



Board of Trustees Meeting

WEDNESDAY 8 MAY 2024 10AM
Office, 15a Clifford Street

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

1.1 Present:

Chair	Karen Sawyer (KSa)
Groups Coordinator	Samantha Triggs (ST)
Talks Secretary	Liz Swinbank (LS)
Membership Secretary	Brian Parkin (BP)
Minutes	Philip Firth (PF)

1.2 Apologies for absence:

Office Coordinator	Mo Sandland (MS)
Equipment Manager	Quinn Smith (QS)

2. Confirmation of approval of the minutes and actions.

The minutes and action list of 13 March 2024 Board of Trustees meeting were confirmed as approved.

3. Board of Trustee Actions not on the agenda.

See separate Action List.

Action 56 - It was recommended that this should be closed, and guidance provided to the Publicity Manager.

ACTION: KSa and BP to liaise with the Publicity Manager (RP) on developing a communications process.

4. Chair's Report.

KSa advised that the meeting was not quorate therefore agenda items for approval would need to be agreed with MS and QS outside of the meeting before final approval could be given.

4.1 Vision for the future

KSa had circulated a draft text before the meeting with a proposed Vision for the future as follows:

Our vision for York u3a is to create a u3a for the future by providing a welcoming environment that supports continued learning and maintains wellbeing. By working with, and listening to, our members we aim to provide a range of opportunities, increase accessibility, and improve communications.

No objections had been raised therefore the Vision statement was **RECOMMENDED** for approval.

4.2 Key Priorities

KSA suggested the York u3a key priorities were as follows:

- i. **Recruitment** – this was seen as the top priority, especially given the number of vacancies in key positions. The Trustees, having considered the limited value of sending out more emails, discussed the “Meet the Team” event, previously agreed, in more detail.

ACTIONS: BP agreed to draft an email to promote the upcoming Meet the Team event.

- ii. **Strategies** - KSA raised the issue of their being three outstanding strategies and agreeing what could be achievable within a six-month time frame. It was recommended that the order of priority be:

- 1) Branding strategy –within 6 months.
- 2) Communications strategy – defer until Branding strategy agreed.
- 3) Membership strategy – defer until Branding strategy agreed.

ACTION: KSA to develop a proposal for the Branding strategy by November 2024.

4.2.1 Charitable Status

As agreed at the March 2024 Board of Trustee meeting. KSA had explored the options for changing York u3as charitable status and what the advantages, and disadvantages, of doing this are. Options including a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The advantages of adopting CIO status include:

- Limitation on personal liability (this would help in recruiting to key positions, such as the Treasurer).
- No need to register with Companies House and comply with associated regulations.
- Can employ paid staff to help with completing important tasks.

The disadvantages of adopting CIO status include:

- Members cannot appoint proxy to vote on their behalf.
- Members, whilst they can vote to appoint a Trustee they cannot vote to remove them.

KSA explained that other options, i.e. a Trust or Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee would not be suitable as they excluded a wider membership.

ACTION: KSa to find out what is involved in moving to CIO charitable status and raise at the Chair's Forum with the intention of discussing with any other u3a's who have adopted this model.

4.3 Fit for the Future

Fit for the Future covers the work u3a is undertaking towards changing the existing model to one where there is a Board of Directors, who focus on governance and finance, and a Council that focuses on operational matters.

York u3a will be given a vote on whether they support the proposed structure.

KSa stated that she would support it however, the Trustees need to agree on whether they will vote to support the proposal. This may need to be done outside of the meeting, depending on the timeline.

4.4 Regional Representative

The Regional Representative had informed the Board of Trustees that he had resigned from the Yorkshire and Humber regional management team.

As this was the case, and he was no longer a Trustee and as member of the Operational Team, the question was raised as to whether he should vote on behalf of York u3a at regional or national forums. It was **RECOMMENDED** that someone would be assigned to vote as and when needed.

5. **Feedback from the Operational Team**

5.1 The notes of the 10 April 2024 the Operational Team meeting had been circulated by QS.

KSa queried the appropriateness of some decisions that had been made and would attend the next Operational Team meeting in order to clarify the process with respect to what can be signed off by the Operational Team and what needs to come to the Board of Trustees for approval.

