

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

held at 10.00am on Thursday 6th March 2025.

2999	<p>Present: Doreen Pascall DP (Chairman); Beryl Mansell BM (Vice Chair); David Lowe DL (Treasurer); Jenny Ruffles JR (Membership Secretary); Pam Walshe PW (Social Committee); Paul Frost PF (Communications); Helen Wood HW (Secretary). Also Peter Bradnock PB as an observer.</p>
3000	<p>Apologies for absence: None</p>
3001	<p>Chairman's Introduction:</p> <p>DP welcomed us all.</p>
3002	<p>Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th January 2025</p> <p>The final version was approved.</p>
3003	<p>Actions and Matters Arising from the last Minutes not covered in other items below:</p> <p>DP confirmed the Pickleball Group is no longer part of Sevenoaks u3a and had returned equipment purchased. There was a small deficit in funds but this was not reimbursed by Su3a.</p> <p>DP reported that:</p> <p>Iain Cassidy had suggested that the national umbrella body for all u3a's will no longer be called the Third Age Trust but become u3a. NB This would require agreement of the new Board at their next meeting.</p> <p>National Office also wants to improve communication with the general membership. Therefore officers of local u3a's have been asked to forward Iain's messages to all members.</p> <p>EC agreed that DP and PF should use their discretion in forwarding only messages of particular interest via Beacon to avoid overloading members. Members will be advised via the newsletter that if they would like to know more about the national office and its decisions these are available on the TAT website. Action PF, DP</p>
3004	<p>Policy on Risk Assessments</p> <p>It was proposed at our last meeting that we should be asking all members joining groups for physical activities to complete their own self assessment to decide if they are fit enough to take part in the activity.</p> <p>GOs should already complete risk assessments for their group annually for which we have templates.</p> <p>EC should set up a Governance Group to include checking procedures. BM offered to set out principles. Action BM</p>
3005	<p>Non members and taster sessions</p> <p>EC confirmed that non members may attend one taster session for a group they wish to join and a monthly meeting. Attending a taster session at more than one group is at the discretion of the Groups Coordinator.</p> <p>The issue of ensuring anyone attending a group on a regular basis is a member of Sevenoaks u3a or at least a u3a was raised again. Lists of Group members should be maintained on Beacon to manage this. Social events/trips can be set up as temporary groups on Beacon to provide confirmation those attending are current members. Action GOs</p>

3006	<p>Recruitment Actions and Progress from Meeting with John Russell</p> <p>No responses have been received from the article in the February newsletter or the monthly meeting.</p> <p>During March DP plans to ring round contacts to ask them about helping out on the EC or in Support teams. DP may set up a meeting if this would be useful to anyone offering held in the evening if preferred. Action DP</p> <p>Social Committee – The Treasurer and Secretary are prepared to stay on.</p>
3007	<p>Recruitment to EC etc</p> <p>AGM Timetable – circulated with agenda. PF confirmed that the publication deadline for the newsletter is 15th of the month. HW will alert the Newsletter team to expect articles and attachments for April May and June newsletters. Using the “News” email address should allow PF to check items are included. Action HW</p> <p>HW will be issuing a “hold the date” notice in the April newsletter advertising for the following roles: Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Communications Trustee, Vice Chair, Groups Coordinator, Social Committee Trustee. HW will stress there is flexibility as duties can be shared and not all the roles need be Trustees. Action HW</p> <p>DP will advise HW on her plans for the rest of the AGM following the official business. Action DP</p>
3008	<p>Chairman’s Report: DPs report was noted.</p> <p>The u3a is not a welfare organisation but where possible DP will direct members with problems to other organisations which offer support and encourages others to do the same. Eg Members should be not be dependent on GOs for getting to and from meetings. We collect Emergency Contact Numbers when people join which enable us to refer later difficulties to relatives/carers. Contact details may need updating. This could be done by sending a request in the newsletter for members to confirm details with GOs who can then update Beacon. If any member becomes too disruptive in any group they may be asked to leave. It was noted that GOs should write to the Chair if they exclude anyone from their group for whatever reason. Action DP/PF</p> <p>We have received an offer to run Ballroom and Latin American Dancing classes for Sevenoaks u3a from two instructors who indicate they already run such classes for other u3as. BM to ask the Kent Network of any knowledge to help advise a decision. Action BM (in progress)</p> <p>Charlie Chaplin Walk – EC asked if the Social Committee is able to offer this as an event for all members. PW said it would have to be advertised on a First Come basis as there are only 25 spaces available. Action PW</p>
3009	<p>Vice-Chair report: BM’s report was noted.</p> <p>BM flagged we need to review and continue with our longer term Strategy.</p> <p>We also need a better induction process for GOs and include a GO’s Checklist. BM offered to draft something but thought this should be picked up by a small team. Action BM/EC</p>
3010	<p>Finance: DL report was noted.</p> <p>DL is preparing next year’s budget including information from Trustees. Action DL/PB</p> <p>Financial year reporting from the groups is in progress. Action DL/GOs</p> <p>DL warned that any change to the annual subscription should be delayed as long as possible and when it is done it should be by a significant amount due to the issues with historic standing orders. Currently in surplus. Also reiterated that Associate membership is too much work and Life membership is not appropriate.</p>
3011	<p>Membership Secretary’s Report: Jenny Ruffles report was noted.</p> <p>Currently 769 members with six new members and one pending since the last EC meeting. This compares with 807 and 24 joining at the same time last year and of some concern. One lapsed member rejoined.</p>

3012	Group Development: No report DP suggested we needed more social groups.
3013	Communications: PF's report was noted. Website – PF indicated traffic was up again nearly to levels before Christmas. More content is needed ie more topics, news of events and group news. Photography is welcome and photos of groups can be emailed to News@Sevenoaksu3a.org.uk providing the necessary permissions are obtained. Action All Communicating external events – generally not posting external third party notices on the website. Can be advertised by members with fliers at u3a monthly meetings etc providing not political organisations. National u3a Messages should not be duplicated on the Website as a general rule.
3014	Meetings and Talks: No report. Barbara is arranging speakers into 2026.
3015	Social Events Team: Pam's report was noted. Winter Lunch went well with 51 members attending. A few events have been arranged for the Spring with more to be planned.
3016	Phones Tablets Computers (PTC) Group: Mike's report was circulated to everyone. Mike asked for a contact for Sevenoaks school. DP to ring him to provide one. Action DP
3017	Science Open Group: Bob Ruffles' report was noted.
3018	Technical Support: Bob Ruffles' report was noted. Bob has previously indicated he will be standing down as leader later this year.
3019	Any Other Business Talks to be reported on the Website to give insight into our activities. Action Comms
	Date of next meeting Thursday, 1st May 2025 at 10.00 am. Other 2025 dates: July 3rd, September 4th, November 6th.

Distribution: Doreen Pascall, Beryl Mansell, David Lowe, Pam Walshe, Jenny Ruffles, Paul Frost, Peter Bradnock.