

Minutes of the Regional Representative Council Meeting held on 9th January 2013 at Nottingham Trent University, Clifton Campus

Present: Chair Alan Morris, Treasurer David Kyle, Secretary Gill Childs, Regional Trustee Michaela Moody, EDO Liz Wilson, Hilary Wells, Carol Lockwood, Lynne Cox, Mike Benthall, Cyril Young, Pat Reeve, Hilary Lucas, Christine Baxter and Karen Highfield-Taylor.

1 a) **The Chairman welcomed** everyone to the Meeting, especially Hilary Wells and Hilary Lucas, who were attending for the first time. b) **Apologies for absence** from Penny Forsdyke, Barry Hillyard and Annabelle Meek.

2 a) **Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th October 2012** were Confirmed (Proposed Michaela Moody, Seconded Cyril Young). The Chair signed the Minutes and the confirmed copy will be posted to the website. b) (i) Under item 18, it had been agreed that two alternates per meeting would be invited to attend but accommodation limitations had prevented more than one being present today.

3 **Chair's Report:** Alan had presented Regional Development Plan, and Appendix and there being no questions or objections raised about the Context, it was Agreed that we will go forward with this aspect of the Plan. Insofar as Evaluation was concerned, we will have a lead evaluator who will, in turn, select two additional people who could be RRC members or any regional U3A members, bearing in mind the need for geographical spread. They will be tasked to produce a short report. Penny Forsdyke had been approached to become lead evaluator and had accepted. All present were in favour of that choice and the Secretary will write to Penny formally confirming our decision. Discussion about the Regional Development Plan followed, including these main points:-

Whether other Regions have Development Plans. Michaela will find out but said we are perhaps the best organized. We need clear ideas about our way forward and not live hand to hand to mouth. The Development Plan opens up what we are doing. We need to be sure we are getting through to membership and committees of U3As. Some things will touch individual U3As, others have a wider appeal. We will bring together U3As doing similar things, at the same time scrubbing out the image of bureaucracy. We will improve pathways between RRC and U3As. Michaela can include a simple run-through of hierarchy in her presentations, Mike said he would like to see cascading of correspondence – i.e. TAT>Region>Network>U3As and indication of things initiated. Gill will work on producing a kernel of contacts in an attempt to improve relationships with U3As. Various amendments to the original document 3(a)(ii) were agreed and the Agreed version is the document entitled A First Attempt at Detailing Tackling the Priorities appended to these minutes. Plans are still being developed in the Area of Financial Risk Assessment. The Chair added the reminder that we rely on RRC for ideas. It was Agreed that in the longer term, we should consider organising a second Summer School. This will need someone to head it up and we should be on the lookout for likely candidates to do this. David is preparing a risk assessment and costs will be added to table 3(a)(ii) (see Appendix 1).

4. **AGM & Conference 2013:** Minutes of a sub-committee meeting held on 6th November 2012 were received. Following a site visit by Alan, Cyril and Gill, the Holiday Inn at Crick has been selected as the venue for our Conference and AGM this year. The visit had shown the Holiday Inn to be favourable for many reasons, including accessibility to those travelling there, parking, costs, lay-out

for registration, meeting rooms, dining and liaison with the hotel event organiser. The cost per head is £21 and we will be making a charge of £10 per person to those wishing to attend. We are hoping to attract 100-120 in all. TAT Chairman Barbara Lewis has confirmed that she will give a talk and Stan Miller was cited as another speaker. A good thread would be U3A in the international, the national, the regional and the individual dimensions and we need to come up with a title (diversity was thought to be confusing). In addition to the speakers, ideas such as burning issues from U3As, case studies, in depth/shared learning, displays and maybe a PowerPoint presentation were suggested.

