Minutes of the 436th Meeting of Barnstaple Third Age Group Committee.

Held on Friday 20 January 2023 at 10.00 am

At Methodist Hall, Fremington

Present Keith Luckhurst, Sue Thomas, Ellie Bray, Maureen Penny, David Dickinson, Roger Bray, Laurence Hillel, Julia Denton, Pam Harman, Gill Dow, Nigel Wright

1Apologies:None

2 Minutes of meeting held on 16 December 2022were agreed – proposed by Maureen, seconded by David

3Matters Arising:

Actions outstanding from previous meetings:- All others considered closed

Action: Action concerning confirmation that group attendees are bona fide u3a members, to be postponed until next year. This could be linked to the use of the Beacon by group leaders

Pam reported that she has now has volunteer help for the monthly coffee mornings. However, it was noted that more general help is needed to help clear up at the end of these meetings. Pam also highlighted the fact that at the last meeting, paper cups had to be used as there were not enough acceptable mugs.

Action: Members of the committee, present at any coffee morning, are asked to help clear the tables by returning coffee cups etc. to the kitchen.

Action: Maureen volunteered to purchase 20 more mugs for Roundswell, solely for u3a use.

In response to Keith's question about the committee for the forthcoming year, both Pam and Gill confirmed that they do not wish to stand again. However, Gill volunteered to maintain Beacon until a replacement comes forward.

In a unanimous vote, all committee members supported Keith to remain as Chairman.

It was confirmed that the Barnstaple hotel is booked for the 4 May and 7 Dec

4 Chairman

2023 marks Barnstaple u3a's 40th anniversary and Keith asked for suggestions about how we could celebrate this.

It was generally agreed that our monthly coffee morning could be a celebratory occasion which we could highlight with the use of ruby coloured bunting/ balloons/ serviettes/ cakes. This needs to be more fully explored when it is known what date to plan for. The majority agreed that we would not charge entry for this.

Action: Pam to clarify actual date of our anniversary and bring this to committee for more detailed planning.

5 National Office

Nothing to report

6 Business Secretary

Roger has forwarded updated documents, received from National Office, to relevant committee members for checking/ comment. There followed a lengthy discussion about various aspects of procedure:

Keith reported on *Communications, press release and growth matters policy* documents, stating that there was nothing specific or new to be aware of, but there was a possibly useful sample of a Press Release.

Action: Keith volunteered to become the Press Release Officer.

Ellie reported nothing new in the *Charity Commission* documents. We are already registered and have regular contact with the Commission through our yearly reports, as well as regularly updating the Commission with contact details of Barnstaple u3a.

Ellie also reported on the*Safeguarding*documents which comprised of a policy that needs to be adopted and looked at in more detail. After discussion it was agreed to purchase a specific register for Safeguarding and another for Accident reports. Group Leaders need to be aware of safeguarding procedures.

Action: Maureen volunteered to become our Safeguarding Officer and will purchase a safeguarding registerand an accident report register - which it was decided needed updating, and produce a policy document if necessary.

Maureen reported on the *Disciplinary* and*Complaints* procedure documents, saying that there was nothing to be particularly worried about, but that she would check again in more detail.

Action: Maureen volunteered to go through all relevant procedure documents held and check for currency, updating as necessary and produce a our own procedure if necessary

Action: Roger to forward all relevant documents, pertaining to official procedures, to Maureen.

Maureen reported on the *u3a Health Check* document, according to which Barnstaple u3a would be described as "stagnant". This prompted discussion about the number of members that we would ideally like and it was agreed that 300 would be ideal, considering the capacity of Rounsdwell Hall for our coffee mornings and the number of group activities that are currently active.

Nigel reported on the *GDPR* documents, which were lengthy and detailed. So much so, that he is preparing a template of the relevant items to circulate to committee members for their perusal. This should then be signed by all trustees and filed with the secretary.

Regarding data protection, Nigel emphasised the importance of not using private email addresses to communicate with members. Instead, it is wiser to use Beacon, where other emails addresses are not visible. This is an issue that needs to be addressed with all group leaders and could be included in a group leaders' meeting.

Action: Roger to pass any relevant GDPR documents currently held to Nigel for him to check for relevancy and update as necessary

Action: Roger to include GDPR as an agenda item for the next committee meeting.

Sue reported on the lengthy _Finance_ documents which had caused her some concern. However, after discussing the points raised, it was established that everything within those documents was familiar and being adhered to. Sue asked about the Assets register which is currently held by the Secretary. It was agreed that she should be kept updated on its contents on a regular basis.

Action: Roger to keep Sue regularly updated with details of the Assets register.

Laurence reported on the many _Risk Assessment_ documents, some of which have already been circulated to committee members. He has simplified some of the information to make it more acceptable to Group Leaders and emphasised that the 'Accident' and 'Disputes' procedures would be of particular relevance.

