

Higham and Rushden U3A

Minutes of the AGM held on 25 February 2021 held via Zoom.

1. **Welcome**

The chair Angela Mason welcomed the members present to the meeting and thanked them for logging on via Zoom. We need to be Quorate to ensure items on the Agenda are agreed and will be monitored during the meeting as members will log on at different times.

2. **Apologies**

No apologies were received.

3. **Chairman's Report** Appendix A

4. **Treasurer's Report and accounts** Appendix B

Ron Smith advised we were now quorate.

5. **The Amendment to the Constitution** refers to changes for Officers time in office, to allow for transition of new Committees, specifically the Secretary. Denise has agreed to stay on for the next three years. This had been agreed by u3a National office in July of 2020. Agreed by a show of hands.

6. **Agreement of Committee initially from now until October 2021 and then going forward at next AGM**

	<u>Role</u>	
Angela Mason	Chairman	Trish Dewar
Trish Dewar	Vice Chair	
Tony Monk	Membership	Tony Monk
Mike Wood	Treasurer	Peter Riches
Peter Riches	Dep Treasurer	
Denise Evans	Secretary	Denise Evans
Linda Walker	Grps Coordinator	Linda Walker
Jean Mole	Speaker Secretary	Jean Mole
Gerald Boxall	Publicity	Gerald Boxall
Jim Morrison	Webmaster	Jim Morrison
Maggie Morrison	Newsletter	Maggie Morrison
Steve Evans	Front of House	Steve Evans

Offered to help.
Gwen Walpole (Pub)
Carole Rider (Recruitment)
Linda Brett
Margaret Shelton

The Secretary had received e-mails from all concerned agreeing to this arrangement.

Thank you to Jenny Carr who had served three years as Speaker Secretary. The Chairman has a gift of thanks to be delivered after lockdown has ended.

7. **Minutes from the AGM** held 18 October 2019 had been on the Website for all to see. There were **no Matters Arising** and therefore were agreed as they stand.

8. **Future of the Higham and Rushden Group.**

Our future is safe for the moment with a new Committee and new people coming forward to help. There still maybe difficult times ahead but the hope is that we can start our monthly meeting with speakers in the Summer. The Venue will need to be announced later as it depends on how difficult socially distancing will be. The vaccination of all will be a boost. Our Publicity team will need to start thinking of the future.

A question arose about the worst-case scenario for our group. Our Constitution has procedures for the closure of the Group including and Extraordinary General Meeting, where the decision would be made by the members. Discussions would have taken place with our neighbours In Wellingborough and Thrapston, our Constitution allows for us to donate our funds to other U3A.

And some more good news. It has been agreed by the Committee that all members who paid subscriptions in the year March 2020 to end February 2021 will receive a free year commencing when their next renewal is due. This is a gesture of thanks to all who kept the faith and appreciated the work going on behind the scenes.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm.

Appendix A

Chairman's Report 2020/21

Dear Members.

Writing this I thought this might be the last Chairman's report. Given the year we have been through. Covid has never been far away from anything that our U3A have been through.

Try as some group leaders did, they were thwarted at every turn by the governments mercurial management system. There didn't seem to be a week without change prohibiting people gathering together. The weather however was with us and for a while I know several groups did manage to meet with social distancing in place.

The outdoor groups made hay while the sun shone but eventually even, they came to a halt. We must remember that our membership age put lots of us in the danger zone and understandably some members withdrew from social gatherings sometimes at the cost of their mental health and wellbeing. Fortunately we remain mostly unscathed by this awful virus. However I know there have been those members touched by sadness at the death of a loved one, my thoughts are with them.

We have suspended several groups as their group leaders retired and could find no one to replace them. I hope these groups will be resurrected once we are able to meet and members come forward to take them on. We will all need a purpose after lockdown ends.

Many members have left our U3A and some of our groups have ceased.

We were at the beginning of the first lockdown 600 members today writing this 446.

I fully understand why members have left us but we are just hibernating and will come to life eventually.

We as a Committee decided to try putting on zoom presentations trying in a small way to gather albeit virtually. This was not successful with a maximum of 20 members taking part. Given that our speakers were charging near to normal fees we thought it best to stop the zoom presentations.

Coming to the present day we know that nothing has changed aside from the vaccination. The vaccination which is the only hope out of this mess. But let us remember that this vaccination does not stop us getting the virus but hopefully will prevent lots of us becoming seriously ill. Therefore, the questions are. Will the government allow us to gather again this year or indeed will our members want to.

You will of all by now have received my letter asking for members to come forward and take up vacancies on the committee? I'll take any criticism you care to throw at me, but the truth is members need to step up to the plate. If this doesn't happen now then its only going to happen sometime in the future.

This U3A was not in the best of health. It needed to be more than on life support.

Today I am happy to report that Higham and Rushden U3A has been fully resuscitated and that we have received enough offers of help in order to give continuity and growth for the future.

Thank you, members, for being here with us today your support for our U3A is much appreciated.

Kind Regards

Angela Mason.
Chairman.

Treasurer's Report for year ended 31st August 2020

(The Income and Expenditure Statements were posted to the Administration Section of Higham & Rushden U3A website at the beginning of October 2020).

In 2019/20, we achieved a break-even result with a slight increase in income over expenditure of £82 compared to a decrease of £1918 in the previous year. Our final reserves of £11,026 are strong and are sufficient to cover a full year of our normal operations.

Member subscriptions at £7,758 were down £1,047 in the year, a drop of 70 members to 543. This fall off in income was however offset by lower expenditure in a number of areas, notably Hall Hire costs down £603 to £995 and Monthly Speakers down £537 to £960.

We also owe an annual commitment to our head office in the form of Capitation Fees of £2,100, TAM £365, Beacon Licence £600, CLA Licence £60 and U3A Network Meetings £50.

In total our expenditure amounted to £7,752 for the year.

On the finance side there have been some changes this year. We have an agreed finance policy covering the financial aspects of the Charity and at long last we have embraced on-line banking. In addition, all accounts are now fully recorded and reported on the Beacon System.

Memberships have been on Beacon for a while now and with the Social Groups continuing to use the system as required, whilst remaining under full control of their own finances, we are now fully committed to this software platform. I must compliment Alan Nixon, our Beacon Project Manager for his support in this development.

In closing, ordinarily it is for the Treasurer to announce the membership fee rate for the forthcoming year, but in this instance has been taken out of my hands. No doubt, the Chairman will outline such fee scales later in this Meeting.

Thank you.



M N V Wood
Treasurer

25th February 2021