

NORTH LONDON UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at St Paul's Church Hall

On Monday 9th July 2018

Present: 58 members, including:

Edmond Cohen – Chair

Leon Levy – Treasurer

Henrietta Cohen – Groups Organiser

Mike Christie - Webmaster

Ann Dugdale – Minutes Secretary

Roy Seger – co-opted member

1. **Apologies for absence** –Ruth Silver, Mary Callaghan, John Hajdu, Sue Teller, Frank and Diane Kelsall, James Crawford.
2. **Minutes of the previous AGM, held on 3rd July 2017** – Copies of the minutes of that meeting were available on the website and for all those attending the meeting. There were no corrections or matters arising and the minutes were **agreed**. (Proposed by Mike Christie and seconded by Pat Taylor.)
3. **Report from the Chair** – Edmond welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that he had been asked to take on the role of Chairman for the last six months, having previously served as Business Secretary. He paid tribute to all the volunteers and people who help to make NLU3A the success that it is. These included those who set out the chairs and sound and vision equipment at St Paul's, the Catering Team, those who organise the Summer and Winter Programmes, the Group Co-Ordinators and hosts of group meetings, John Hajdu for arranging the very popular Monday visiting speakers, Leni, Judith Abbs and Judith Litherland for their excellent work on The Northern Line, Bruce and Aliya Middleton for hosting new members meetings, Ruth, Mary and their assistants for all the special Events, and all the committee members for making this another successful year. In particular, Edmond thanked those committee members who were retiring this year (Sue Teller and Leon Levy), Ruth for carrying out the role of Chair for the first six months of the year and, especially, Patricia Isaacs who had stayed on for a year after her retirement as Chair, to help and advise Ruth and himself over a sometimes difficult transition period.

Edmond went on to say that, despite a number of new U3As starting up nearby over the last year, NLU3A now had over 800 members and played an active role in National and London Region activities as well as the local North London Network Group. Leni Green would be attending the National Conference in August. Key activities for the Committee over the last year had included: reviewing the 3 year Strategy and policy; reviewing the website and arranging its updating and refreshing; and examining in depth key issues such as membership fees, how best to manage rising accommodation costs, whether we needed a name change, how best to manage rising membership numbers, policy for starting new and duplicate groups, and looking at ways to attract more ethnic minorities and men to our membership.

Edmond then handed over to Leon for the Treasurer's report.

4. **Treasurer's report** – Copies of the income and expenditure and the balance sheet were available for all those present at the meeting. Leon summarised these and reported that our accounts were in good order, with a £27,000 reserve, and approved by the accounts examiner. He explained that the accounts showed a deficit for the year which included an amount of approx. £1,500 from National Office to cover the posting of TAM, which sometimes was made twice in one year and not at all in others, depending on when NO put the charge through and our financial year end date. In order to even out this anomaly it would show as an accrued item in future years but for 2017/18 it had appeared twice; therefore, the real loss for the past year was c£4,400. This was almost entirely due to rent increases (the cost of booking rooms for meetings and large groups) plus an accrued amount covering the week's Away study tour as booking fees had to be paid in advance.

Several questions were raised in relation to the accounts and answers and explanations were provided as follows:- TAM is not available on-line so has to be posted and the charge, if we want our members to receive it, is therefore unavoidable. (It was noted, however, that the Sources document would be available on-line shortly, although this would not reduce the postal charge for TAM.) One member said he wanted to thank NLU3A for paying for TAM as some U3As did not and their members did not receive it. Another member asked if some of the excess funds could not be spent on paying not just for increased accommodation but also things like additional or new equipment for meetings, such as extra microphones, etc. The committee will consider this suggestion further.

Leon said that, as a result of the increased accommodation costs, the Committee proposed that membership fees be increased by £3 per member to £39 (£68 for joint membership) to help cover the rising costs of accommodation. He pointed out that there had been very few increases over the past five years. Although one or two people expressed some concern at this, one member pointed out that an additional £3 per year is nothing and barely covers the cost of a coffee these days. A vote was taken and the majority were in favour of the increase (only 4 against).

