

MINUTES OF THE 27TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SOUTH LAKES U3A HELD ON 15 MAY 2019 AT CASTLE STREET CENTRE, KENDAL

Present : 96 Committee and general members were present.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Bob Wells welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies were received from Angela and Peter Davenport, Brian Garvey, Jane Wiseman, Bill and Lynda Wood, Rita Farnsworth, Mary Christian.

3. MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 16 May 2018 were accepted as a correct record:

4. MATTERS ARISING – None

5. CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

It is a privilege for me to report on another successful year for South Lakes U3A. The National Office recently issued a 'Health Check' questionnaire for local U3As and, unsurprisingly, South Lakes is clearly doing well. Our overall membership continues to rise year on year (1470 when I last checked) and we now boast 94 special interest groups (an increase of 15 in the last year) with 134 recorded volunteer coordinators, plus other helpers and assistants.

All this activity, both mental and physical, is possible because of the willingness of many to share their skills and expertise with other members. I can not let this occasion pass without repeating my personal thanks to all who make the organisation function so well.

Once again, our Open Morning in October was very busy and many new members were recruited. It was my pleasure to show the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria, Mrs Claire Hensman, the very wide range of opportunities we provide for third agers in the Kendal area.

Attendance at our monthly meetings has been high and we have often had to ask Joanne for extra seating in this hall. Different speakers appeal to different audiences but Sheila Watson has organised a fascinating and varied programme from a wide range of presenters. Sheila will pass the baton to Mark Miller at the end of the year. I know Mark has already identified some interesting prospects for 2020. Thanks to both Sheila and Mark for all their efforts.

I hope that the 89 group coordinators and other volunteers who attended the Afternoon Tea enjoyed a small token of gratitude for their contribution to SLU3A.

I was extremely sad to have to accept the resignation of the Newsletter editor,

Ann Quintilla. She has produced a publication to be proud of which has attracted many new members and kept established members well-informed about our activities for over 8 years. I would like Ann to accept a small token of our appreciation for the marvellous job she has done.

Of course, I am delighted to announce that Paul Dinsdale has volunteered to take over Ann's role and to look at even more effective delivery of SLU3A news.

The entire Committee has been a pleasure to work with and it has given me great support. Many thanks to all of them. However, I will only name those that are ending their term of office today.

Vice Chair, Jenny Harrison has kindly agreed to continue her, at times, frustrating, work coordinating the coordinators and introducing groups to the Beacon database.

Our secretary, Chris Needham, has set a standard that will be very difficult to follow.

She has been responsible for the organisation of two Open Mornings and two Coordinators Teas - all major accomplishments which were superbly executed. In addition, she has suffered a year with a bumbling incompetent Chair and kept me right on all manner of issues.

The humble title of Assistant Membership Secretary hides the phenomenal amount that Colin Edwards has contributed to our U3A over the past three years. He guided us through all the traumas of the introduction of GDPR (whilst receiving self-contradictory advice from the National Office) and also introduced the Beacon membership database system to South Lakes. We are extremely fortunate that Colin has agreed to continue as Database Manager although he will no longer be a formal member of the Committee and can leave some of the more routine membership tasks to others.

I would like to invite Jenny, Colin and Chris to accept some small tokens of our gratitude.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT 2018/19

First of all I would like to thank all the team members, Audrey Stainton, our assistant treasurer, who handles the money collection and the group attendance records.

Cath Sharpe and Colin Edwards for the subscription collections,

the Co-ordinators for collecting room charges

and Stuart Hinton for examining the accounts .

Without all their work the job of Treasurer would be significantly more difficult.

Subscriptions are up on last due to more members joining our ranks; we now have over 1450 members. You will notice that this year there is an amount for income and expenditure for social activities, in previous years we have only shown the net figure. Because of our increased membership this has resulted in an increase in the group attendance fees giving us an income £42481 as opposed to £28725 last year.

If we look at the payments you will see that the group rents have increased. This is due to the hall providers increasing their charges and to new groups setting up in rented accommodation. There is a new item, BEACON, this is the charge for the data base that we rent from the Third Age Trust. If you are a coordinator and have not yet started using the Beacon system I would encourage you to do so, for more information please speak to Colin Edwards who is retiring as Assistant Membership Secretary but staying on as our data base manager.

All other items of income and expenditure are in line with last year's figures allowing for inflation

Our total expenses amount to £44987 as opposed to £32289 last year, which means we made a loss of £2505, which is better than the £3563 loss we made last year. Obviously we cannot go on making losses and I propose to speak about this in item 8 on the agenda.

