

SOUTH WEST HERTS U3A

Minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting

Held at Francis Combe Academy, Watford, on Monday, 11th June, 2018, at 10.00 am

Introduction

Neville Halliwell (Chair) welcomed members to SW Herts U3A 16th Annual General Meeting.

1. Present: 200 members.

Apologies for absence were noted from Linda Wordsworth, Anne & John Cox, Sylvia & Bob Baker, Elaine & David Faires, Margaret & John Whitmore.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 12th June 2017 and matters arising

The Minutes having been published on the U3A website, acceptance was proposed by John Britten, seconded by Gavin Peacock and approved unanimously. There were no matters arising.

3. Report from the Chair

Neville Halliwell was pleased to announce that membership of our U3A would be offered to all on the current waiting list, for admittance in October. He commented on the considerable volume of work needed to be undertaken by the Executive Committee during the year to comply with revised standards of the Charity Commission and Third Age Trust and with new legislation regarding Data Protection affecting the recording and storage of members' personal information. Charity Law requirements for the inclusion of all income and expenditure, both charitable and non-charitable, in future financial statements has necessitated significant changes in the reporting format of our accounts, resulting in an increased workload for the Treasurer and Study Group Leaders.

A Fire Evacuation procedure has been established in consultation with Watford Firefighters and Francis Combe Academy, and a Fire Officer and Deputy Fire Officer appointed. The Policy has been posted to the website, together with Policies relating to General Data Protection Regulations, Privacy, Safeguarding and Equalities & Diversity. These are also exhibited on the noticeboard at General Meetings.

Other innovations are a new Study Group Leaders Guide being compiled by Teddy Bennell, the sub group studying the implications and requirements of GDPR, the maintenance and regular updating of the TAT Committee Reference File by Jill Elliott, and the appointment as Safeguarding Officer of Peter Dawson, who has also been responsible for the improved sound system at General Meetings. Tribute was paid to the Catering Team, the Theatre and Outings organisers, Barbara Bestwick for her ideas for new Social Events, and the Newsletter Team for continuing to produce a professional document. The Treasurer was praised for his work and thanks were expressed to Gavin Peacock who has examined the Accounts for many years, but is now stepping down from this position as new legislation requires the appointment of an external Auditor.

A quiet moment was kept for members who had sadly passed away during the year, together with one who had very recently died.

The report concluded with the Chairman's thanks to all who had contributed to the organisation, including the three Minutes Secretaries - Valerie Cowan, Barbara Nash and Mary Hammond, Bridget Trotman for maintaining the Database, Subscriptions Secretary Janet Toon, the Greeters welcoming members to meetings, Study Group Leaders and all members of the Executive Committee for their hard work in a particularly busy year. He expressed special thanks to Stewart Lewis, now retiring from the Committee, for his support, sound advice and considerable contribution to the U3A over many years.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Mary Coleman, seconded by Mike Quinton and approved unanimously.

4. To approve the examined Accounts

Treasurer David Adams presented the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2018 with explanatory notes. He was grateful for the co-operation of those dealing with membership and subscriptions, all organisers of group activities and outings, and the Study Group Leaders who had responded so well to the new reporting requirements. He likened himself to a scoreboard keeper who merely recorded the results of work undertaken by other people. There was an expected deficit for the year of £1,941.26, but the balance in the General Fund was in excess of £21,000, more than sufficient to require no increase in subscriptions for the foreseeable future. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Stewart Lewis, seconded by Jill Elliott and approved unanimously.

5. To appoint an Examiner of the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019

Alan Squire, former Chief Accountant of Harrow Borough Council, had examined the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 and it was Resolved that he be reappointed Examiner for the year ending 31st March 2019.

6. To elect a Vice Chairman to fill the vacancy for a term of three years

Having been proposed and seconded, Mike Findley was unanimously elected to the position of Vice Chairman.

7. To elect a Secretary to fill the vacancy for a term of three years

Jill Elliott was the only nomination and was unanimously re-elected to the position of Business Secretary.

8. This item was deferred pending consideration of Item 12b.

9. To note the co-option of two members to the Committee

Peter Trotman and Anne Cox were co-opted to the Committee for the following year until the next AGM.

10. This item was deferred pending consideration of Item 12b.

11. To approve the RECOMMENDATION from the Executive Committee:

THAT for the year 2019-2020 the annual membership subscription for Full Members will remain at £20. For Full Members who are on Income Benefit or in receipt of Pension Credit the annual membership subscription will be £4 (proof of benefit or pension credit must be submitted).

The recommendation was approved unanimously.

12. To approve AMENDMENTS to the Constitution recommended by the Executive Committee

12a "Clause: 3(i) The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development."

This wording is to bring the objects of SW Herts U3A in line with those agreed by the Charity Commission and the Third Age Trust. The Amendment was approved unanimously.

12b "Clause: 6(ii) The Executive Committee shall consist of not less than five and no more than twelve members being the officers specified above and not less than one and not more than eight members elected at the Annual General Meeting who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting."

This makes provision for a larger Executive Committee if needed, but it was stressed that this does not impose a minimum requirement, and John Britten recommended that where possible the EC should operate more efficiently with a smaller number of members. The Amendment was approved unanimously.

12c "Clause: 6(iii) The Executive Committee may in addition appoint no more than four co-opted members who shall have full voting rights and have tenure until the next Annual General Meeting."

The operation of the Executive Committee has necessitated the need for extra members. The Amendment was approved unanimously.

The business then returned to the election of officers and committee members.

8. To elect Committee Members to fill three vacancies for a term of three years

Teddy Bennell, Peter Dawson and Ariaan Winter were the only nominations received and were elected unanimously.

10. To confirm that those principal officers and committee members whose term of office has not expired are eligible to serve for a further year:

Neville Halliwell, David Adams, Barbara Bestwick, Bridget Finch, Peter Howarth, June Parker and Barbara Trotman.

All were elected unanimously.

13. Any Other Business

John Britten asked what information is held in the Archives, the method of storage, access to the Archive Section of the website and the application of new Data Protection regulations. The Chairman summarised the documents held such as Annual Returns, Accounts, Minutes of General Meetings, Chairmen's Reports, information about speakers, theatre trips, outings and TFA holidays, and confirmed these are all in paper form and that no information is stored electronically. Gavin Peacock said that the Archive Section of the website is password protected. Teddy Bennell confirmed that GDPR is not retrospective, so any records prior to 25th May 2018 are unaffected.

Pat Stuart made a plea on behalf of those members who are hard of hearing that it was impossible for them to hear all that was said unless a microphone was used. Questions and comments from the floor should be repeated by the Chairman so that all members could hear and be aware of any discussion.

Jill Elliott proposed a vote of thanks to Neville Halliwell for all his work as Chairman.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.10 am.

Minutes signed as a true record (Chairman)

..... (Date)