

**MINUTES OF A MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday 24 February 2022 @ 2pm at 2 Home Way, Petersfield**

- Present:** Steven Watts (Chairman)  
Robina Whitehorn (Secretary)  
Gordon Watts (Treasurer)  
Jenny Thwaites (Groups Co-ordinator)  
Linda Hutton (Membership Secretary)  
Peter Lake (Lead on Communications)
- In attendance:** Lynn Battersby-Vogt (Speaker Secretary)  
Liz Wright – PR Adviser  
Louise Fox – prospective MC member  
David Kidd – prospective MC member  
Malcolm Muggerridge – prospective MC member

1. There were no apologies.
2. No interests were declared.
3. **Chairman's Welcome** – Steven Watts, Chairman, welcomed the Advisers and prospective MC members who were attending to observe the proceedings prior to standing for membership.
4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** – The Minutes of the previous meeting of 21 January 2022 were agreed as a true record.
5. **Matters Arising** – The Open Meeting pre-brief on 14 February had been conducted successfully
  - The Group Convenors' Meeting had been arranged for 10 March @ 3pm
  - The New Members' Coffee Morning had been rescheduled for 23 March
6. **Speaker Programme** – Lynn Battersby-Vogt reported that she had completed the full programme for 2022, following adjustments necessitated by Covid restrictions. She was requested to pass a copy to the Secretary. She had also introduced a Speaker Confirmation Form to standardise the administrative process. Peter Lake suggested

that feedback from members would support the promotion of Open Meetings in News and Views, although it was acknowledged that individual views were often inconsistent. The MC discussed how best and in what form to publicise the Open Meetings; the Speaker Secretary was requested to send a single information sheet, with short biographical details and where possible a connection of local interest to John Donlan (for the website), Andy Borthwick (for News and Views) and the Editor of Connect.

The Speaker Secretary requested further clarification regarding Speakers who did not charge a fee but asked for a charity donation in lieu; the Management Committee acknowledged Charity Commission guidance on payments from one charity to another and advised that in all such instances the matter should be referred to the Management Committee.

It was noted that four Open Meetings – General Interest, Science and Technology, Arts and Heritage and Health and Wellbeing had been scheduled within the same week in February; it was agreed that the organisers should be encouraged to share scheduling intentions in order to avoid potential clashes.

- 7. PR Update** – Liz Wright reported to the Committee her remit to improve communications within Petersfield u3a and to project the organisation's external profile in order to recruit new members. She had engaged with Petersfield Post and Shine Radio, the latter being keen to use this opportunity to expand its own audience. It had been suggested that a future partnership with Shine Radio could include a u3a member contribution to the broadcast and the formation of a Media Group within Petersfield u3a.

She had given input to News and Views to advise on presentation and clarity; on her recommendation it was agreed that the Publications section on the website should be renamed "Media".

As PR Adviser it would be helpful for her to understand Petersfield u3a's policy on non-member attendance at Open Meetings; RW would send her a copy of the written policy.

Finally, she looked forward to the official Petersfield Tree Planting event in support of HM The Queen's Green Canopy Jubilee Commemoration on Wednesday 23 March at 1pm at the Avenue Pavilion. The Chairman had suggested that Joyce Borthwick should be invited to represent the u3a and he had informed Philip Jones, the former Chairman. It was intended to place a Save the Date notice in Connect with publicity in News and Views, Petersfield Post and on Shine Radio.

Liz Wright and Lynn Battersby-Vogt left the meeting.

- 8. Finance Report** – The Treasurer reported little change since the previous month. He drew attention to the level of support for Groups which reflected formation of new Groups and the commitment to meet venue hire and related costs until the end of August 2022 (decision to be reviewed April 2022). Some Groups were now choosing to

meet in external venues rather than private homes in order to accommodate new Members. The Committee agreed that this was a reasonable commitment.

9. **Membership Report** – The Membership Secretary reported that Petersfield u3a had 663 members to date; 77 having joined since September 2021 and 12 since the last meeting of the Management Committee. There had been 3 resignations.

LH presented for comment the updated Membership Application Form, in which payment by Bank Transfer was strongly encouraged in order to avoid bank charges. Given that 320 members presently paid for annual renewal by cheque, it was agreed to request that all such payments (including for outings) should be made by Bank Transfer. The Committee agreed to revisit this matter in June. **ACTION:**

**RW**

10. **Groups Report** – The Groups Co-ordinator stated that the Scrabble Group had been reactivated, and that new Groups had been formed to cover International Affairs, Spanish and Wine Appreciation. A Zoom Meeting for Conveners had been arranged on 10 March at 3pm, during which John Donlan would give a review of Beacon updates.

