Petersfield
Charity No. 1060354

Minutes of Petersfield u3a Management Committee Meeting (Agreed)

Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 1400 at the
United Reform Church Hall, Petersfield

Present: Jenny Thwaites (Chair), Rose Noonan (Secretary), Bernice O'Reilly, Peter Lake, Titian Fleming, Sandy Stephens, Peter Clist, Doreen Challen, Susie Reynolds, Patrick Rudden; Russ Stephens (guest)

For relevant parts of meeting, Jenny Stevinson, Greg Cumming, Charles Price

NOTE: * indicates pre-circulated paper

1. Apologies: Tim Willans

2. Declarations of interest: None.

3. Co-option of Patrick Rudden and other trustees (see also item 12) JT confirmed that GB has resigned as trustee and Treasurer.

   Co-option of PR: JT welcomed PR and proposed that he should be elected to the committee as a trustee, and also as Treasurer. This was seconded by RN and unanimously AGREED. PR now has a generic email address treasurer@petersfieldu3a.org.uk ACTION: JT/RN to insert an announcement in Connect.

   Co-option of GC and CP: JT explained that former Treasurer Greg Cumming and former Chair Charles Price, as previous authorised signatories for the CAF bank accounts, have agreed to be co-opted as trustees for a short period in order for new signatories to supersede them on the mandate. Once the new signatories are authorised, GC and CP will resign, likely to be in 2-3 weeks' time.

   RN proposed the co-option of Greg Cumming; PL seconded. This was unanimously AGREED. JT proposed the co-option of Charles Price; Bo'R seconded. This was unanimously AGREED.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March* The Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising None.

6. Interest Hubs Initiative (standing item)
   JT welcomed Jenny Stevinson to the meeting to report on progress with the Interest Hubs. JS still sees the groups as potentially playing an important part in Petersfield u3a, but as attendance remains variable across hubs she remains keen to raise the hubs' profile and perceived value. She reiterated the hubs' original purpose: to support existing and new convenors and generally facilitate two-way communication between the groups and MC. She requested continuing MC support, and requested to be kept informed about MC activity.

Suggestions included publicity for hub meetings on Connect; a greater presence, eg ‘hub news’, on the website; promoting the hubs at the planned Convenors’ Lunch; encouraging convenors to become more involved in developing the convenor handbook. Convenors are already encouraged to invite a deputy to attend. Bo’R agreed to help JS prepare a piece on the Hubs for Connect. JT thanked JS for her continuing work with the hubs and noted that progress may take some time. ACTION ALL: email JS with ideas.

7. Members’ Reports Items not covered elsewhere:

(i) IT*: A new projector has been purchased. RS explained that, although it is the property of Petersfield u3a and will be used by several groups, TW has arranged for the Film Group to oversee its safe storage. Questions about associated cables and their storage will be dealt with by TW on his return.

(ii) Treasurer*:
As of 12 May, the current account holds £6,080.58, and the deposit account £30,203.36.

a. Proposal
As explained in his paper, PR proposed that Petersfield u3a should make the following decisions:

1. Formally adopt QuickFile as the authoritative record for all income, expenditure and group balances, replacing the Excel group accounts spreadsheet;
2. Approve the use of the signed-off 2024/25 annual accounts figures as the official opening balances to be entered into QuickFile, overriding any conflicting figures in the Excel spreadsheet;
3. Confirm that Petersfield u3a accounts are prepared on a cash basis, and that this applies consistently in QuickFile and at year-end;
4. Approve monthly group balance reports to conveners generated from QuickFile project tag reports, replacing any manual spreadsheet-based communication.

The proposal was seconded by RN and unanimously AGREED.
If adjustments are needed, PR will liaise with group convenors. Bo’R also offered to help.

Other points raised

- RN reminded colleagues that a new Independent Examiner is required. ACTION: PR ask GB for the details of the person he had in mind.
- PR queried the source of an invoice for £50. ACTION PR: check with RS if for Siteworks. □
  RN clarified that expense claims may be made by emailing scanned receipts to the Treasurer.

(iii) Groups (BoR): Two new groups are starting up: Writing (convenor Bo’R) and Investment (convenor PR). Bo’R confirmed that the guidance suggested by PR appears to satisfy any potential safeguarding issues. She also noted that a visit to the House of Commons on 8 June, organised by the Current Affairs groups, has 26 surplus places which are being advertised to the general membership.

