Petersfield
Charity No. 1060354

MINUTES OF A MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 29 March 2022 @ 10am at 2 Home Way, Petersfield

Present: Steven Watts (Chairman)
Robina Whitehorn (Secretary)
Gordon Watts (Treasurer)
Jenny Thwaites (Groups Co-ordinator)
Peter Lake (Lead on Communications)
Linda Hutton (Membership Secretary) via Zoom

In attendance: Louise Fox – prospective MC member
David Kidd – prospective MC member
John Bevan – prospective MC member
Marie Hook – prospective MC member

1. There were no apologies.

2. No interests were declared.

3. **Chairman's Welcome –** Steven Watts, Chairman, welcomed the 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 24 February 2022 were agreed as a true record. There were no Matters Arising.

5. **Finance Report –** The Treasurer reported that support of Group Activity (venues and speakers) remained consistent at £682 in March. He reminded the Committee that they had undertaken to maintain this support until the end of August 2022, with a review due in April.

   An unrestricted donation of £50 had been received from EHDC in recognition of the u3a's participation in the Petersfield Covid Vaccination operation at the Festival Hall. The Chairman agreed to talk to Les Jarman about an appropriate use of this money, and to advise members via Connect. **ACTION: SW**

Participation in the Petersfield Green Canopy Jubilee Tree Planting scheme at The Avenue Pavilion had cost £120. The Treasurer reminded Committee members that all financial transactions with the Town Council attracted VAT. The latter's charges were also subject to a 2% increase from April.

Booking for the forthcoming Chichester Festival Theatre Season had commenced, though sadly with a reduction in interest, only 15 members having applied. The trip to Kensington Palace in May was likely to be well supported.

It was anticipated that Capitation invoices would shortly be issued by the Third Age Trust.

The Treasurer stated that the forthcoming closure of HSBC Bank in Petersfield added further to the discussion at previous meetings about bank charges, only the Post Office now accepting CAF cheques. The Committee considered at length how best to encourage members to pay subscriptions and other charges such as outings and theatre trips via Standing Order. It was agreed unanimously that with effect from the membership year commencing September 2022, cheque payments by members would no longer be accepted for any of these purposes. Gordon Watts agreed to draft a letter to be sent to all cheque paying members, with a Standing Order Form informing them of this decision; the Membership Secretary undertook to redesign the Form so that it was suitable for both new joining and renewing members. Warning announcements would be made at Open Meetings and via Connect; Group Coordinators would be asked to help spread the message. **ACTION: GW / LH / JT**

6. **Subsidy for Group and Open Meetings** – The Management Committee had undertaken this financial commitment to Groups and all Open meetings until the end of August 2022 to enable members to meet once again post Covid and to encourage the formation of new interest Groups in accordance with the u3a Health Check preferred ratio. It was recognised that Groups needed clarity about the situation from September 2022 to assist their future planning. The Treasurer confirmed that the current commitment (support of venue and speakers) was approximately £680 per month, and that the present financial position could support the subsidy for a further year. The Committee agreed that they wished to encourage the engagement of good quality speakers with broad appeal, though the lack of larger venues was regretted. The Committee agreed unanimously continue the subsidy for Group and Open Meetings (venues and speakers) for a further year until the end of August 2023, at which time the situation would be reviewed.

7. **Speaker Fee – David Allen –** The Secretary brought to the Committee's attention a query from the Speaker Secretary. David Allen, who had been recommended by another u3a, charged £145 plus mileage at 43p per mile (from London). (The Speaker Secretary currently had a remit of £100 without reference to the MC). The Committee approved this charge, subject to further details of the topic advertised. It was noted that Mr Allen was scheduled to speak after the AGM in October, and the MC wished to be assured that the subject of the talk would encourage attendance. Given the

Committee's wish to invite good quality speakers, and in recognition of the present cost of living, it was agreed to increase the Speaker Secretary's remit to £150 for total individual expenses.