6. **Finance**

6.1 Financial Position Statement

A spreadsheet summarising the financial position was circulated for discussion. KSa stated that the position was better than expected and called for ideas for how the current budget underspends could be addressed. It was agreed that the publicity budget should be used to fund the Meet the Team event.

7. Governance

7.1 Scheme of Delegation

KSa reported a minor change had been made which was to include the amended constitution.

7.2 AGM

KSa reported that the AGM went to plan.

7.2.1 Plan update

KSa advised the Trustees that the Annual Return and AGM Plan actions have been completed except for publishing the draft AGM minutes on the website. This would be done following the meeting, subject to approval.

7.2.2 Draft AGM minutes

KSa asked that the draft AGM minutes be **RECOMMENDED** for approval and publication on the York u3a website. This was **AGREED**.

7.2.3 Constitution

KSa reported that amended constitution was approved at the AGM and details have been sent to the Charity Commission. A copy will also be sent to the u3a.

7.2.4 Charity Commission Return

KSa reported that all Charity Commission returns have been completed and had been circulated with the papers for information.

7.3 Policies:

7.3.1 Disciplinary Procedures

QS and MS had approved this prior to the meeting. The remaining Trustees **APPROVED** the procedure at the meeting.

7.4 Role Descriptions:

7.4.1 Social Secretary

Further changes to the Social Secretary role description were requested by LS.

ACTION: LS to circulate the amended version for discussion.

8. Governance

8.1 Report from the Appointments sub-committee

KSa reported that Julia McMahon has been appointed to the Groups Finance Officer role.

8.2 Annual Health Check Focus Group

As there had been limited engagement with the Focus Group. It was **RECOMMENDED** that it be discontinued.

9. Membership Recruitment and Retention

9.1 Membership report

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Membership stood at 1748 and is increasing by around 3% year on year. 10 people had joined following communication of the 'special offer'.

BP asked whether Sum Up could be used for membership renewals and agreed to look into this.

ACTION: BP to look at whether Sum Up can be used for membership renewals.

10. Communications

10.1 NewsMail

Discussions have been ongoing regarding the content of the NewsMail and how best to issue guidance to the Editors. Examples of newsletters from other u3a's had been collated to benchmark against. It was agreed that there was limited time available, and this would need to be done outside of the meeting.

ACTION: Trustees to review the sample u3a newsletters stored on the shared drive and forward feedback to KSa for collation.

11. Interest Groups

11.1 Groups update

A report had been by ST. The main item to note was that the number of groups has gone down to 126.

ST advised that the room booking system is being reviewed. The Board of Trustees noted the report.

11.2 Humanist Group

KSa reported that the Humanist Group has organised a York u3a meeting that included an invitation to non-members. The Trustees were asked to discuss the implications and agree a way forward.

ACTION: KSa is to write to Humanist Group leader confirming that, in the interest of good relationships, the meeting planned for May could go ahead as planned however, future meetings would have to be members only.

12. **Events & Volunteering**

12.1 Saturday Talks

LS confirmed that the Saturday Talk programme was complete except for October which is being finalised. There had been ongoing problems filling the Front of House role however, it was hoped that this had now been resolved.

12.2 Saturday Socials

A report from the Social Secretary had been circulated prior to the meeting. The events are going well and alternating between games one month and a speaker the next.

13. **Equipment & Technology**

13.1 Equipment Report

A report had been circulated for information by QS.

ACTION: KSa to liaise with QS to check whether the Office computer has latest version of MS Office.

13.2 Annual Review of Asset List

An equipment list, indicating the number and value of u3a assets, was circulated for information by QS. The report was noted.

14. **National and Regional Updates**

14.1 Regional Representative Report

A report had been circulated for discussion. The report was noted.

14.2 National AGM

The national AGM will be held in October. Any resolutions for change proposed by York u3a will need to be submitted by the end of June 2024.

15. **Third Party Promotions and Advertising Requests**

It was agreed that suitable third-party promotions and advertising requests should be shared via a link on the York u3a website rather than added to NewsMail or sent to members by email.

16. **Risk**

16.1 Risk Register

Following the last meeting, the Treasurer vacancy had been added to the risk register. Guidance had been sought from the u3a as regards to the penalties York u3a could face whilst the post is vacant. They have advised that there were no major issues if we are actively recruiting.

