

Minutes of the Regional Representative Council Meeting held on 8th May 2013 at Nottingham Trent University, Clifton Campus

Present: Chair Alan Morris, Treasurer David Kyle, Secretary Gill Childs, Regional Trustee Michaela Moody, EDO Liz Wilson, Hilary Wells, Richard Burdon, Carol Lockwood, Lynne Cox, Barry Hillyard, Mike Benthall, Cyril Young, Pat Reeve, Hilary Lucas, Penny Forsdyke and Pat Mangwana .

1. a) **The Chairman welcomed** everyone to the Meeting, especially Pat Mangwana, Alternate for Derbyshire, who was attending for the first time. b) No **Apologies for absence** had been received. Alan drew attention to the non-attendance, again, of Assistant Secretary, Annabelle Meek. Alan had telephoned Annabelle but she was not at home.

2. a) **Minutes of the RRC Meeting held on 9th January 2013** were amended at item 8, Regional Trustee's Report, to record that ***the decision to write to the Third Age Trust about the cessation of bulk mailing of Third Age Matters had been Proposed by Mike Benthall, Seconded by Christine Baxter and the Motion was carried unanimously.*** There were no further amendments and after being Proposed by Liz Wilson and Seconded by Barry Hillyard, the Chair signed the Minutes and a confirmed copy will be posted to our website.

2. b) **Matters Arising from the Minutes:** Liz reminded us that a Summer School must be planned a long way ahead. Henny and John Harman are excellent people to work with in this regard.

In respect of Item 11 of the Minutes, the Chair stated that the processes of election had been set out very clearly and suggested that RRC members re-read the documents referred to – i.e. Lin Jonas's paper dated November 2012 and "Election Procedure 2013 – Regional Trustees" dated November 2009 and prepared by Michaela.

3. **Chair's Report:** The Chair said that whereas introspection is not desired, there are certain points that we must clear up certain aspects of the regional constitution concerning the election of the Regional Trustee: Items 7.4, 7.5, and 7.6 need not be amended further because they had been agreed by the RRC in October 2013 and could go to the AGM; at 2.3 - wording to be changed to ***'A Regional Representative Council, etc'***; 3.5 – amend to read ***'To administer the election processes for the Regional Chair and Educational Development Officer (EDO)'***; 6.1 – amend to read ***'A Regional Chair and EDO shall be elected by the Association, both to serve, etc.'***; 7.2 – strike out ***'Regional Trustee'***; 7.4 to read ***'Nominations for election of Chair and EDO must be made in writing and must be in the hands of the Secretary at least four (4) weeks before the AGM. Nominees shall be proposed by one and seconded by another member U3A. Candidates will attach to their nomination form, a personal statement of not more than two hundred (200) words; 7.5 to read 'Should nominations exceed vacancies, candidates will be permitted to address the meeting. Election of the Chair and EDO shall be conducted at the AGM by one vote per U3A present at the meeting.'***; 7.6 to read ***'Election of the Trustee will be as specified by the TAT. The candidate or candidates will be invited to present a short address to the appropriate Regional AGM and to answer questions from the floor by way of introducing themselves to U3As in the Region.'*** Finally, paragraphs 7.6 to 7.10 to be re-numbered 7.7 to 7.11 respectively. A summary of these changes is attached to these Minutes.

These changes were Proposed by Mike Benthall, Seconded by Barry Hillyard and Agreed upon by all present.

4. **Secretary's Report:** Gill said that she would arrange with the Holiday Inn, our Conference and AGM venue for 2nd July, for a re-visit by Alan, Pat, Cyril, Annie Curtis and herself. Gill will circulate copies of the Conference and AGM packs to all RRC members and the Network Contacts as well as all U3As.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** David talked us through his Report and the Income item for The Third Age Trust – AGM & Conference etc of £2,500 is to be amended to read '**Conference 2012**' only.

There followed a short discussion about the definition of RRC expenses/TAT expenses. Some RRC members have claims still outstanding because of the uncertainty about to whom claims should be submitted. It is hoped that Michaela will be able to obtain early agreement about this matter.