Edmond then asked for a vote on the Accounts, Melvyn Rees proposed the Accounts be accepted and this was seconded by Jim Sweeny. The Accounts were accepted by unanimous vote.

Leon said that Muriel Temkin was willing to remain as the Accounts Examiner and her election as such was agreed by unanimous vote.

5. **Committee elections 2018/19** – Edmond explained that there was one committee member up for re-election (Ann Dugdale) and three co-opted members were up for election (Henrietta Cohen, Mary Callaghan and Roy Seger). Ann Dugdale was nominated for re-election by Edmond Cohen, seconded by Henrietta Cohen. Henrietta had been co-opted as Groups Organiser and was nominated as full committee member by Edmond Cohen, seconded by Ann Dugdale. Mary Callaghan had been co-opted and had taken on the role of resources manager. She was nominated by Patricia Isaacs and seconded by Sue Teller. Roy had been co-opted, as a replacement for Leon as Treasurer when he retires in August, and was nominated by David Paton and seconded by C Croome. Edmond asked if there were any objections to these nominations and all four elections were agreed by unanimous vote.

6. Any other business

- a) Edmond drew attention to the new publicity leaflet.
- b) Melvyn Rees said there were still a few places left on the next Far Away Day and that application forms were available.
- c) Christine Stammers encouraged people to have another look at the Summer Programme as places were still available on many of the events.
- d) Elsa Ramsey said the Catering Team required a new member who must be able to cook and anyone interested should contact her after the AGM
- e) Leon said the Hampstead Garden Suburb U3A wanted an Accounts Examiner and anyone interested should contact him after the AGM.

7. Open Forum

Q1. Is there any way of checking whether the 800+ members are all active members?

A1. Yes, Groups records show who belongs to which groups and Group Leaders are asked to keep a record of attendance. Inevitably some members drop out over the course of a year for various reasons and those normally do not renew their membership.

Q2. Why does the website show spaces on some groups but when an enquiry is made people are sometimes told the group is full?

A2. Henrietta explained that the Groups organiser's team had stopped maintaining waiting list information some time ago, due to the difficulties of doing this accurately. However, the issue is on the agenda for the Group Leaders event on 3 September to see what can be done for the future. Mike pointed out that The Norther Line(TNL) does include vacancies on groups where Group Leaders notify that.

Q3. Jenny Clarke suggested that the Committee approach new members after one year, when they had time to settle into NLU3A, to see if they were interested in volunteering to run groups or help in other ways, rather than just after they had first joined and did not know many people.

A3. The Committee agreed to take this suggestion on board.

Q4. Is there a way of monitoring the number of hits on groups' pages on the website?

A4. Yes. Mike explained this was not a particularly sophisticated reporting tool but the information was there and showed that Group pages were the most frequently visited.

Q5. What is the current policy on neighbouring U3As paying for joining groups in adjacent U3As?

A5. Patricia explained that the arrangement varied depending on whether there were vacancies or waiting lists, but generally, especially with those U3As that were part of the North London Networking Group, a reciprocal arrangement was made whereby the visiting members could pay a small fee to join a group with vacancies on the basis that if their place was subsequently required by a NLU3A member, they had to drop out. The charge made depended on the time of year the arrangement started. People who wanted to join more than one group had to join NLU3A in the usual way but were not charged the £5.50 capitation fee (charged by NO for TAM and admin costs), and joined as Associate Members. As a follow up, one person said they thought this issue was important in view of the many new U3As that had sprung up recently. This was

agreed, however, the issue is difficult as different U3As have different policies on membership fees and charging capitation twice. This issue is also on the agenda for the Group Leaders Event.

Q6. What percentage of groups used hired premises?

A6. This information is available but not to hand today. Mike said he thought it was in the region of 2/3 groups held in people's homes and 1/3 in booked and paid for accommodation.

Q7. Rather than leave all the reserve funds on deposit can NLU3A spend some of it on paying for groups accommodation and some new sound equipment, such as an additional microphone.

A7. The Committee agreed to look further into this, although there were technical issues to take into account in adding microphones to the existing system.

As there were no further questions, Edmond declared the meeting closed at 12.10pm.