Minutes of the 437thMeeting of Barnstaple Third Age Group Committee

Held on Friday 17 February 2023 at 10.00 am

At Methodist Hall, Fremington

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

1Apologies:Maureen Penny

2 Minutes of meeting held on 20 January 2023were agreed – proposed by Nigel, seconded by Sue

3Matters Arising:

Actions outstanding from previous meetings: - All others considered closed

With regard to the ongoing action point concerning confirmation that group attendees are bona fide u3a members, it was agreed that group leaders should submit a list of their members, thus confirming membership.

Action: Laurence will contact group leaders asking for details of their attendees.

Concerning plans for a celebration of our 40th anniversary, it was agreed that more detailed planning would be discussed at the forthcoming committee meetings.

Action: Roger to ensure that this is an agenda item for April.

Keith reported that Maureen has purchased a new Accident Report Register, but is still looking into matters concerning Safeguarding. In her absence, it was suggested that she could report to committee at the next meeting.

Action: Roger to include Maureen's report on safeguarding procedures in next agenda.

Action: Maureen volunteered, at the January meeting, to go through all relevant procedure documents held and check for currency, updating as necessary.

Date and venue for a Group Leaders' meeting has still to be arranged and will need to include Maureen's feedback about Safeguarding procedures as well as Disciplinary and Complaints procedures

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

Action: Keith will ask Vicky to ensure that speakers are aware of the absence of personal insurance cover when they visit our u3a, and for them to sign to this effect.

Sue has still not received details of the financial support requested by the Science group leader for speaker's fees. Keith suggested that support - when requested – could be paid up to £30/ £40 without the need for committee approval, but if more was requested, it would need to come to committee for a decision.

At the Link meeting on 10th February, Keith ascertained that just 2 out of 5 undertook risk assessments for field trips; no-one took any action for groups held in members' homes and no-one carries a first aid kit.

Action: Arrangements for Ann Widdecombe's visit in May remains to be included in the agenda for March/ April?

4 Chairman

In answer to Keith's query, all committee members confirmed that they would be attending the AGM on 2 March 2023.

Roger has the signing in forms and clip boards.

Minutes of previous AGM and accounts for 2022 have been circulated to members, via Beacon.

5 National Office

Nothing to report

6 Business Secretary

Roger now has a file in readiness for all new procedural documents, after they have been checked.

No nominations have been received for possible new committee members.

7 Beacon/ GDPR

Nigel had previously circulated, to committee members, three policies concerning Data Protection and Privacy. He circulated a master copy and asked for all committee members to sign to confirm that they had read and agreed them. These would then be kept by the Business Secretary.

Nigel then went on to say that we need to implement these policies and that the first and perhaps most important change should be the committee's own use of emails. He stressed that it is not acceptable, in terms of data protection, to address emails to more than one person. It is acceptable to do this to an individual – using the normal 'To' field, but for more addressees the sender of an email should use the 'BCC' facility. This allows you to hide recipients in email messages, whereas addresses in the 'To' field and the 'CC' field appear in messages for all to see. Members should use the Beacon system for emails wherever possible as this avoids any breach of data protection law.

Action: If not using Beacon for emails, committee members should use BCC for emails addressed to more than one person.

8 Treasurer

The bank balance at the end of January 2023 was £11557.74

Ann Brand has requested a new card table for her Rummikub and Canasta groups and she acknowledges that this would remain the property of our u3a.

Action: Laurence will liaise with Ann regarding the purchase of a new card table.

With regard to Ann Widecombe's visit in May, Sue recommended that we offer free coffee to all who attend. Our financial position is very healthy and we can afford to do this, thus making the event a part of our 40th celebrations. This was agreed by all committee members.

Action: Sue to notify Barnstaple Hotel of our decision. She will also confirm a 'theatre' seating arrangement for possibly120 people – with some flexibility for more if demand warrants it.

Action: Keith will announce the event at out April coffee morning, stating that it is a part of our 40th celebrations, and is open to all Barnstaple u3a members.

Action: Keith to ask Vicky to confirm with AW what, if any, equipment / special arrangements she needs for her talk.

Action: Pam will organise a bouquet for AW

It is also hoped that on the day we will be able to have a photo of AW with our Chairman and Business Secretary for use in our own newsletter, and possibly local press

With regard to the agenda item 'Accountability', Keith explained that Mike Blower, who examines our financial records every year, is concerned that some group leaders are obviously not accounting for all of the money that they handle. Mike wants to stress that all receipts, for incidental expenses, and all surplus money must be handed to the treasurer, in accordance with guidance from National Office. This subject to be raised at the proposed group leaders meeting.

Sue finished by saying that membership would remain at £10.00, coffee mornings £1.00 and TAM would increase to £3.60 in 2024.

9 Membership Secretary

We currently have 272 paid members, of which 19 are affiliated.

Julia stated that attendees at the coffee mornings are not always signing in (a requirement for Health and Safety as well as membership), nor are they all paying. This was particularly noticeable at the last coffee morning where 120 attended (at £1/ head), but only £80.00 was received.

There followed a discussion about how to overcome this and it was agreed that table arrangements at the entrance should be altered to ensure that all attendees have to pass the signing in tables – and pay!

Post meeting note: It was confirmed that the takings at the coffee morning were £109 not £80 as first believed.

10 Groups Coordinator

Laurence circulated a risk assessment check list that he has compiled, to be used by group leaders leading walks and other outdoor activities. All agreed that this should be circulated to the relevant group leaders.

Action: Laurence to circulate check list to all walking group leaders.

Laurence went on to say that new groups were being well supported and the proposed new Bonsai group was receiving some positive interest.

11 Speakers' Secretary

All agreed that the last speaker - Rupert Kirkwood – was excellent and well deserving of 10/10

Our speaker at the AGM in March is Chairman Keith talking about remarkable British Trees.

12 Newsletter Editor

Action: Nigel to pass details of his new Bonsai group to Lynne for the newsletter.

Action: Keith to forward Lynne a suitable tree picture for the newsletter

13 North Devon Link

Keith reported that there will be a Link Theme Day – in October 2024.

All other information from the Link meeting, regarding risk assessments, is reported at item 3 of these minutes.

14 Roundswell Hall and Fremington.

Roger has been in contact with Helen Wheeler (Roundswell Hall) regarding risk assessment. They have one and she will forward a copy to him

15 Lunches& Coffee Mornings

So far, Sue has sold 16 tickets for the Spring Lunch - on Thursday 16 March. Tickets will be on sale again at the AGM.

16 AOB

Gill volunteered to remain as a co-opted committee member so that she can continue to oversee all matters Beacon. All expressed their sincere thanks to Gill.

Pam confirmed that she is stepping down from the committee but will still be a member of u3a

Nigel raised the issue of the laptop used at Roundswell Hall, saying that it was still unreliable with an intermittent link between screen and computer. It was agreed that after making the laptop 'safe', Nigel should dispose of it.

Gill proposed that the committee considered the possibility of recruiting new committee members throughout the year, rather than just at the end of the year. This was agreed.

Action: Laurence will send letter asking about new members' interests and skills to Julia for circulation again.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.40 with Chairman Keith thanking all for their attendance.

Next Coffee Morning: Thursday2 March 2023**(AGM)**

Next Committee Meeting: Friday17 March 2023 -Fremington Hall**.** Keith will organise coffee.

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