5. Secretary's Report: The items on which the Secretary was reporting had already been included in items 3 and 4.

6. Treasurer's Report: David said that our finances were ticking over in reasonably good shape. There had been mixed reaction to the invoices sent out to U3As for Affiliation Fees and some questions had been asked. All U3As had been invoiced and the Treasurer said that he needed to enlist the help of RRC members in collecting outstanding monies. Gill will also assist by checking that we have the correct contact details. We have a balance of approximately £600. Nothing further has been received from TAT and we were reminded that we must first expend our tranche of £3,000 (by 31st March) before the remainder of our allotted £8,500 would be sent to us.

7. The Education & Development Officer's Report had, in the majority, been covered by the Development Plan but Liz added that she would be holding an early meeting with Derbyshire re their Development Plan.

Liz had also submitted a report on the NEC (in July 2012) from which the main discussion point was about whether future strategic planning was necessary. The previous Chair of TAT held the view that a Strategic Plan document was probably not necessary and the Vice Chair held much the same view. Liz said her belief was that we should have policy reviews and Michaela assured everyone that new Chair, Barbara Lewis, had "taken charge".

8. Regional Trustee's Report: There were strong feelings about the TAT ruling to cease bulk mailing of Third Age Matters with effect from the end of April this year. At the same time, the cost will rise from £1.50 to £2.10 per copy. The meeting felt that Third Age Matters is vital if we are to maintain wider horizons but it is feared that some U3As will simply not receive it at all once bulk mailing finishes, perhaps because of cost. It was felt that more notice ought to have been given by TAT and it was proposed by Mike Benthall, seconded by Christine Baxter and a motion was carried unanimously that we would write to TAT. The following wording is suggested "The East Midlands Regional Representative Council (EMRRC) has no problem with the principle of removing the Bulk Mailing option for the receipt of Third Age Matters but feels that implementing the decision in April is too precipitate and that it should, instead, be phased in. Moving to Direct Mailing will mean an increase in membership subscriptions for some, if not all, of the U3As moving to that system. Permission for a subscription increase has to be obtained at an AGM which may not be possible for all U3As by April." U3As were to be encouraged to opt for direct mailing.

With regard to new U3As, it was thought that Memory Course volunteers should be included in the training referred to in Michaela's Report.

9 (a) No **Derbyshire Report** because there had been no Network meeting since the last RRC. (b) **Leicestershire** had submitted a report which really needed to be shorter: half of an A4 page would be sufficient, covering big and important matters only. (c) There was **no written Report from Lincolnshire** but it was reported that Horncastle and Bourne are to hold study days. There will also be a Memory Course dry run. (d) **Northamptonshire**: The Development Team has been updated and the building of the website is moving fast. Alan said that the cohesion evident in Northamptonshire is commendable and Liz concurred by saying that she was impressed by their unified decisions. (e) **Nottinghamshire** reports that clusters are working well – e.g. Long Eaton, Ilkeston and Beeston; and West Bridgford and Radcliffe-on-Trent. A questionnaire had been drawn up to ascertain U3As' views with regard to growth and the launch of new U3As. Liz was asked to circulate a copy of that questionnaire and to make available a copy of the Nottinghamshire Network Development Plan.

10. **Memory Course update**: Lynne Cox, as Regional Coordinator, will send a written Report to the Secretary and gave an oral report. Items included were: Memory Newsletter 3 has now been sent out, academics at Leicester and De Montfort Universities have been contacted but there has been no response. We are encouraged by Radcliffe-on-Trent U3A having completed one course successfully and other courses going ahead this year are Charnwood (Leicester); Ripley (Derbyshire); Keyworth (Nottinghamshire) and Horncastle (Lincolnshire). Others may be added.

11 **Rules for election of the Regional Trustee**: In reply to the Chair's request, Lin Jonas had sent a document dated November 2012 giving details of the rules. An additional document, Guidelines for Co-opting Trustees dated November 2009 was also circulated. These will be sent to all U3As after being considered by the NEC. It is hoped that these, together with the Regional Constitutional amendment agreed at the last meeting, will clarify matters for the future.

12. **Any Other Business**: The Chairman said that he had taken the decision not to stand for re-election at the AGM this year.

13. **Date of Next Meeting**: 8th May 2013

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 3.35pm.