

**MINUTES OF BRIDPORT AND DISTRICT U3A**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON**  
**TUESDAY 26<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022 at the BUC HALL, BRIDPORT**

**Membership Present:**

With the total membership of 496 at the time of the meeting, the required quorum of 10% of the membership, was exceeded with 70 members attending.

**Committee Members Present:**

Vincent Sheppard (Chairman), Valerie Gierth (Treasurer), Diana Coleridge, Alison Williams, Mick Holgate Jackie Martin, Heather Harvey.

**1. Chairman's Welcome:**

Vincent Sheppard welcomed everyone to this first face to face meeting in two years and thanked them for their attendance which had easily succeeded in attaining the officially required quorum of at least fifty in number.

**2. Apologies for absence:**

Philippa Grier, Jim & Liz Basker, Helen Kortelainen-Beck, John & Christina Walker, Lorraine Parnell, Brenda Smith, Jon & Amanda Snook, Suzy Fry, Ken & Anne Holbrook, Susan Dymock, Keith Windsor, Catherine and David Green, Rosi and Martin Wilton, Tony Dix, Marilyn Stevens, Ken Stead.

**3. Acceptance of Minutes of the previous AGM:**

No comments were raised regarding the minutes of last year's meeting. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Ray Stamford and seconded by Gill Smith. The Chairman's copy of the minutes was signed as being a true record of the proceedings.

**4. Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising from last year's meeting.

**5. Chairman's Report**

Many thanks to everyone who has attended today to allow the meeting to go ahead. As you know we have emerged out of Covid relatively strongly. Our membership is back up to almost 500 and we have just over 50 active groups. Big thanks to Diana Coleridge for keeping the membership up to date.

We have got back to near normal but let us not be too complacent as I am sure we are all noticing that more people we know have caught Covid. Our monthly meetings are back in the Bridport United Church hall. We thank Maria Forbes who had the very hard task of organising online monthly meeting talks but she did manage a fantastic scoop, arranging for Kate Adie to speak to us last November. We welcome Linda Moore as our current talks organiser who has already got talks arranged for the end of the year and well into 2023.

Our website is looking great and many thanks to Tony Dix for all the hard work he has put in to making it very accessible to our members. Unfortunately, Tony is not well now and he will be taking a break as webmaster for the foreseeable future. We hope to find someone amongst our members to take up this role but in the meantime, it is up to me to do some of the simpler tasks to keep the website up to date. So please be patient!

Throughout Covid, we started up a monthly newsletter and many thanks go to Karen Herbert for editing the newsletter, John Grantham for proof reading and to Robin Amswych for producing the final PDF file which is mailed to our members. It would be nice to know how useful our members find the newsletter and if they do indeed read it and think it is worthwhile to continue producing it. A vote was taken and showed a big majority in favour of the newsletter in its present monthly form.

Many thanks to our group leaders who have done a fantastic job getting us through the last two years, and ensuring that we have many active groups up and running. But we do need to keep evolving, which is why I am appealing to our membership to think hard about setting up groups with new subjects, or for current groups that are expanding or that have waiting lists, to start duplicate groups. Your committee is here to help you through the process, so just ask Alison Williams, your Groups Coordinator.

Many thanks to our committee who have also evolved in the last year. We will have a new secretary for minute taking, Jackie Martin. Heather Harvey stands down after this AGM. We wish her all the best and thank her for the time spent over the last few years accurately compiling our minutes. However, we do have a vacancy for the Business Secretary role. We thank Karen Herbert for her role as Secretary over the last few years. Valerie Gierth has been our treasurer since the start of Bridport & District U3A. She has expressed an interest to step down from this role. I appeal to anyone in the audience with the relevant accountancy skills to either speak to Valerie or myself if they are willing to take on the role. Thanks to Mick Holgate for the huge effort he has made to make this AGM happen.

Finally huge thanks to all our members because without you, we would not have a thriving u3a. We all look forward to another successful year.

