

**Pocklington & District U3A
Committee Meeting**

Wednesday 21 April 2021, 10.30 a.m.

Online meeting via Zoom

Present: Graham Ball (Chair)
Ron Tinkler (Secretary)
David Hebden (Treasurer)
Moirra Laverack (Membership Secretary)
Liz Dearsly
Paul Gilles
Brian James
John Senior
Rosemary Waugh
Steve Fraser (President)

1. Introduction/Welcome

GB welcomed members and opened the meeting. A special welcome was extended to Brian James who had been co-opted on to the Committee. Apologies for absence had been received from Rosemary Hutchinson, Chris Mills, and Elizabeth Walker

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March were read, and were accepted as a true record. This was proposed by JS and seconded by LD.

3. Matters arising

- a. Following the discussion about subscriptions to TAM, ML reported that a few members have said they no longer wish to receive a hard copy, and that it is likely, as the next submission date is after May 1st, that there will be a further reduction.
- b. The 'fortnightly update' to members is well-received, and will continue.
- c. New members will be discussed under AOB.
- d. The question of whether P&D should open a Facebook page had elicited only five responses from members, three positive and two negative. One respondent had helpfully raised the topic, and provided some useful pointers of the many rules and restrictions covering postings, and administrative issues. It was agreed that if the decision is made to go ahead, the page should be public, should be in line with u3a guidance on political and religious matters and should act as a showcase for u3a activity in the area, to also assist with recruiting new members. The many issues that would be involved pointed to the need for a moderator/administrator with considerable knowledge and experience in the type of area. JS is in contact with a possible candidate with such experience, and discussion will be on the agenda for our next meeting.
- e. The cost of Beacon in the next year is likely to be £1.50, not £1 p.c. This will affect the consideration of the annual subscription.

4. Treasurer's Update (DH)

- a. The Treasurer's Report is attached to these minutes.
- b. The current balance is £10,266, of which £2,111 is from the subscription account.

- c. This balance is about £1500 lower than this time last year, although expenses had been about £3000 lower. A major reduction has been due to the lack of Drop-in sessions. If we move to the Beacon system, and numbers subscribing to TAM don't significantly reduce, it looks increasingly likely we may need to review subscription fee for 22/23 year.
- d. DH suggested that we could put forward a proposal for a revised fee of "up to £12" at the AGM, which would enable the actual subscription rate to be an appropriate figure up to that level in the light of overall membership numbers which should become clearer with time. There was general approval for this approach

5. Membership Secretary's update (ML)

- a. There are currently 703 members on the roll; there have been 478 renewals, and some lapsed members have returned. This is very pleasing.
- b. The reduction in subscriptions to TAM will reduce costs, when the submission is made on May 1st.
- c. Beacon. ML has been working with Brian Snelson on the trial data. However, they have received an e-mail from the Chair of TAT informing users that the update that moves to Beacon Phase 2 will be delayed sine die, due to the withdrawal of the IT support company, APT. Legal proceedings are underway and the future looks unclear.
Brian S will keep updating the subcommittee on the situation, but it was pointed out that, although the possibility of a Beacon website option, part of Phase 2, had been attractive, P&D was not committed financially to joining and our current system with WYD was still adequate. It may also be an option to move to Beacon even if it was only in its Phase 1 current position. The subcommittee will continue to meet, but the likelihood of 'going live' on Phase 1 in September is under review.
- d. Future Membership position and "recruitment".
 - a. The policy of combining e-mail and informal communications is working well.
 - b. After May 1st, GLs will be contacted for their assistance.
 - c. Thirteen new members have enrolled; possibly outdoor small group meetings, under the 'rule of six' could be set up to welcome them? The suggestion of a Zoom welcome had not seemed to be received positively.
 - d. Posters around Pocklington and other local communities could raise awareness of the u3a and its activities. Interest was invited in designing posters for this purpose
 - e. Even after restrictions are officially lifted, many people will feel nervous about returning to large gatherings. We should consider the possibility of a staggered return to the Burnby Hall Drop-ins.
 - f. The question was raised as to whether the archiving of lapsed members can be delayed? This is feasible and was done last year, but had been felt not to be desirable as a precedent. This approach gives no clear picture of ongoing numbers, allows for confusion between actual and possible membership communication groups, potentially continued to provide access to "benefits" to people who had not paid their subscription and could put P&D u3a in breach of GDPR legislation. Most people respond better to having a definite deadline by which they know they must respond. This was agreed by the Committee. It was agreed that these points could be made in the 'final opportunity' letter which will be sent to appropriate people in early May, as this may provoke a better response.

6. Secretary's update (RT)

- a. RT has made the annual return to TAT, giving the figure of 685 members as of 31 March. Our annual subscription to TAT will be based on that figure it is calculated annually but paid quarterly.
- b. YAHR AGM. The papers for this meeting had been circulated to the Committee in advance. The YAHR represents 51 u3a branches in the region; anyone may attend the meeting, but prebooking is necessary. CM had previously offered to attend this meeting for the P&D. This was welcomed and CM was asked to confirm and pre book his place. CM was thanked in absentia.
- c. Market Weighton CHG. Although this group has now recommenced its activities, it was felt that there is little interest or relevance in maintaining links with it, and it was decided not to pursue the connection.
- d. "ZOOM" style AGM and Constitution. Under the emergency government national regulations covering such meetings for charities, we could run a virtual AGM this year through Zoom. However, about six weeks lead time would be needed to set everything in order for this, which would take the timing to the beginning of June. If the relaxing of restrictions continues as outlined, we would be able to hold a physical meeting by the end of June or early July, which was generally felt to be more desirable if it is possible. ERYC are running a series of courses on re-opening venues for public use. The Committee agreed unanimously to adopt an optimistic attitude, and plan for a physical AGM in July/August. Details would be confirmed at the May Committee Meeting

7. AOB

- a. AGM 2021
 - a. 22/23 Subscription – to be discussed further at next meeting.
 - b. Examiner of Accounts – Two names had been suggested, both of well-qualified accountants known to members of the Committee. It was agreed that Andrew Smith would be approached initially by ML, and would be appointed if willing.
- b. New Members (Meetings and Drop Ins) New Member Meetings are agreed to be important, as discussed earlier in the meeting. Open air meetings can be organized under present regulations, and we also need to consider upgrading the importance of the welcome offered at Burnby Hall Drop-ins. LD made the case for a change in layout and arrangements. It was suggested that RH should serve as a deputy to LD in welcome arrangements, and that all of us can take a hand in welcoming and integrating those who have made the effort to turn up and join. Given that there will probably be restrictions on numbers and on catering arrangements, the suggestion was made that new members could be invited half an hour earlier than returning members, so that they would get a smaller and less intimidating gathering. The possibility of a change of venue for New Members welcome meetings was also raised – Both the Scout Hut and the Rugby Club were suggested as possibilities which might offer adequate parking and facilities. ML and LD will investigate further at an appropriate time. It is important that the venue should be seen as warm and welcoming.
- c. RT will contact GLs in early/mid-May, and invite them to check on the membership status of their Group members and their handbook entry. The Committee were invited to suggest any ideas for inclusion in the Secretary's message.
- d. ML reported that two members had recently married. A card had been sent extending the good wishes of the P&D to the happy couple!

There being no further business raised, the meeting closed at 12.19.

8. Next meeting will be on Wednesday, 19th May, at 10.30 a.m. on Zoom.