

## MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

held at 10.00am on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

3020	<b>Present:</b> Doreen Pascall DP (Chairman); Beryl Mansell BM (Vice Chair); David Lowe DL (Treasurer); Jenny Ruffles JR (Membership Secretary); Pam Walshe PW (Social Committee); Helen Wood HW (Secretary). Also Peter Bradnock PB as an observer.
3021	<b>Apologies for absence:</b> Paul Frost PF (Communications)
3022	<b>Chairman's Introduction:</b> DP welcomed us all giving particular thanks to Beryl, David and Pam for their long service to Su3a and the EC.
3023	<b>Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th March 2025</b> These have been agreed by email.
3024	<b>Actions and Matters Arising from the last Minutes not covered in other items below:</b> No further matters raised.
3025	<b>Formal appointment of Groups' Coordinator – Marianne Bradnock (MB)</b> The EC confirmed the appointment of Marianne Bradnock as Groups Coordinator as emails.
3026	<b>Chairman's Report</b> <b>Trustees Report</b> – DP had circulated her initial draft to the EC. PW will email a correction to BM/EC. BM will then create a revised draft and circulate this to EC. The EC is collectively responsible for ensuring its report is factual, communicates with members but also meets the requirements of the Charities Commission. Requires a positive opening but also emphasise the need for volunteers. Finalize for Newsletter deadline of May 15 <sup>th</sup> . <b>Actions PW, BM, EC, HW</b>
3027	<b>AGM 2025</b> <b>Timetable and arrangements</b> – In accordance with Timetable circulated in March. AGM Papers will be published in the June newsletter to include the Meeting agenda, Draft minutes from 2024 AGM, Trustees Report including Financial Report and Accounts, Forms for Postal and Electronic Voting. Statements from candidates will only be required if posts are contested. <b>Action HW</b> <b>Appointment of Tellers</b> – Bob Ruffles has agreed to act as a Teller. HW will ask another. <b>Action HW</b> <b>Trustee appointments including applications and statements</b> – No further volunteers so far. HW asked those standing for election to return completed nomination forms signed by their proposers and seconders to her. NB Current Trustees are unable to propose or second. <b>Action HW,PB,JR,PF.</b> <b>Any other Motions</b> – None received from members.
3028	<b>Finance DL Report</b> <b>Approval of Accounts 2024/25</b> – These were circulated in advance of the meeting and signed by the examiner Michael Harwood. One title change was requested. The Accounts 2024/25 were approved by the EC. <b>Approval of Financial Budget 2025/26</b> – Funds are gradually declining but DL advised the EC can defer raising subscriptions for another year and leave adequate reserves. The proposed budget is conservative and it is anticipated expenditure will be less. Costs can be reduced by no longer providing printed newsletters, GO guides, and reducing the size of the handbook. Membership cards are currently issued with the handbook but DL will investigate replacing these with electronic cards via Beacon once he has stepped down as Treasurer. The budget was approved although PB raised concerns about the apparent level of underfunding. Average subs for u3a groups is c £20 compared with Sevenoaks at £13 so there is potential to increase ours.

