



## MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**HELD ON TUESDAY 3rd MARCH 2020**

**AT 23 BULLFINCH LANE, RIVERHEAD**

**In attendance:** Lesley Allum-Jolly, Richard Clout, Alan Heyes, Delma Moore, Pene Stambollouian (Sec), Magda Sweetland (Chairman), Christine Walls, Sharon Willmore

**Apologies:** Harry Reeves, Gill Walker, Janet Willcox

### **1. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

The draft minutes of this meeting were circulated for approval by those who had attended the meeting, and once agreed by email, were placed on the website. Magda signed a hard copy of these minutes for the file. There were no matters arising not included in the agenda at this meeting.

### **2. Monthly Meetings.**

It was generally agreed that the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> February had been well attended despite the poor weather and the talk well received and enjoyed. The vote of thanks had been an excellent expression of the mood of the event. Relocating the HUB next to the tea area had attracted more interest and provided better lighting. The speaker for April had confirmed his attendance.

### **3. Finance and Accounts**

Richard circulated two papers : a statement of receipts and payments to date, and an outline budget for the coming year. He drew attention to a donation of £385 from two members who had received this sum from a Travel Company offering to pay commission sums across to allocated charities. Alan suggested that this sum might be used to help buy a defibrillator at Holmesdale Bowls Club if the Club decided to go ahead with this purchase.

With regard to the 2020/2021 draft budget Richard said he had based his figures on the assumption of a 500 membership in the coming year, and on the amounts expended in most recent years. He had not been advised on the need for any capital or other extraordinary expenditure for the year. Some saving may be made in Hall Hire if we are able to return to the Community Centre later in the year. It was agreed that membership cards will not be issued this summer due to the amount of additional work entailed and their limited use. It was also agreed to remove the cost of a music licence, and that the service charge at the Festive lunch would again be paid for through the budget in January 2021, and members would be advised that personal tips are not necessary.

### **4. Communications**

Alan said that Carol's presence with a computer at the Monthly Meeting in order to answer queries on setting up passwords and accessing areas of the website had been successful. It is suggested that this might be repeated in the early autumn to help new members with similar queries. Alan confirmed that the draft of March's Newsletter was ready for Magda's approval and Chairman's statement.

## **5. Social Events**

Lesley confirmed that she and Richard would kindly host a summer lunch at their home for group contacts. A date and further details will be finalised shortly.

## **6. Science Group**

Christine said they are expecting a good turnout at the next Science talk to be held at Holmesdale on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March. If numbers for these events continue to grow the small meeting room at the Hollybush Bowls Centre or the Otford Village Hall may be considered as alternative venues. Both offer sufficient parking space and were available at low cost.

Alan suggested the large hall at Hollybush will be needed for the 26<sup>th</sup> March talk on Mathematical Modelling on the Spread of Infectious Diseases, which will be open to Sevenoaks U3A Science group members as well. Final details will be circulated once the outline has been agreed with the speaker.

Christine confirmed that Sheila Cutter would be liaising shortly with Richard on the handover the Science Club's financial records for the year.

## **7. Report on Study Groups**

Delma reported that with the addition of the new Wine Appreciation group, Knole U3A now offers 81 groups.

In line with Magda's strategy of building small teams to help carry out the principal roles on the Committee, Rosemary Oldman has been recruited to work alongside Delma in looking after eleven groups. Rosemary will help to finalise these groups' Handbook insertions, will act as their first point of contact, and meet with them when necessary. Further experienced group contacts are being sought to similarly assist in this way.

There followed a discussion on the implications of the coronavirus on group activities especially those that travel into and around London. Magda has spoken to the TAT office and understands policy advice will be issued shortly for circulation to all U3A members. It was agreed that the Committee has no role in giving advice, and that individual members are responsible for deciding the appropriate action they wish to take to protect themselves.

## **8. Progress Report on New Study Groups**

Sharon reported that there had been little interest in setting up new groups over the winter, and suspects that the next surge will be after the September Open Meeting. However, the recruitment of 50 new members since the summer had resulted in 6 new groups, the same proportion as last year. At least four interested parties are needed to initiate a new group.

## **9. Membership**

Lesley said 5 new members have been signed up since January, bringing the total number to 508 in her records. In briefing new members she has been emphasising that U3As are run on the basis of all members making some form of contribution, and has directly asked new members what they might offer. It was agreed that the application form should include a set of questions along these lines to ensure that new members appreciate the importance of personal commitment on joining.

## **10. How to Assist Knole Computer Group**

Magda summarised the discussion she has had with Hamilton Woods (who with Simon McIntrye has run the Computer Club for ten or eleven years now) and asked for suggestions

on how the club might be re-invigorated and better supported. It may be that U3As in other parts of the county are facing similar difficulties, and have come up with different approaches which Knole could adopt, and possibly enter into reciprocal arrangements to share speakers and sessions.

Reference was made to the Sevenoaks Apple Group which might serve to furnish ideas on organising meetings. The small group sessions where individual members are helped with their personal queries have been very much appreciated, as has been the offer of informal one-to-one help through the 'buddy' system.

The February session on 5G had drawn a good audience, and stimulated a lively discussion despite the absence of the advertised speaker. The Committee did acknowledge however that running a full programme on varied topics took a lot of effort and time to organise. Also that some groups naturally run out of steam over time, and a temporary break or change in name or format can help to stimulate new interest.

### **11. Review of Administrative Procedures**

Magda reported that she was continuing to work on the list of Administrative improvements and proposals, one by one. She is to attend a hard hat meeting at Bat & Ball shortly and will also respond to an invitation from Otford Village Hall to view their refurbished premises. There has been no further development on the plan to establish associate membership between Sevenoaks, Edenbridge Westerham and Knole, but expects these talks to go forward in the spring.

### **12. Dates for 2020 Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May. The AGM will be held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

