

## **RINGWOOD U3A**

### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18th APRIL 2019 AT 2.00 pm AT GREYFRIARS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

#### **1. WELCOME**

The Chairman, Peter Jackson welcomed 68 members and 3 guests to the meeting, and noted that apologies for absence had been received from 8 members.

#### **2. ADOPTION OF UPDATED CONSTITUTION**

Our current constitution was designed for a new group, and as we are now established, the Chairman outlined the proposed changes to the constitution. These include the need to change the essential committee posts to incorporate, as well as Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, a Groups Co-ordinator, and Membership Secretary. He proposed increasing the number of Committee members from ten to twelve, to enable the appointment of a designated Speaker Secretary and Publicity Officer, as well as 'Meeter and Greeter', and some General members. This would make the committee more applicable to how we run our U3A today.

This was proposed by John Wells, seconded by Richard Jupp and carried with 2 abstentions.

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON THURSDAY 19th APRIL 2018**

The Minutes had been distributed to all members in advance of the meeting. Jenny Jackson proposed that they be accepted and Richard Jupp seconded the motion, which was carried.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Peter Jackson had been appointed to the Committee at the AGM and was elected as Chairman by the Committee at a subsequent meeting.

#### **5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Peter said 'I have been made to feel very proud of our membership after the response from several new members said that they found Ringwood a very friendly and relaxed group. Many had also visited other U3A groups in the area before deciding on joining us. This friendliness and the sense of fun that we have fits in with changes that we will be seeing coming from the U3A Trust over coming months. Whilst many U3A members are very happy with our title 'The University of the Third Age' some feel that it does not represent what we do now, and that it presents a barrier for some who feel that we are too intellectual for them. Whilst the purpose will remain at providing informal learning for retired people it will now recognise that we do a lot more than just that. The first change that you will see is that the name of the organisation will become 'The U3A'. and the strap line will change to 'Learn, Laugh, Live'. We have already started using this on our new posters.

Over the past year we have lost our Spanish groups one of which I believe was the very first group to meet when we started. Thanks to all who helped to organise them. We have also lost the Travel group and Bridge group, many thanks to Judith and Maggie for the work that they put into their groups. However we do now have a very successful Men's group-thanks to Roger, and an additional Book Group.

Every year there has been a pattern of losing members, normally about 10%, however this last year the losses have been higher. There are many reasons why members leave, some move, some have illness or mobility issues and so on. Unfortunately this last year shows that some left because they

were unable to join the groups that they wished because they were full or had stopped being available. This is very sad as it is easy to start a new group as you do not need to be an expert in the subject, merely a facilitator, and help and support from both the Group Co-ordinator, other group leaders and National U3A is available.

At another U3A in the New Forest an ex language teacher offered to run a beginner's Italian language group but had a strict restriction on numbers. The group was soon over subscribed so some of those who could not join decided that they would set up another group without having anyone who knew any Italian. The person who was taking the leadership role did not have room to host a group in her house, so another person offered hers. Their Groups Co-ordinator obtained material from National U3A designed to help start such a group, offering guides, books, DVD's and importantly the name of a person that they could contact for advice on starting and running such a group. Both groups started together and after six months they met up to have an 'Italian' evening where only Italian was spoken. The second group whose leader had no previous knowledge of Italian were far more advanced than the Teacher group. It seems that the more relaxed approach was more effective on this occasion.

If you have any ideas about a new group even if they can't meet in your home, please come and talk to us. Remember you do not have to be an expert, just have an interest in sharing and expanding this interest with others. We will help get any materials necessary to get the group going. In my experience groups very soon start to provide their own expertise.

I must not forget all the existing group hosts or leaders as they provide the heart of Ringwood U3A without them we would not exist. Some of you have been running your groups for over 7 years and all of you show a tremendous commitment in keeping your groups running. On behalf of the members I thank you all.

You will see that once again our reluctant Treasurer has produced another excellent statement of accounts which she will talk to you about later. We have always tried to generate enough funds to meet the Charity Commission's recommendation that we have enough money in the account to cover any unforeseen occurrence such as a major drop in membership, having to move to more expensive accommodation if Greyfriars encounter a major problem or if the U3A Trust have to put their fees up particularly due to uncertainties in insurance issues. The recommended amount is enough funds to run for a year without income. The existing committee now believes that we have exceeded this amount so the new committee will be reviewing our finances and assessing what are the most prudent steps to adjust the account as soon as possible.

It is now time to give some thanks to those who have given us their time over the last 3 years – some more than that- helping to make certain that Ringwood U3A works as well as possible for the benefit of its members. Firstly, I want to mention Irvine Leonard who was our membership secretary but unfortunately had to resign owing to problems with his sight. Valerie Grant- Meeter and greeter and welfare officer. Barbara Coleman – originally Membership Secretary and latterly general member dealing with refreshment and catering. June Edwards – who was Groups Co-ordinator but also dealing with refreshment and catering. Ros D'Albert - Secretary who has ensured that you all are kept up to date on all happenings as well as accurately making sense of what has been agreed in the committee meetings. Hazel Taylor – Vice Chair, Speaker Secretary who also covered the website and latterly the publicity. She has also given me a great deal of support whilst I have been unwell.

My last thanks are to all of you the members as without your continued support we would not exist. Thank you all.'

## **6. TREASURER'S REPORT AND ADOPTION OF THE ACCOUNTS**

Copies of the accounts were distributed to members at the meeting. Christine Rutherford the Treasurer reported that, although she has been Treasurer for three years, she is happy to continue in the post, although if any other member would like to take over she would happily stand down.

The annual turnover remains steady at around £6000 per year. The major expense is room hire, closely followed by Events. The events costs include catering and entertainment at both the Summer and Christmas events. Capitation, which takes care of our insurance needs, and the Direct Mailing of Third Age Matters magazine are costs which remain fairly static from year to year. There has been a conscious decision to spend a little more on speakers, and hopefully you have appreciated some excellent talks. Many of the speakers just ask for a donation to their chosen charity.

Towards the end of the financial year we looked at our financial position and decided to use capital to purchase a new laptop. The original laptop, although still useful for some purposes, was no longer able to cope with modern software.

Christine thanked our member John Wells for once again thoroughly auditing our accounts and asked that they be accepted by the meeting. Judith Pursell proposed that the accounts be accepted, which was seconded by Pat Baldwin and duly carried.

The Chairman mentioned that next year, we will pay for the accounts to be audited, to assure members of complete transparency.

## **7. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Chairman: Peter Jackson

John Wells proposed and Richard Jupp seconded this appointment, which was carried with one abstention.

Secretary: Russ Doody

Margaret Jeffery proposed and Penny Brown seconded this appointment, which was carried.

Treasurer: Christine Rutherford

Audrey Pocock proposed and Anne Jupp seconded this appointment, which was carried.

Committee members to be elected en bloc: Janet Smith  
Audrey Salter  
Mary Newbery  
Cyril Downing

Joy Forrester-Addie proposed and Judith Pursell seconded these appointments, which were carried.

Under the terms of the new Constitution, the Chairman put forward the suggestion that Hazel Taylor be retained as a Committee Member for one further year, in the position of Publicity Officer. This was proposed by Roger Gregory, seconded by Jenny Jackson and carried.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Hazel Taylor pointed out that the Committee has no Speaker Secretary, and asked anyone interested to come forward. There is also a vacancy for a General Member.

There being no other business, the meeting closed.