

Furness U3A Committee

CONFIRMED MINUTES of the Meeting held at the Bedford Room, Ulverston Methodist Church on 10th February 2026

1 PRESENT:

Committee Members

Christine Butler, Harry Knowles, Richard Lewis, Linda Marshall, Neil McLaughlin Cook, Adrian Morris, Dawn Morris , Duncan Platts and Gary Thompson.

By Invitation

Simon Baxter.

2 APOLOGIES:

None.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH JANUARY

The Minutes (previously circulated) were formally agreed.

ACTION

Neil to send the Minutes to Simon, for uploading to the website.

4 ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES THAT ARE NOT COVERED IN THE AGENDA

4.1 Richard was now receiving emails from The Cumberland, alerting him when payments are to be authorised. Payments are now authorised by Gary and either Neil or Richard.

4.2 The National Office had confirmed that Furness u3a had been formally accepted as a u3a on 22nd June 2006.

4.3 Simon was still to explore the phenomenon of variability across groups in relation to the number of clicks on the website.

ACTION

Simon to explore this.

4.4 All other Actions had either been undertaken or were discussed under items 5-10 below.

5 REVIEW OF THE FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

The speaker was considered excellent, and the attendance of 173 was even higher than the previous month.

For the first time, a member with a visual impairment had been enabled to view the slides via our TV screen.

ACTION

Neil to explore whether the Coronation Hall would be able, as part of its planned improvements, to provide repeater screens for those with visual impairments.

Members had heard mobile phones ringing during the talk, and was **AGREED** that a reminder to turn phones off, or switch them to “silent” should be made.

ACTION

Richard to ask members, at the start of the March meeting, to ensure that phones are turned off or switched to “silent”.

The Committee noted that the March meeting would include the AGM, and that members are not normally charged an admission fee for the AGM.

ACTION

Richard to remind members, via the Newsletter, that there will be no entry charge for the March meeting.

6 FURNESS u3a AGM

Neil confirmed that the first mailing had been issued on time. The second, final mailing, would be issued no later than a fortnight before the AGM.

ACTION

Neil to draft the final mailing, and issue it by 24th February.

Neil had circulated a draft Trustees’ Report. The Committee **AGREED** to adopt the report, subject to the insertion of membership numbers [666 overall, including 34 Associates].

ACTION

Neil to amend the report and include it in the second mailing.

The second mailing would need to include the Final Accounts; Gary confirmed that the Examiners were due to complete their work, and return the approved accounts to him, in time for the mailing.

Nominations for Committee membership were due by 18th February. All members of the current Committee who wished to stand for [re]election had now submitted their completed forms to Neil. No other forms had yet been received.

ACTION

Neil to advise the Committee, after 18th February, whether there had been more than 1 nomination for any vacancy, and therefore whether we would need to hold elections during the AGM.

18th February was also the deadline for u3a members to submit additional resolutions, or amendments to resolutions proposed by the Committee. One amendment had been submitted so far, but no rationale had been included. The Committee **AGREED** that the amendment could only be discussed at the AGM if a rationale was provided no later than the deadline.

ACTION

Neil to ask the proposer of the amendment to provide a rationale by 18th February.

Neil to inform the Committee, after 18th February, of all resolutions and amendments that had been validly submitted by the deadline, and explain what this would imply for the structure of the AGM Agenda.

7 FURNESS u3a 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Duncan had circulated an update to the Committee, which was discussed in detail.

The event would be planned by a Steering Committee, convened by Duncan and also comprising Véronique Bonnard, Diane Hill, Carol Green and Tim Evans. [The Volunteer Group had been contacted, but no member of this group had volunteered to take part.] The Committee **AGREED** that the Steering Committee would be responsible for developing proposals for consideration by the Committee, and that the Committee would be responsible for final approval of any proposals.

ACTION

Duncan to arrange for the Steering Committee to provide monthly reports to the Committee, with a view to detailed proposals being submitted for consideration and approval in April.