JT reminded the Committee that it had been agreed to introduce Associate Membership (£10) from August 2022 for those individuals in Petersfield u3a Groups who were members of another u3a. The MC confirmed this decision, being mindful that some Groups were full and had waiting lists but agreed that Conveners should be reminded and encouraged to address this during the Audit process.

11. **Future Events** – It was agreed that there would be no Petersfield u3a Open Day in 2022, and that the main event would be a combined Celebration of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the u3a's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. There would be a lunchtime picnic on the Heath on Wednesday 1 June, to which members could bring their own refreshments. LH undertook to enquire if the Liss Band would be available. **ACTION:**

**LH**

12. **Leadership of the Welcome Team** – The Committee noted Marjorie Day's wish to stand down and thanked her for her leadership. Sue Hampton had volunteered to step in; JT would meet with her to consider how the team might be formally identified as a Group, contactable via a website link. JT was keen that members of the Management Committee should visit as many Groups as possible and would encourage Conveners to extend an invitation. **ACTION: JT**

13. **Upgrade to Constitution** – The Secretary reminded the Committee that the Constitution of Petersfield u3a was drawn up in 2007; it predates the Charities Act 2011, GDPR, and all current Charity Commission guidance on governance and compliance. As stated in the Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting, the 2021 Model Constitution is approved, authorised and recommended for adoption by The Third Age Trust; it is clearly laid out and reflects the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and

current Charity Commission guidance, including electronic processes introduced during the pandemic. Some clauses may not seem relevant to Petersfield u3a, especially those in Part 1; they are necessitated by our regulatory and compliance obligations as a registered charity and cannot be altered. It was not proposed to change our current Object or Dissolution Clauses; this upgrade is a clarification, update and refinement of governance and administrative processes. Additionally, the new Model enables the Management Committee to draw up rules and byelaws for the conduct of routine business and administration. Some of these are included in present Constitution and would therefore become part of the byelaws – eg frequency of Committee meetings, financial procedures and cheque signatories, position and role of President – but this gives the individual u3a greater flexibility in drawing up, implementing and amending such rules to meet local circumstances.

The Committee were supportive of the overall Model, except for 3 paragraphs in Clause 16, namely:

*(7) The maximum total period of service of any trustee shall be 9 years in any combination of roles whether or not the periods of service are contiguous.*

*(8) No-one may hold any specific officer position or be an ordinary (non-officer) trustee for a continuous period in excess of 3 years without an interval of at least 1 year between the periods of service.*

*(9) All trustees shall be elected annually but may be re-elected subject to the provisions in sections (7) to (8) of this clause*

Whilst it was understood that rotation of roles and new inputs were beneficial to the organisation, it was considered that 3 years was insufficient time for a post-holder to become fully familiar with and comfortable in the role. It was also feared that a year's break from the Committee would impede continuity and lead to skill fade. Exceptionally, it was agreed that 3-year tenure of the Chairmanship was sufficient given the responsibilities and commitment of the role.

After extensive discussion, it was agreed that Petersfield u3a should submit the following amended Clause for approval by the Third Age Trust:

*(7) The maximum total period of service of any trustee shall be 10 years in any combination of roles.*

*(8) No-one may hold any specific officer position for a continuous period in excess of 5 years without an interval of at least 1 year between the periods of tenure of an officer position, during which time the individual may remain a non-officer trustee, unless elected to the Chairmanship, which office may be held for a maximum single total period of 3 years.*

*(9) All trustees shall be elected annually but may be re-elected subject to the provisions in sections (7) to (8) of this clause*

Steven Watts left the meeting and Peter Lake took the Chair.

14. **Covid Recovery** – The Committee noted the Government’s decision to end legally binding Covid restrictions and looked forward to further resumption of u3a activity. They undertook to abide by any subsequent Covid precautions and to respect those members who remained cautious.
  
15. **Any Other Business** – PL thanked the three prospective members of the Management Committee for their attendance and interest; he invited their comments and feedback, and colleagues discussed ways in which new members might give support to the current Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.45pm

**Next meeting:** Tuesday 29 March 2022 at 10am. Venue: 2 Home Way, Petersfield.

RW 28/02/22

**Signed.....Chairman**

**Date.....**