On the subject of affiliation fees, the Treasurer explained that these had been re-introduced at the AGM last year, following a 'holiday' from the fee being charged the year before. This was perceived to have been a mistake. Collecting the fees this year had been very difficult and David was very disappointed by various U3As' reaction to receiving an invoice for £10 (or £20 for bigger UAs). Amongst the comments received from U3As, we had been challenged as to the nature of the charge and the function of the Region and an aggressive reaction was not out of the ordinary.

The Chair said, in looking at the principle, we should not rely solely on fundings from the Third Age Trust. Instead, we should agree that we raise our own money and Alan made two further points:
1) The affiliation fee should be a permanent feature of Association Funding which could go up or down from year to year and
2) We should look to our own events where we could make marginal surpluses.

The Chair Proposed and Mike Benthall Seconded the Proposal to establish the principle of the Association having its own money. Mike said that TAT should realise that the more we set ourselves apart, the more divisive it becomes. 9.6 of the Constitution states that Region may seek and receive additional funding from its member U3As. It was agreed that volunteers should not find themselves out of pocket and Liz recalled an NEC Minute which has stated that a Regional volunteer is anyone who supports the Trustee in their role. Network expenses were thought to be payable by the TAT and the Regional budget clearly covers items such as today's expenses. However, in the case of sub-Committees, the matter is not at all clear and we do not know to whom we should appeal to cover these legitimate expenses.

David said firstly, that he would be recommending to the Annual General Meeting that affiliation fees for 2013-14 should remain the same, and this was Proposed by Barry Hillyard, Seconded by Pat Reeve and Agreed by all present. Secondly, we should aim to move to a position where there is money from the TAT and from our own sources through a) affiliation fees, b) slight marginal excesses and c) funds from voluntary organisations. Michaela said that she would write to all U3As and this was welcomed and agreed by all present. A point was also raised that RRC should look at the prospect of different treatment of those paying affiliation fees and those not .g. with prices for workshop attendants. The Chair will write to John Ellison for approval in general. Liz suggested that a Finance Committee be formed so that we could plan in what we expect and ask TAT what they will budget for us. Approximately 25% of U3As have not paid their affiliation fee invoices.

6. **Educational and Development Officer's Report:** Liz was able to report that East Midlands counties are at varying stages with their Development Plans with Lincolnshire having an *aspirational* plan and Northamptonshire and Derbyshire going really well. Liz emphasised the need to have

flexible plans. Indian Summer funds in the sum of £250 will come from the TAT. It is hoped that a large volume of people will be reached at forthcoming events such as Thoresby (250 attended last year) and Gedling Borough Council have offered us a stall at a Summer event. It was suggested that as these various events approach, Liz, Michaela, Alan and Gill ensure that RRC and Network Contacts are alerted to them.

7. Regional Trustee's Report: In response to some points raised in item 5, Michaela said that she would attempt to bring round those U3As where some aggression had been sensed. Michaela's Report had been circulated and it was noted that a very great deal of planning and development was under way. Regrettably, the Regional Volunteer training day had had to be cancelled owing to lack of support and it would seem that smaller, localised events would be preferred. Michaela and Liz will be using the day for more planning talks. Direct mailing for Third Age Matters is now under way and our Michaela will be looking at alternative ways of getting the magazine to others. There was feeling amongst RRC members that our Resolution about the cessation of bulk mailing had not been properly treated and Michaela was asked, as our Trustee with access to the NEC, how this had been handled by them. Michaela said that it had been passed to a sub-committee. Because of our concern, Michaela said that the matter would be raised with the NEC at the meeting scheduled for next week. Alan asked Michaela to send to Secretary Gill an extraction from the Minutes where our Resolution had been first considered. Upon receipt, Gill will circulate it to members of the RRC. Members expressed their views for Michaela to take forward and we will anticipate receiving a response, in writing. The whole matter had, so far, taken an inordinate amount of time to be addressed when a point of the motion had been that speed of response was essential.