#### **6. Treasurer's Presentation of Accounts – Valerie Gierth**

In addition to the copies of the accounts that had been made available via email, copies were available for attending members. Using a screen presentation, Valerie drew attention to some of the main aspects of the accounts. With regard to Income, essentially just membership fees, this was almost identical to the previous year, although down considerably from pre-Covid years.

The largest single expenditure of £1977 was the Rent Subsidy. The committee decided to pay the cost of hiring halls in order that groups could meet with social distancing. We are continuing this subsidy until the end of this calendar year.

The second largest item of £1796 is the Third Age Trust fee which is based on the number of members in the previous year. The fee has been £3.50 for the last 10 years or more, but has now increased to £4.00. There is a resolution at the Third Age Trust AGM to be held in October, to link an annual increase in this fee to the % rise in state pension.

£1118 is the charge for postage which includes £941 payment to Third Age Trust for posting Third Age Matters magazine. A question raised the issue of non-receipt of the Third Age Trust Magazine which a couple of members had experienced. Mick Holgate was not aware of this as a wider problem, but undertook to investigate. **Action: MH**

Valerie noted that this is the first year since the start of the Bridport u3a that expenses were higher than our income. This was due to the Committee's efforts to help groups continue to meet. She expected a larger deficit in the current year when we have a full 12 months' of rental support. The surpluses built up over the past years will have been put to good use.

Valerie answered a question by explaining that 'Dpn' in "Dpn of Equipment" is an abbreviation for depreciation. In the context of the accounts being presented, this depreciation relates mainly to IT electronic equipment.

The Treasurer concluded by confirming that the total assets of £13,425 at 31<sup>st</sup> December were sufficient to keep our annual subscription at the same level, namely £15 per annum.

These accounts have been approved by the committee and have been examined and signed by the Independent Financial Examiner, Kevin Senior, who Valerie noted, is happy to serve in that role again next year.

**7. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner:**

A motion to appoint Kevin Senior as Independent Financial Examiner was proposed by Mary Thomas, seconded by Sarah Herring and carried unanimously.

**8. Election of the Committee:**

Each of the following have been individually proposed and seconded prior to this meeting and are willing to stand for re-election. Vincent Sheppard, Valerie Gierth, Diana Coleridge, Tony Dix, Mick Holgate. There was a unanimous vote in favour of their election en bloc.

There was then a motion to elect Jackie Martin and Alison Williams to the committee; this was proposed by Sarah Stamford, seconded by Ann Brown, and again, carried unanimously.

**9. Special Resolution – New Constitution:**

The Chairman explained that this resolution is for the adoption of a new Constitution in full accordance with the Third Age Trust’s Model Constitution for England and Wales dated February 2021. The main change with the proposed new Constitution is that it allows for General Meetings to be held by electronic means, either online only in defined special circumstances, or as hybrid meetings. Electronic balloting may also be put in place.

Members present were reminded that the proposed new Constitution had been emailed to members with the Notice of AGM, which members not on email had received by post, together with information on where hard copies would be available.

Pat Grafton proposed adoption of the new Constitution and this was seconded by Alison Williams. The Chairman requested a show of hands in support of the proposal, and the resolution to adopt the new Constitution was carried unanimously.

**10. Any Other Business:**

The Chairman invited questions from the floor relating to any concerns that anyone may like to raise.

Roger Smith expressed the feeling that while he enjoyed the monthly newsletter he felt it might be a little too lengthy in its current form and asked how others felt. Discussion on this point illustrated that in the opinion of the majority, it is perfect as it stands.

Following a further question about Tony Dix, the Chairman was pleased to say that Tony has expressed the fact that he is happy to be voted on to the committee this year and looks forward to continuing to make a valued contribution to the branch as his health permits.

Helen Molyneux wished the minutes to record her vote of thanks to all members of the committee who do so much for the branch.

The meeting closed at 2.32pm.

Signed .....

Dated .....