

operation. Garden groups – don't usually start up until March. Canal walk is most likely to be cancelled for this month.

Membership

5 members joined this week, making a total of 646. Issue with capitation fees for the previous year is now resolved. We have had an invoice from Head Office for £2,202 which TD will now arrange.

TD requested approval from the Committee that under the Beacon system we do not allow Associate members next year if they are already a u3a member somewhere else.

The Committee agreed that we do not allow Associate members from April 2022.

5 **Bill Howarth - RIP**

The Committee gave sincere thanks to all the hard work and dedication Bill had given in the setting up and running of our u3a. FM requested that a piece be put in the newsletter summarising all that he had done. TD will contact JJ.

6 **2022-2023 Subscriptions**

TD had prepared a draft budget and stated we need to raise the subscription to £15 per person. The free coffees will remain. Our projected balance of net income is less than £1,000. Bearing in mind also that the overall retention of fees equating to 6 months of running costs.

The Committee agreed that we should raise the fees to £15 from April 2022.

7 **Easter / August /Christmas closure dates**

Easter

It was agreed that we would close on the Tuesday after the Bank Holiday i.e., Tuesday 19 April 2022.

August

There are groups that collect monies on a regular basis and if we close down for more than two weeks it creates problems for them, especially during the summer months when there are more trips arranged. It was agreed that we would close down for the first two Tuesdays in August but in the first instance we would invite the main Group Leaders involved to a meeting directly after a Tuesday coffee morning to discuss further. AW will contact them to arrange a suitable date.

Christmas

Our last coffee morning would be Tuesday 13 December and we would restart on Tuesday 10 January 2023.

8 **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy**

DB had drawn up this policy. This policy is a requirement for all Charities. As it is, we do not exclude anyone. TD will convert it into a pdf document and circulate it to all concerned.

The Committee agreed to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

9 **COVID Review**

It was agreed that we are all comfortable with continuing with the status quo in that we continue to comply with all Government guidelines. FM stated it is important to remind members about taking lateral flow tests before embarking on trips, it is not just for their safety but the safety of all members on the same trip.

11 **Independent examination – requirements and timings**

TD will prepare the papers for the Independent Examiner to compile his report. We will use the services of Tony Deagan from Sefton CVS again. TD will contact him within the next few weeks to arrange a suitable date.

12 **Beacon – Finance Module – Approval required**

On the U3A Beacon Forum it is suggested by some that the Finance Module is basic. However it will be suitable for us and will simplify our finances and it needs to be put in place by the beginning of April. FM stated we would need to run the old and new system in parallel with each other for at least the first year.

The Committee agreed to starting the Finance Model from 1 April 2022.

13 **Card Reader for membership renewals**

The Third Age Trust Treasurer has suggested amongst others that the “sum up” Card Reader system is suitable for use by U3A’s. The cost is £149 which includes a card reader, printer and sim (reducing the need for a Wi-Fi connection).

The Committee agreed that a card reader was the way forward.

TD has suggested that in future our membership renewal process would be simplified by producing a schedule of existing members details for the renewal team to update any changed details. We would use the same Gift Aid declaration year on year. This would save on printing and filling out membership forms.

14 **Any other business**

14.1 **Health & Safety – Group Leaders 2022**

With the passage of time because of COVID restrictions, it is timely to remind Group Leaders about the H&S policy and procedures we have in place in respect of activities and use of venues. We have new Group Leaders and also new venues. It is also necessary to remind Group Leaders of all COVID restrictions/requirements and promoting the use of lateral flow tests before attending activities or trips. AC said he will restart venue checks in the Spring.

- 14.2 The previous H&S Officer had raised concerns regarding the H&S policy and had we done all the relevant checks on venues etc. He had done two previous to standing down and had commenced on the third. FM had originally taken on this role when the previous officer stood down. However, this was at the beginning of 2020 just as the Pandemic happened and all these checks then ceased as everything was closed down. AC, as mentioned above stated he will restart venue checks in the Spring.

AC mentioned that he will contact the previous H&S officer regarding this policy.

15 **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 8 February 2022 at 1.30pm Lydiate Village Centre

TD THANKED EVERYONE FOR THEIR TIME TODAY.