It had been suggested that there might be 2 events: one for members and one open to other members. However, the Committee asked the Steering Committee to focus on events for members, and asked the Steering Committee to bear in mind that the date of the anniversary was 22nd June, and that a Coro Coffee Morning had already been booked for 29th October.

Nevertheless, the Committee also **AGREED** that the anniversary should be publicised at external events at which our u3a would be represented [such as stalls at EcoFair, Ulverston Charter Day and Retro Rendezvous], and on our website.

ACTION

Gary to devise materials for use at public-facing events.

Simon to ensure that the anniversary is flagged prominently on the website.

8 **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

On behalf of the Committee, Dawn had recently attended a national u3a online “coffee morning” on this topic. She summarised some of the key ideas raised in the event about how equality, diversity and inclusion might be more effectively promoted within u3as. Members expressed their gratitude to Dawn for taking on this role, which had been vacant for the past year, and looked forward to the greater prominence she would enable us to give to these important issues. The Committee noted that the provision of a TV at the monthly meeting for a member with visual impairments showed that Dawn had already made a difference.

The Committee discussed practical steps that could be taken in the short term. It was **AGREED** that [a] new members could be helped by the reinstatement of a “new members” table at monthly meetings, which would be located next to the existing Finance and IT Help Desk, to form a set of general Help Desks, [b] it would be helpful for all u3a members to become aware of Dawn’s role via an article in the Newsletter, and [c] Dawn should be given access to the welfare and inclusion email address, to give members an easier way to contact her.

ACTION

Dawn to write an article for the March Newsletter, introducing herself and summarising any relevant points from the coffee morning.

Adrian to serve on the New Members Help Desk.

Neil to ask Peter Quiggin to give Dawn access to the welfare and inclusion email address.

9 **VOLUNTEERING FOR FURNESS u3a**

Linda and Duncan had compiled a list of u3a members, the “Volunteer Group”, who had expressed an interest in principle in volunteering to help on an ad hoc basis, for example by helping serve drinks at the monthly meetings. The Committee suggested names of additional members who might be included.

ACTION

Linda to add the additional members to the list.

Neil had received an email from Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service [CVS], inviting Furness u3a to participate in a Volunteering Fair on 14th May in the Coro. The Committee **AGREED** that it would not be appropriate to participate, because our volunteers are always recruited internally from our members, not externally.

ACTION

Neil to reply to Cumbria CVS.

10 REPORTS

10.1 Chair

Nothing further to report.

10.2 Treasurer

Gary had emailed a written report. All accounts were balanced and reconciled, and the net cash position was £13677.00.

10.3 Secretary

Nothing further to report.

10.4 Groups Liaison

Duncan had emailed a written report, which was received without further discussion.

10.5 Membership Secretary

Linda had emailed a written report. The report had noted that there is sometimes a long delay between a member dying and the u3a being informed, which meant that, until notification had been received, the membership records were inaccurate; she had asked for suggestions for resolving this issue. Committee members were unable to identify a solution, but assured Linda that she was doing all that could be reasonably expected of her.

10.6 Speaker Finder

Harry had emailed a written report. The report had asked for members' views about a suggestion that the Ulverston Food Share Project might provide a speaker for the March 2027 Monthly Meeting and AGM. The Committee **AGREED** that, although a talk on this topic might be interesting, it would not be appropriate to schedule it for March because the Committee had previously agreed that AGM speakers would always be members of our u3a.

10.7 Welfare and Inclusion

Nothing further to report.

10.8 Website Editor / Newsletter Editor

Simon had emailed a written report. Also, the Committee was pleased to note that two newcomers had said that the website was very impressive and informative.

10.9 Publicity Officer

Harry had emailed a written report. The Committee **AGREED** that Harry should keep the materials currently stored in his garage. The Committee noted that Andy Buck had agreed to store the new Feather Banners.

10.10 Hospitality Officer

This was Christine's final Committee meeting, and members thanked her for all she had done, both in the hospitality role and for the Committee more generally. Christine confirmed that, although she would be standing down from the Committee at the AGM, she would be happy to continue to organise coffee and tea at monthly meetings.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

12 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 10th March**. Time to be notified.