

Catherine Butcher has asked for a twenty minute slot. She will be willing to give a talk at u3a meetings about a new initiative called Internet of Caring Things Programme, which will be up and running in 2023. The programme aims to bring together citizens, businesses and suppliers in the region to explore what is needed in terms of developing or re-design products and services to support healthy ageing.

The date of the next meeting is 6th January 2023. Please note the change in your diaries.

Name	Cecelia Coulson	Position	Chair	Date	20 th January 2023
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Name	Mary Barlow	Position	Secretary	Date	20 th January 2023
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