Risk 1 - 'York u3a may have to cease trading if finances are inadequately managed'. It was RECOMMENDED that this be downgraded as the lease costs have been agreed and membership fees increased.

No other changes were made.

16.2 **Risks identified during the meeting**

No new risks were identified.

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

17. **u3a Festival 24**

KSa reported that planning for the event is going well.

18. **Any Other Business**

None.

19. **Next Meeting:**

- **Board of Trustees Wednesday 10 July 2024 at 10am.**
- **Operational Team Wednesday 12 June 2024 at 10am**

Board of Trustees Action Record
Wednesday 8 May 2024

Meeting Date	Minutes Ref	Ref	Action	Responsibility	Progress Report	Date Completed
10/05/23	4.1 / 4.2	29	Lease and use of rooms: To meet with the Friends and: 1) Review the policy on forward booking of u3a rooms 2) Discuss lease	DMB / KSu	14/06/23 – Pending. Awaiting Friends to table this issue for discussion. DMB agreed to re-visit asap. 09/08/23 – The Friends have agreed to book rooms no longer than 2 weeks in advance. 09/08/23 – Ongoing. Positive meeting held with The Friends on 24/07. Waiting for feedback from the Friargate Business Group. 13/09/23 – A further meeting is planned for Monday 18 th September. 11/10/23 – Ongoing: positive meeting held with Friends; a 10-year lease renewal seems likely / affordable. 08/11/23 – Ongoing. Discussions still taking place. 14/01/24 – See agenda item 6.2 20/03/24 – Waiting for an update from the Friends. 08/05/24 – Lease now signed off	08/05/24
14/06/23	14	44	Google training: To develop a presentation on how Committee members / Group Leaders can benefit from using Google docs / Google Drive.	BP, KSa	09/08/23 – Ongoing. 13/09/23 – Ongoing 11/10/23 – Ongoing 08/11/23 - Ongoing 10/01/24 – KSa, BP to meet Shirley Saunders (SS) 20/03/24 – Outstanding 08/05/24 – Ongoing – KSa discussed requirements with SS. BP has also drawn up requirements with input from QS and MS. Still need to agree if Google is the way forward or whether there are any other options, eg. Teams. Trustees need Google training before a decision can be made (KSa to arrange after July meeting).	

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Wednesday 8 May 2024

Meeting Date	Minutes Ref	Ref	Action	Responsibility	Progress Report	Date Completed
09/08/23	12	52	Beacon: BP to look at alternative membership systems, including that used by Sheffield u3a.	BP	13/09/23 – BP requested Committee members to consider the functionality requirements of a new system to help with identifying a new database. 11/10/23 – Ongoing. Information on alternative systems shared with committee members. BP seeking further input / feedback from committee members. 08/11/23 – BP not at the meeting, no update. 10/01/24 – BP to meet with SS 20/03/24 – Outstanding 08/05/24 – KSa has discussed aims, objectives, requirements with Shirley Saunders (SS). Need to go back to basics and review what Beacon does well and not so well, and then look again at whether Beacon has functionality that can help, eg. Financial elements. Paying by Direct Debit is an important requirement. Recommendation: close action and focus on training group leaders on how to use Beacon. Agreed by email	08/05/24
13/09/23	7.1.5	56	Promotion of u3a Benefits: ND to look at how to promote the benefits provided to members by the u3a.	ND RP	11/10/23 – Ongoing. See Oct report for update. 08/11/23 – No update. 10/01/24 – Richard Platford (PR Manager) to pick up this action. 20/03/24 – Outstanding 08/05/24 – Recommendation: action should be closed and KSa and BP to liaise with the Publicity Manager (RP) on developing a Comms Strategy.. Agreed by email	08/05/24
08/11/23	8.4	69	Membership Strategy Set up a workshop to develop a Membership Recruitment and Retention Strategy	KSa	10/01/24 – This will follow on from the first meeting of the Focus Group where members will be asked to get involved. 20/03/24 – First meeting held, low attendance, a follow up meeting to be diarised. 08/05/24 – Discussed via 08/05/24 meeting agenda.	

