

**MINUTES OF THE 130<sup>th</sup> COMMITTEE MEETING OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH u3a,  
HELD IN METHODIST CENTRAL HALL, LONGTON, AT 2pm ON THURSDAY 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL  
2025.**

**PRESENT**

Andrew Devin	Chairman
Keith Ward	Vice-Chairman
Phil Rowley	Business Secretary/Publicity Lead
Kevin Ford	Deputy Treasurer
Beverley Maher	Entertainments Co-ordinator
Pauline Williams	Groups Co-ordinator
Diane Ellis	Catering Officer
Joe Neilson	Committee Member

**1. APOLOGIES**

Lynne Stevenson, Alan Stevenson.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 were approved, and signed by the chairman as an accurate record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**a u3a Trust matters**

**1. Upcoming online workshops.**

The chairman explained that four different workshops were being provided during April and early May, which would provide specific support in the running of a branch. Since the branch had written policies and procedures for the subjects covered, the committee considered that there was no current need for attendance.

**2. Annual Return**

The Trust reminded all branches that, on 1<sup>st</sup> April, they had requested all branches to submit their Annual Return for 2024/25. Details need to be supplied via the Portal. As agreed at the March committee sitting, the Treasurer and Membership Officer will liaise to prepare and submit the necessary details via the Portal.

**3. Volunteers Week**

(i) Volunteers week will take place 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June. It is a nationwide celebration across the UK. Some examples of how u3as are going to celebrate will be included in next month's mailing.

(ii) On the subject of volunteers, the chairman took the opportunity to congratulate Deputy Branch Treasurer, Kevin Ford, on his "Inspiration in Education Award" at the Your Heroes Awards for 2024. The committee concurred that the award was richly deserved.

**4. New essay competition**

The new u3a Essay Writing Competition has launched. u3a members are invited to submit an essay of up to 1,000 words that can make the case for a person, policy, invention or idea having a positive impact on society. Submissions are open until 12pm on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May.

**LS/AS**

**b Regional matters**

Regional Trustee, Jean Jackson, had not issued a Regional u3a Newsletter since the previous committee meeting.

**5. BUSINESS SECRETARY'S REPORT**

PR stated that there were no specific matters to report.

**6. TREASURER'S REPORT**

- a** Treasurer, LS, distributed a Statement of Income and Expenditure as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. Details were as follows:

	£	
Current	770.05	Balance 2024/25
	17,099.41	B/F from 2023/24
	<b>£17,869.46</b>	<b>TOTAL BALANCE</b>

- b** The balance carried forward from 2023/24 includes an unspent ring-fenced donation from Joan Rose (currently £441). The financial health of the branch continues to be very strong.

**7. MEMBERSHIP OFFICER'S REPORT**

AD stated that, as at the date of the meeting, the number of members for the new subscription year was 306. This included 286 renewals, with the balance relating to members who had joined since the start of the new calendar year. The chairman observed that membership numbers are traditionally at their lowest at the beginning of a subscription year, but nonetheless the figures were very pleasing.

**8. GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT**

- a** PW stated that there were no matters to report.
- b** AD stated that he had received an email from the Outdoor Bowls group leader confirming that the activity had re-commenced for the Summer Season on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Since interest is likely to be high, the leader will maintain a waiting list.

**9. ENTERTAINMENTS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT**

- a Chocolate Bingo review**  
Feedback from members who attended the monthly meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March was very positive. Members were enthusiastic about a repeat next Easter.
- b Bookings, etc.**
1. The monthly entertainment for April 24<sup>th</sup> is confirmed for Professor Ray Johnson to provide a presentation/film about Longton. His subject will be "The Gladstone Story- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary". He will require a screen only.
  2. Rebecca Done has been booked to provide the musical entertainment at the AGM on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

3. A lady named Denny will provide a talk on 26<sup>th</sup> June about hedgehogs. She has requested that members bring along some kitten biscuits and cat meat. She will require a microphone only. AD will announce the request after the AGM has concluded.

AD

4. The committee agreed that BM could provisionally book Dean Dixon to be the guest speaker at the Christmas gathering. His subject will be Pantomimes.

5. A discussion took place at last month's committee meeting relating to a request from a representative of a charity called "Mary's Meals," to give a presentation at one of our monthly meetings. PR subsequently provided BM with the details for her consideration. After a short discussion, the committee decided not to proceed. PR will respond.

PR

6. The offer of a talk from Neil Hanson, who is based in Yorkshire was discussed in detail. Since the cost was £100 plus travel expenses, the committee declined the offer.

10. **PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT**

1. PR stated that he attended Stone u3a branch on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April to meet two members of the u3a Trust publicity team. They all then travelled to observe the operation of the Hawaiian Canoe Group activity, which is based on the Trentham Estate. Although not specifically related to Stoke-on-Trent South, PR attended in his capacity as publicity lead for the region, but he was also representing this branch.

11. **CATERING**

DE reported that she would be providing drinks and biscuits at the April monthly gathering.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a **AGM issues**

1. Since the presentation of the AGM will necessitate tables and chairs being placed at the front of the main hall, BM confirmed that Rebecca Done will prepare and present her concert from the stage.

2. The committee were of the opinion that members of the Executive should not endorse applications for other committee members, so according with good governance.

b **Other issues**

1. An enquiry had been received from a member of the NHS Talking Therapies Service asking whether they could drop off a range of leaflets. The service also offers mental health workshops. The branch has advertised the organisation in recent Newsletters, AD will respond accordingly.

AD

2. Consideration to arrange a committee meal was postponed until the June meeting.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

The meeting was formally closed at 3.08pm.

Chairman: *A. J. Devín*

Date: *12<sup>th</sup> June 2025*