If you look at the balance sheet you will see that there are two new items, yearend Creditors and Debtors. Following advice from the National Office we have adopted an Accruals system of accounting. This method gives us a much more accurate picture of our finances. The yearend debtors refer to monies collected in March, principally group attendance fees but not handed over to our assistant treasurer until April and the Year End Creditors principally comprises of money due to hall providers for March or earlier usage but these accounts were not received until April.

Because our total income is in excess of £25,000 as with last year we are required to submit examined accounts and a Trustee Annual report to the Charities Commission. This will be done on line later this year.

If anyone has any questions, I will be pleased to answer them.

I therefore propose that the accounts are adopted by the meeting, Mary Choiseul seconded the proposal.

Item 7 on the agenda, Appointment of Independent Examiner

Stuart Hinton has once again agreed to carry on in the role and I would like to propose to the meeting that he should be examiner for 2019/20; however he has said that he would

like to relinquish this role for 2020/21 and so we will be looking for a new Independent Examiner.

I would now like to move on to item 8 on the agenda.

We have principally two sources of income our Subscriptions and Group Attendance fees, On this slide you can see that our £9 subscription fee just about covers. The first column of figures show the total costs for the year and the second column shows how each of our £9 subscription is used.

One idea that the finance subcommittee looked at was increasing the subscriptions substantially say to £15 and doing away with the Group attendance fees. But there is one big problem to this and that is Gift Aid. HM Revenue rules only allow us to collect Gift aid from donations, subscriptions where there is no direct benefit to the donor and the subscription fee being used to fund the group rentals is perceived as a direct benefit. For the 931 members who Gift Aid their Subscription an calculation would have to be made to see how much benefit they were receiving from this arrangement. Coordinators would have to keep more records of attendance and these could be inspected by the Inland Revenue, thus causing headaches all round. So we need to look at Group Attendance fees as a means of increasing our income.

Ian then continued with a Power-Point presentation re: -

- i) Subscriptions and Attendance Fees
- ii) Newsletter

Members voiced their feelings on the two matters, in a very in-depth debate.

- i) Ian had proposed a three-tier system for Group Attendance fees.

Terry McIntee thought this a 'bad idea' and said it would be divisive, Margot Harvey and many others agreed. Terry suggested that subs be increased instead, Ian explained that there was a gift aid issue if we did that.

It was suggested by a member that all groups pay £1.50.

After much discussion, the proposal that the existing £1 fee be increased to £1.50 was proposed by Mary Choiseul, seconded by Richard Pealing and agreed by all.

- ii) A discussion on the newsletter being distributed electronically, saving printing costs and distribution problems

Ian said that there are very few U3A's now that produce a hard copy of a newsletter.

Peter Bunny said that electronically it could be kept more up to date.

Concern was expressed regarding the non-computer literate members and it was suggested that a print out could be distributed to those members.

Colin reported that 82% of members have e-mail addresses.

To be discussed further in committee meetings.

7. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Ian Fishwick proposed that Stuart Hinton be appointed as Independent Examiner for 2019/20. The proposal was seconded by Jane Willis.

The proposal was accepted unanimously.

However, Stuart does not want to continue as examiner after 2020

8. SUBSCRIPTION AND ATTENDANCE FEES discussed within Treasurers Report

9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2019/20

Mary introduced the nominees for Committee positions as follows:

	Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chair	Bob Wells	Colin Edwards	Ian Fishwick
Vice Chair	Hilary Claxton	Bob Wells	Hilary Pickup
Secretary	Val Garvey	Bob Wells	Ian Fishwick
Assistant Secretary	Catherine Williams	Chris Needham	Val Garvey
Treasurer	Ian Fishwick	Colin Edwards	Catherine Sharpe
Assistant Treasurer	Audrey Stainton	Bob Wells	Ian Fishwick
Membership Secretary	Catherine Sharpe	Colin Edwards	Ian Fishwick
Assistant Membership Secretary	Hester Gorman	Bob Wells	Chris Needham
Minutes Secretary	Anne Urquhart	Bob Wells	Chris Needham
Publicity Officer	Peter Bunny	Bob Wells	Chris Needham

As none of the nominations was contested members were invited to accept them on bloc : proposed by Hilary Pickup, seconded by Mary Choiseul and agreed unanimously.

10. AOB - none

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.25 am