It was further agreed to invite the Speaker Secretary to attend the next meeting of the Management Committee to discuss Speaker engagement and costs. **ACTION: RW**

8. **Membership Report –** The Membership Secretary reported that 5 new members had joined within the last month. She stated that she had received requests for a list of forthcoming speakers, and the Committee agreed this should be published, ideally with the inclusion of Arts and Heritage and Science and Technology meetings. The Chairman agreed, with Peter Lake, to convene a meeting with the Conveners of the four Open Meetings to discuss the publication of an advance joint programme. **ACTION: SW / PL**

   The Membership Secretary requested that at the next meeting the Management Committee should discuss the material and quality of membership cards. **ACTION: RW**

   The Committee discussed and approved for further refinement the revised Membership Application Form produced initially by Linda Hutton and amended by Peter Lake. Comments from Louise Fox would also be added. **ACTION: LH / PL**

9. **Groups Update –** The Groups Co-ordinator reminded the Committee about the EHDC Supporting Communities Fund.
   She reported on a very successful Welcome Coffee Morning co-ordinated by Sue Hampton. Three new Groups were under formation and several new members had offered assistance. The Café du Coin had been an enjoyable event, but with limited attendance.

   Gordon Watts presented a request on behalf of Book Group 2 – for subsidy of the fee of £40pa required by Hampshire Library for provision of reading sets. Having declared an interest as a member of Book Group 2, he took no part in the subsequent conversation. The Committee agreed that all Groups could apply for a subsidy of costs if they so wished but were unwilling to make an open-ended commitment; it was therefore decided to grant Book Group 2's request in accordance with the same rationale as current support for Groups' venue and speaker costs, subject to annual review within the same timeframe.

10. The four prospective members of the Management Committee confirmed their interest in seeking elected membership. It was agreed that they would attend and participate in meetings of the Management Committee in an advisory capacity, with no voting rights, until the AGM in October, when they would submit themselves for formal election.

    It was agreed that Louise Fox should have access to Beacon in order to research membership and attendance statistics, subject to confirmation by John Donlan and Peter Lake.

11. **Welcome Table at Open Meetings –** It was agreed to place the Welcome Table in the Main Hall; Linda Hutton would to consider how best to do this in conjunction with giving the Welcome Team greater visibility. **ACTION: LH**

12. **Updated Policies –** The Committee reviewed Peter Lake's revision of two Policies relating to Petersfield u3a Membership Types and Guest Attendance at Open and Group Meetings. Several minor amendments were suggested, and it was proposed that the review period should be two years. Both documents were unanimously approved subject to the incorporation of the proposed changes. **ACTION: PL**

13. **Update to Constitution –** The Secretary reported that the National u3a Office had approved the requested amendment to the February 2021 u3a Model Constitution, as agreed at the meeting of the Management Committee on 24 February 2022, namely Clause 16:
    (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

    The Committee agreed that the Secretary should initiate the formal process of obtaining approval from the Charity Commission and the Third Age Trust, prior to submission to Petersfield u3a members for formal ratification at the Annual General Meeting in October. She would confirm that this could be done at the AGM rather than at an earlier separate Extraordinary General Meeting. **ACTION: RW**

    The Committee were concerned that there was yet no candidate for the post of Chairman when Steven Watts stood down in October. It was agreed to address this as an Agenda item at the next MC meeting. **ACTION: RW**

14. **Celebration Picnic on the Heath** – Arrangements were confirmed for the all-member picnic on 1 June. A returnable deposit was due to the Council; otherwise, all equipment and food/drink would be provided by members. The event would be publicised via Connect, News and Views and through the Group Conveners; the Chairman would ask

Liz Wright to produce a template flyer. **ACTION: SW**

15. **Any Other Business –** MC members were requested to make the Chairman aware of individual members' queries.
    - It was agreed to ask the Community Centre to display the u3a's Green Canopy certificate.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 12.30pm

Next meeting: Friday 13 May 2022 at 10am. Venue: 2 Home Way, Petersfield.

RW 31/03/22

Signed………………………………………………………………………Chairman

Date…………………………………………