	<p><b>Appointment of Examiner of Accounts for 2025/26</b> – Michael Harwood has agreed to be nominated by EC.</p> <p><b>Update to Bank Mandate</b> – EC agreed DL progresses adding Peter Bradnock as a signatory in advance of the AGM. <b>Action DL</b></p>
3029	<p><b>Recruitment to Supporting teams</b></p> <p><b>Social Events</b> – Telephoning members identified from the S and I database has not found any volunteers. The Treasurer is prepared to carry on. PW will hold a meeting later in the month. DP asked to attend. <b>Action PW</b></p> <p><b>Science</b> – Team has an additional member.</p> <p><b>Technical Support</b> – TSG continues to seek members with the appropriate skill sets to support General meetings and for undertaking repairs and maintenance. Rob Weighill and Bob Cherry are certified to carry out PAT testing for this year.</p>
3030	<p><b>Vice-Chair report: BM's report was noted.</b></p> <p>A discussion followed relating to difficult members. GOs should involve the EC.</p> <p>BM flagged we need to review and continue with our longer term Strategy. <b>Action EC</b></p>
3031	<p><b>Membership Secretary's Report: Jenny Ruffles report was noted.</b></p> <p>Membership – Numbers of both members and groups are dropping to the level of a Failing u3a.</p> <p><b>New Members Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> – NB Only 13 accepted of 65 invited. JR met with MB for planning. JR wants to improve the Skills and Interest part of the Application Form to help differentiate between interest in attending events and volunteering for the organising.</p> <p><b>Open Day</b> – EC agreed that the Open afternoon should be moved to the January 2026 monthly meeting to enable a GOs meeting to be held in September 2025. Groups did not like being located in the small hall so it was suggested we only used the large hall. Changes to Hall Bookings should be made through Barbara Coleyshaw. The January speaker will need to be cancelled. <b>Action JR/MB</b> Publicity needed. DP would write to the Chronicle again. Budget includes funding for bunting etc. PB suggested pull up boards.</p>
3032	<p><b>Group Development: MB's report was noted</b></p> <p>EC agreed to invite Marianne to the July committee meeting. <b>Action HW</b></p> <p>MB outlined plans for a GOs meeting in September. EC approved these and associated funding in principle. MB should contact Barbara Coleyshaw with regard to hall bookings. <b>Action DP/MB</b></p>
3033	<p><b>Communications: PF's report was noted in his absence.</b></p> <p><b>Newsletter</b> – Issues with articles not being included. Comms team are meeting on May 2nd to review their processes. NB all articles should be sent to News@sevenoaksu3a.org <b>Action Comms/EC</b></p> <p><b>Printed Copies of Newsletter</b> – Due to increasing costs of printing and posting (£232 for 73 copies) the EC agreed that Su3a should cease sending printed copies of the newsletter to any members as soon as possible. EC agreed it would not send printed copies to anyone who has registered an email address with Su3a with immediate effect (Sixteen members). DL will circulate a draft explanatory note to the EC for approval and send to these members via Beacon. <b>Action DL/EC.</b></p> <p>A clear note must be included in the June letter explaining that with increased content costs will rise further and be unsustainable. Members with no email will be encouraged to ask family or friends to help access it. The format can be improved for reading on phones and tablets without the limitations required for printing. Positive feedback will be encouraged although we expect to receive complaints. <b>Actions Comms Team/EC</b></p>
3034	<p><b>Meetings and Talks: Barbara Coleyshaw's report was noted.</b></p>

	Barbara listed speakers into 2026. EC agreed that she should ask the speaker booked for January 2026 to speak at the 2026 AGM instead as a postponement rather than cancellation. <b>Action DP</b>
<b>3035</b>	<b>Social Events Team: No report.</b>
<b>3036</b>	<b>Phones Tablets Computers (PTC) Group: Mike's report was noted.</b> No change from last month.
<b>3037</b>	<b>Science Open Group: Bob Ruffles' report was noted.</b> <b>Proposed Science Seminar "AI in Agriculture"</b> DL raised the concerns that the Science Group would make a loss on the seminar planned for June 4 <sup>th</sup> at East Malling Research Centre due to the difficulties encountered in booking two of the three speakers required. Worst case would be a shortfall of £800 due to up front payments. EC could fund this entirely from the Social Fund or in part from the Residue Fund from the Apple Group to avoid impacting General Funds. The event cannot be advertised until speakers are booked.
<b>3038</b>	<b>Technical Support: Bob Ruffles' report was noted.</b> DP will send a note to Bob to ask about the needs of the team. <b>Action DP</b>
<b>3039</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b> DL noted all expenditure must have EC approval. Up to £50 can be spent on items as agreed. Over £50 requires specific approval of the amount at a meeting or by email. DL requested approval for the purchase of a new Treasurers laptop c £500-£600. This is included in the budget and was agreed by the EC. The existing Treasurer's laptop with a new battery can then be given to a support team as a replacement. <b>Action DL</b> DL explained he currently backs up Beacon data on a monthly basis and would need to ask someone with a Su3a laptop to continue this. PB offered. DP reiterated her gratitude to BM, DL and PW in their help to her as a new Chairman.
	<b>Date of next meeting</b> <b>Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 at 10.00 am</b> <b>Other 2025 dates: September 4th, November 6th.</b>

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