Throughout many of the discussions raised by the above topics, reference was made about the need to inform Group Leaders. Whilst acknowledging that it is not easy, it was agreed that we need to arrange a formal meeting for Group Leaders to familiarise them with relevant procedures, including: Date Protection – use of Beacon for emails; Accident and Dispute procedures; Risk Assessments; Safeguarding

Action: A suitable date and venue to be arranged for a Group Leaders' meeting – Roger - agenda item for next committee meeting?

Keith concluded this part of the meeting by thanking committee members for their extensive work in checking the documents

Rogerthen went on to report that he has received a renewal insurance policy from National Office and this is now on file. However, it was pointed out that any visitors to Barnstaple u3a's events would not covered by the policy. This infers that there is no insurance cover for paid speakers.

Action: Keith will ask Vicky to ensure that speakers are aware of the absence of insurance cover.

7 Beacon

Gill reported that training opportunities for the Beacon system have recently been circulated, but stressed that these training events are quickly filled. She would like a list, readily available, of anyone interested in such events so that in future, she can respond immediately to try to secure places.

Action: All committee members to inform Gill if there is a chance they might like to be included in any future Beacon training events.

Gill proposed that the membership list for 2023 is closed at the end of January and she would then write to all members confirming their membership numbers. The committee agreed to this.

At this stage, Laurence volunteered to liaise with Gill to cover Beacon issues so that he could learn more about the system and be able to access it if/ when necessary.

Nigel commented that, as part of the working party re-writing the national website, he is aware that some material – mainly photos – has been lost. He therefore asked for any images held by others, to be forwarded to him.

8 Treasurer

The bank balance at the end of December 2022 was £10297.31

Sue has received a £10.00 note - in an envelope - for membership renewal, but she has no idea who paid it. This has been mentioned to all at the coffee morning to help determine to whom the £10 refers to. It was agreed that this sum should be included in the misc section of the accounts.

The Science Group leader has arranged for a speaker for one of their meetings and may need an additional subsidy to help with the cost. It was agreed this could be possible but more information was required.

Action: Sue to ask for more details of the cost before committee agree to a modest contribution.

9 Membership Secretary

For 2023 - 237 members have renewed (out of a possible 302). This includes 15 affiliated members.

The price of TAM is now £3.35, but is rising to £3.60 from April 2023. This increase will be included in 2024 fees.

10 Groups Coordinator

Laurence suggested the need for a general checklist, to act as a risk assessment, for group leaders – for walking groups. However, it was felt that some issues need further discussion.

Action: At the next Link meeting, Keith will ask other groups how they manage risk assessments including the use (or not) of first aid kits.

Action: Roger - Agenda item at next meeting

It was agreed that the letter sent to new members enquiring about their interests and possible involvement in forming new groups would be sent to any new members twice a year – in March and September.

Action: Gill, currently our Beacon administrator, agreed to send the letter to any new members.

11 Speakers' Secretary

In the absence of Vicky for the May coffee morning, Keith asked for a volunteer to escort Ann Widdecombe. Pam agreed to do this. Further arrangements for this event will be discussed nearer the time.

Action: Roger – agenda item for March?

February's speaker is Rupert Kirkwood – Up the Creek & Far Beyond.

12 Newsletter Editor

A notification about our AGM on 2 March 2023 will go into the next newsletter, together with a nominations form for new committee members.Roger needs to receive any nominations 28 days before the AGM. Keith confirmed, which was substantiated by other committee members, that he preferred the number of committee members to be around 6/9 which could be increase if the work load increases

Action: David to liaise with Lynne (newsletter editor) about inclusion of AGM notification and committee nomination form.

13 North Devon Link

Keith will report after the February 10th meeting

<u>14 Roundswell Hall and Fremington</u>.

The earlier discussion about the number of members in Barnstaple u3a (see item 6 in these minutes) and the capacity of Roundswell Hall for coffee mornings, led to a question about a risk assessment for the coffee mornings there.

Action: Roger to contact Helen (Roundswell Hall) to query what risk assessment they do and, if available, to use this to write our own for our coffee mornings.

<u>15 Lunches& Coffee Mornings</u>

The Spring Lunch is on Thursday 16 March and tickets at £10.50 will be available at the next coffee morning in February.

Pam now has more volunteers to help at the coffee mornings – see item 3 of these minutes

<u>16 AOB</u>

Nigel volunteered to be the custodian of various pieces of projector equipment required for groups and coffee mornings.

Laurence gave his apologies for the next committee meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.50with Keith thanking all for their attendance and involvement in this comprehensive meeting

Next Coffee Morning: Thursday2 February 2023

Next Committee Meeting:

Friday17 February 2023 -Fremington Hall**.** Sue will organise coffee etc.

Friday 17 March – Keith will organise coffee etc.