8. Network Reports: All counties had submitted written Reports which are appended hereto. In the case of **Derbyshire**, it was noted that the Network Picnic will take place at Shipley Park on 10th July. In **Leicestershire**, work is being done to encourage Groups in Residential Homes and the Chair said that the more case studies that could be carried out, the better and perhaps an extensive Report could be prepared. U3A may be able to expand into prisons and the Indian community is another area where U3A may be popularised, especially with the forthcoming Indian Summer event. Barry will e-mail an appendix to the Minutes to Gill. There was a good deal of varied activity in Lincolnshire, including a very successful Open Day at Bourne U3A and an event at Lincoln which will enable the visiting public to take part. **Northampton** were able to report good progress on their website and Pat and Cyril were reminded of the need to recruit a new Alternate for Northamptonshire. Lastly, **Nottingham** are embracing an Action Plan, prepared by our EDO, Liz, and the In Depth Learning Project had featured a leading expert on D H Lawrence.

RRC members were reminded that if they have an event/matter which would benefit from appearing on our website, they should send copy to Gill who will arrange an appropriate website posting.

9. Memory Course Update: Lynne said that she had little to report, other than updates of those events which had taken place. A written Report will be submitted to Gill in due course.

10. Correspondence with the Chair of the NEC: RRC Chair referred first to his paper, a) So What Should a U3A Try to Do?: Alan said that he did not necessarily expect any response from Barbara Lewis re this document. Barry endorsed it as a succinct report and Gill will send copies to new RRC members. Our Regional Trustee said that it would be embodied in her documents, also. Regarding

item b) A First Attempt at Detailing Tackling the Priorities, this was to be labelled "Regional Development plan". Our Treasurer said that he would send a Financial Risk Assessment to Gill for onward dispersal to RRC members.

11. **Any Other Business:** Some people have already been identified who will be approached to help with display material for the Conference and AGM. These include Southwell and the Shared Learning Project. Hilary Wells brought up the possible venue for the Regional Annual Conference in 2014 and said that Trent College would be able to accommodate and cater for us at a cost of £15 per head. All present Agreed that this was very acceptable. We are aiming at Tuesday, 15th July 2014 as the date when it is held.

12. **Date of the Next Meeting:** 18th September 2013 at Nottingham Trent University.

13. **Dates of Future Meetings:** 5th February and 15th May 2014. In view of extensive road works in the Nottingham area, Alan said that it was impractical to continue to meet in Nottingham. Therefore, all present were asked to consider an alternative venue and send their suggestions to Gill.

14. Liz and members thanked Alan, who would be retiring at the AGM, for his contribution as Chair of the RRC.

Appendix: As promised, Barry Hillyard later submitted the following short Report; Appendix (a) and Lynne Cox submitted her Memory Course update; Appendix (b).

Appendix (a) Group Discussions were held on the topic of the participation of U3As on setting up activities in residential and nursing homes, i.e. for the 4th age. Most groups felt that this was an area offering great opportunities for both the 3rd and 4th ages, with two-way benefits. Most of the points made fell into two categories – the administrative aspects of such links, and the areas of mutual interest which might be most profitably pursued. It was agreed that: The major distinctions between residential and nursing homes must be recognised. All activities must be organised and closely coordinated and monitored through the management of the homes, with appropriate emphasis on safety and security, insurance etc. U3A members would not be social workers and could not replace other forms of support. Working in homes would not necessarily suit all U3A members, and Group Leaders probably already have enough to do, so fresh volunteers would be desirable. The participation of young people as well as 3rd age people would be excellent. Possible topics of mutual interest were numerous, including music/entertainment, family history and historical reminiscences, canasta and other indoor games, crafts, and gardening. It was noted that Bradgate U3A are already involved in this activity. An article on cooperation with the 4th age has been written for TAT, and might appear shortly in Third Age Matters. It was agreed that individual U3As should convey the enthusiasm of the meeting to their committees with a view to developing the whole area in the county.

Appendix (b) Memory Course Update

Derbyshire

One U3A has completed a course.

Leics & Rutland

One U3A has completed a course with another organised for the Autumn. One other U3A has a course organised. One further U3A has put on a short course including memory but unlike the A&O version.

Lincs

One U3A has organised two courses so far, with others to follow. Two U3As have the course organised. There appears to be more activity in Lincs than elsewhere within the Network.

Notts

One U3A has completed a course and another has completed two.

APPROVED