(iv) Membership*: SS thanked Sue Besant for filling her role very successfully for 3 months; RS added his thanks to Liz McMurchie for her work on scanning over that period. It was agreed to insert a note of thanks from MC to Sue and Liz in Connect. ACTION: SR

(v) Convenor Handbook and Website* (PL)
PL reported that development of these is not straightforward, partly because of the challenge in finding a volunteer to maintain and refresh online resources. SR has not yet identified any new potential volunteers for this task. PL suggested that later in the year he would be willing to be part of an ad hoc committee to work on this issue.

PL is keen to continue to support KN's work on the convenor handbook, and summarised how she has developed the existing content for web publication to date. RN suggested asking a new group convenor to offer feedback on the material currently available.

8. Appointment of Treasurer - see Item 3.

9. Learning Grants Scheme* (DC)
DC elaborated on PL's paper, noting the following:
   - the scheme was launched last week
   - two applications have been received and are stored on Dropbox; DC is keeping a log
   - this week's Connect publicises the scheme to all members
   - a system for Q&A by email has been implemented
   - a dedicated email address is in operation: grants@petersfieldu3a.org.uk
   - 5 members have offered to join the evaluation team and meetings are being scheduled

   DC requested that an MC subgroup should ratify the evaluation team's decisions in late August, and also discuss any applications that meet the criteria for sums exceeding £500. JT, RN and Bo'R volunteered to assist.
   DC/PL explained that their approach to awarding grants would need to retain a degree of flexibility within the overall guidelines. JT thanked DC and PL for their work.   ACTION DC: circulate names of evaluation team

10. Review of Byelaws and Code of Conduct (DC) *

    (i) Byelaws: As previously agreed, the final version, including recent amendments and referencing, was proposed for adoption. Proposer PL, Seconder SS: AGREED. The revised Byelaws were signed by the Chair. ACTION DC: forward pdf to IT Support to supersede version on website; post on Dropbox to supersede previous version (housed in new folder 'Byelaws').

    (ii) Code of Conduct: DC pre-circulated a version following feedback received in March and consulted colleagues regarding some further queries. It was agreed to change 'ask' to 'expect'. It was previously agreed that once finalised, members should be required to click to accept the Code of Conduct at the point of joining, and reminded of it when renewing. ACTION DC: circulate revised version (for substantive comment only), present final version for approval at July meeting.   ACTION SS: arrange for integration within joining/renewal process.

11. Connect (standing item) Nothing to report.

12. Change of names on Bank Mandate (see also item 3)

    Co-opted trustees PR, CP and GC signed the relevant paperwork for u3a and CAF Bank.

    It was AGREED that the new signatories will be Patrick Rudden, Jenny Thwaites, Rose Noonan and Bernice o' Reilly. Proposer DC; seconder PC. All signed the requisite paperwork.

13. AOB

    (i) Volunteers: SR requested to be informed about any new helpers to update her records. Bo'R noted that she knows two members who may jointly take over from Louise Fox, and will put another in touch with RS regarding support for David Ford. PC has also recently agreed to work on the website with TW/RS.

    (ii) PCC and related issues:

    RN observed that PCC hire fees will increase by 3% in January 2027.

There was some discussion about the PCC AV system following further problems at this week's General Interest Talk. It was agreed to investigate the specific issues relating to sound. Suggestions included asking speakers in advance about their AV requirements (TF); advertising in Connect for members with appropriate expertise (SR); and exploring if a Film Group member might be able to help (RN). Otherwise, JT asked PL to try to locate a sound engineer to look into resolving these issues (budget to £300). ACTION: PL

(iii) Convenor Lunch

JT reported on projected costs for this proposed event at Petersfield Golf Club. Room hire has been reduced to £200; a finger buffet costs £15-£20 per head. The event is targeted primarily at convenors, but there may be capacity to include certain volunteers with managerial roles. Bo'R proposed a costing exercise before such decisions are made.

The meeting closed at 16.40.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Wednesday 8 July 2026 at 1400. Venue: United Reform Church

DC 13/05/26

Chair's signature: Date: