

Preston and District u3a Committee Meeting
Minutes of the meeting held at 10am on 5th April 2024 at
St Cuthbert's Church, Lytham Road, Fulwood, PRESTON

		Actions
	AJC welcomed the committee and then pointed out the fire exits etc.	
1. In Attendance	Tony Cheetham (AJC) - Chair Sue Holder (SJH) – Secretary Janet Nixon (JN) - Treasurer John Savage (JS) – Assistant Treasurer Laura Mole (LM) – Members' Representative (co-opted) Sheena Clowes (SC) –Groups Coordinator David Parker (DP) – Beacon Administrator	As per signed sheet
2. Apologies	Kay Harrison, Peter Kitchen	
	OFFICERS' REPORTS circulated (Chair, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Beacon Administrator)	
3. Appointment of Chair and new committee members	As a new Chair was not appointed at the AGM then, as the constitution permits, the committee exercised its right to request that the retiring Chair remain in post until the next AGM in 2025. The Chair confirmed that he would be happy to remain in post for the forthcoming year. The Chair welcomed Laura and John to the meeting. It was agreed to co-opt Laura to the post of Members' Representative.	
4. Minutes of the last meeting	The minutes of the last meeting held on 31st January 2024 were accepted and signed as a true record.	
5. Matters arising from the minutes	The Chair was pleased with the response to his email to the membership seeking volunteers as this resulted in LM and JS stepping forward. The increase in attendance group subs has been accepted by the membership and still represents good value for money. Some u3as pay a higher joining fee at the outset but this approach was considered less suitable for Preston & District u3a. The Chair and Treasurer have reviewed the Operational Cash budget. Re venues: the Groups coordinator confirmed she was visiting St Martin's to assess the facilities and availability after the meeting. The Reading and Art Groups will be sharing the Douglas Hall by way of an experiment. If successful this will reduce accommodation costs significantly. AJC briefly outlined the Fit for the Future proposal for the benefit of the new committee members. It is not yet clear whether this proposal will be voted on by u3as or individual members.	
6. Review of AGM	The AGM appeared to go well. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer have already met to discuss follow-up actions most of which have been completed. The Treasurer will ensure that bank signatories are updated and the Secretary will notify the Charity Commission and TAT of committee changes as required.	JN SJH
7. Membership Secretary's Report and Succession Planning	It is vital for the successful operation of our u3a branch that members volunteer to take on committee roles. By the next AGM a new Chair, Membership Secretary and, possibly, a Treasurer will be required. In addition a new Website Administrator may soon be needed (see item 14 below). To this end the Chair will take a table at the coffee morning on 30 th April when he will be available to discuss committee roles and responsibilities with members. Anyone who is interested in the role of Chair could be invited to shadow AJC. In addition potential volunteers could shadow other committee members and observers could attend committee meetings twice a year, say, starting with the committee meeting after the coffee morning. The committee hoped that by allowing members closer access to their activities they would be encouraged to volunteer. It was noted that as of 5 th April 110 members have not renewed their membership subscription.	AJC

Summary

<p>8. Treasurer's Report and financial matters</p>	<p>The branch finances generally look good but it's still necessary to make up the approximate £4K loss from the current account. Comparing the figures from 2023 with 2024 shows an increased participation which bodes well. Actions have been taken to ensure that there is account documentation for 6 years plus the current year. JS confirmed that the handover from M Clark is going well with another meeting planned in the coming week. The Treasurer confirmed that the process of adding JS as a trustee has begun which will give him access to the bank account. He will need a card and card reader for Post Office payments.</p>	<p>JN</p>
<p>9. Third Age Matters subscriptions</p>	<p>The bill for Third Age Matters is significant especially if some members don't actually want it. The Treasurer pointed out that we receive an adjustment fee from TAT later in the year to cover late joiners. Last year this was just under £2K. Members need to be aware of the resultant cost incurred by Preston and District u3a. It was agreed that it would be most efficient to combine the decision whether or not to have the magazine with updating membership records.</p>	
<p>10. Members' Coffee Morning and Group Leaders' Lunch</p>	<p>The Members' Coffee Morning and Group Leaders' lunch will be advertised in the weekly newsletter for the next 3 weeks. It will be held in the Northumbria Hall. Approximately 30 Group Leaders have signed up for the event and committee members are also included. It was suggested that the Groups Coordinator could occupy a separate table to discuss new interest groups with members.</p>	<p>SC</p>
<p>11. New Interest Groups</p>	<p>1. Pickle ball: There is a group at Bamber Bridge which the Chair is hoping to visit to see how it operates. 2. Photography: A member is keen to re-start this group and plans to visit the Clitheroe Photography Group first to get some pointers followed by a re-launch in the autumn. 3. Tea dance: The committee thought that this might be very popular. The second Thursday in the month would be a good time as no groups meet that afternoon. 4. Wine-tasting: The Treasurer's neighbour is a wine expert who might give advice/assistance. The sessions would require a speaker and clearly the cost would be more than £3. 5. History Group: This could be run along the same lines as the Archaeology Group perhaps with organised speakers and utilising local resources such as the Preston Black History Group, UCLAN, the Regional History Centre of Lancaster University etc. Alternatively it could be run like the Philosophy and Current Affairs groups where group members agree to introduce a topic. The Chair and Treasurer were keen to get this group started.</p>	<p>AJC JN</p>
<p>12. Publicising External Events</p>	<p>Whilst the u3a does not generally advertise third party events it does make sense to notify the group leader if any local events are deemed to be of interest to a particular group.</p>	
<p>13. Beacon issues</p>	<p>The Beacon Administrator highlighted the case of a member who did not receive emails via Beacon and how it was resolved. LM was unable to contact a group leader via the bluebird symbol. The Chair agreed to raise the issue of the bluebird link-up with N Green. The issue normally arises with individual members' systems, not at the centre. Beacon training courses for committee officers are available if required and DP should be notified of any interest.</p>	<p>AJC</p>
<p>14. New National Website – Replacement for Sitebuilder</p>	<p>Sitebuilder is a very old and limited system which is due to be replaced during 2024/25. The Chair has had a manual printed for guidance purposes. N Green has administered the present system for the past 11 years but a new administrator will be sought to take forward the new SITEWORKS/WORDPRESS system forward, probably in 2025</p>	
<p>15. Any other Business</p>	<p>The Treasurer will be absent for 6-7 weeks from the end of February 2025. All accounts will be completed for the auditor. However it will be necessary to ensure that payments can be made in her absence.</p>	<p>JN JS</p>

Summary

16. Date/Time/ Location of next meeting	The next meeting will be held at: 10am on Friday 31st May 2024 in the Melrose Room, St Cuthbert's Church, Fulwood The Chair thanked the committee and closed the meeting.	

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD.....

DATE.....