Board of Trustees Action Record

Wednesday 8 May 2024

Meeting Date	Minutes Ref	Ref	Action	Responsibility	Progress Report	Date Completed
10/01/24	5.2.	24.1	NewsMail To produce a few draft self-printed copies for approval before proceeding further.	S&NT	20/03/24 – Editors need some help with sending the copy to the printer. MS is working with them to help.	08/05/24
10/01/24	5.4.	24.2	New Members Handbook MS to lead the development of a New Members Handbook once the focus group presents its findings.	MS	20/03/24 – No feedback has been received as to what to include in a New Members Handbook. MO will work on a framework. An email will be sent out to people who joined in the last year requesting input. 08/05/24 – ongoing	
13/03/24	7.2	24.7	Constitution Amendments Circulate the revision to the Constitution and the AGM Notice for approval outside of the meeting.	KSa	08/05/24 – All documents circulated and approved prior to the AGM.	08/05/24
13/03/24	7.3.3	24.8	Trustee's Annual Report KSa to circulate the amended Trustee's Annual Report.	KSa	08/05/24 – Circulated prior to the AGM.	08/05/24
13/03/24	7.4.1	24.9	Disciplinary Procedure Trustees to review the Disciplinary Procedure in anticipation of Approval at May meeting.	All	08/05/24 – Discussed and approved via 08/05/24 meeting agenda.	08/05/24
13/03/24	8.1	24.10	Treasurer Vacancy Contact YAHR to see if they can help with recruitment or support on a temporary basis.	KSa	08/05/24 – no help provided by YAHR	08/05/24
13/03/24	8.1	24.11	Treasurer Vacancy Send out a further email advertising for a Treasurer.	BP	08/05/24 – Treasurer vacancy, and other vacant roles, will be taken forward via the Meet the Team half day event on 04/06/24. ST has provisionally booked the Fox room for the event. KSa to send an email to Trustees outlining the objectives of Meet the Team half day event and what needs to be done.	

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13/03/24		24.12	Charitable Models Contact TAT to explore the benefits of other charitable models.	KSa	08/05/24 – Discussed via 08/05/24 meeting agenda. See 4.2.1 – Further action for KSa to find out what is involved in moving to CIO charitable status and raise at the Chair's Forum with the intention of discussing with any other u3a's who have adopted this model.	
13/03/24	9.4	24.13	Sharing Good Practice To identify any money that could be used for the purpose of meeting and sharing good practice and to get agreement for this from the Acting Treasurer.	ST	08/05/24 – budget has been approved for group leader events	Completed 08/05/24
13/03/24	10.1	24.14	NewsMail To work with the Editors on producing guidelines for the NewsMail.	KS/ST	08/05/24 – Discussed via 08/05/24 meeting agenda.	
13/03/24	12.2.3	24.15	Saturday Social Room Bookings To review the system for the booking and payment of rooms for the Saturday Socials.	LS	08/05/24 – LS discussed issues with Anna Baldwin.	Completed 08/05/24
13/03/24	13.2	24.16	Asset List To share the asset list currently held with the Trustees.	QS	08/05/24 – Qs circulated an up to date assess register.	Completed 08/05/24
08/05/24	3	24.17	Developing a Comms strategy KS to liaise with the Publicity Manager (RP) on developing a communications process.	KSa / BP		
08/05/24	4.2.i	24.18	Recruitment To draft an email to promote the upcoming Meet the Team event	BP		

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Wednesday 8 May 2024

Meeting Date	Minutes Ref	Ref	Action	Responsibility	Progress Report	Date Completed
08/05/24	4.2.ii	24.19	Branding strategy To develop a proposal for the Branding strategy by November 2024	KSa		
08/05/24	7.4.1	24.20	Social Secretary Role Description To circulate the suggested amendments for comment.	LS		
08/05/24	9.1	24.21	Membership To look at whether Sum Up can be used for membership renewals	BP		
08/05/24	10.1	24.22	NewsMail Trustees to review the sample u3a newsletters stored on the shared drive and forward feedback to KSa for collation.	All Trustees		
08/05/24	11.2	24.23	Humanist Group To write to Humanist Group leader confirming that, in the interest of good relationships, the meeting planned for May could go ahead as planned however, future meetings would have to be members only.	KSa		
08/05/24	13.1	24.24	Equipment Report to liaise with QS to check whether the Office computer has latest version of MS Office.	KSa		