

Hitchin u3a

Finance Policy & Procedure

1. Trustees Financial Responsibilities

1.1 The trustees of Hitchin u3a are responsible for

- Safeguarding the assets of the charity - Identifying and managing the risk of loss, waste, theft, or fraud
- Ensuring the financial reporting is robust and of sufficient quality
- Keeping financial records in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation (e.g. Charities Acts, Companies Acts, etc.)
- Preparing annual accounts in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation
- The accounts should show a true and fair view of the state-of-affairs of the u3a

1.2 Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. To enable the trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures are detailed below.

2. Banking

2.1 All bank accounts are in the name of the u3a and operated by the trustees.

2.2 New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.

2.3 Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.

2.4 The authorised signatories are the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and other trustees as appointed by the committee. This responsibility cannot be delegated.

2.5 All cheques must be signed by two signatories.

2.6 All bank statements must be sent directly to the Treasurer.

2.7 The Treasurer will update the committee on all income and expenditure at each Committee meeting.

2.8. Online Banking

2.8.1 Operation of the online banking service is under the control of the Treasurer who has full access rights and is responsible for assigning the appropriate delegate rights, as agreed by the committee and in accordance with the bank mandate.

2.8.2 Payment by online banking – Bacs -set up by the treasurer or any of the other authorised persons needs authorisation by one other delegate.

2.9 Payment by Bank Cards

2.9.1 The issue of any bank debit or credit card in the name of Hitchin u3a will be approved by the committee.

2.9.2 Any payment by the debit card used by the Treasurer has to be authorised in advance by another authorised person

2.9.3 All such payments must be supported by an invoice or receipt made out to Hitchin u3a

3 Groups Finances

3.1 Interest groups are expected to be self-financing and can collect such sums of money as the group members and leadership deem to be necessary to undertake their activities.

3.2 The funds of the interest groups belong to Hitchin u3a.

3.3 Groups are permitted to make any expenditure deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership and can withdraw money on request from the ringfenced funds held by Hitchin u3a on their behalf in the Social Account.

3.4 Where a group uses a paid tutor, they must provide an invoice to Hitchin u3a

3.5 Group Leaders should maintain a simple cash book to record all income and expenditure except for small contributions towards coffee and/or biscuits.

3.6 Group Leaders will submit an annual year end statement to the Treasurer, detailing total income and expenditure for the year and the balances carried forward at the year end.

3.7 Groups money is reported to committee 4 times a year.

4. Payments to Other Charities

4.1 In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives.

4.2 Where a speaker requests that their fee is paid to a charity of their choice, this will only be done if the speaker gives the Treasurer written authority to do so.

5. Expenses Policy

5.1 Regular out of pocket expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed by the Treasurer. Expense claims must be submitted with receipts. Large one-off expenses have to be authorised by the committee and no committee member should authorise their own claim. Expenses will include, with committee approval, attendance at the Trust's AGM and Conference and national and regional workshops.

5.2 First claims need to be made on the appropriate form (available from the Treasurer) giving sufficient detail as to the nature of the expense and the claimant's bank details .

Regularly recurring expenses, such as for catering at meetings, will just require the receipt(s) once the initial form has been submitted.

5.3 Expense claims should reflect the cheapest travel option available. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current HMRC approved rate for the actual mileage travelled. Car parking and congestion charges can be reclaimed (with receipts) but parking or other fines will not be allowed.

5.4 Overnight accommodation will only be allowed in exceptional cases and will need the prior agreement of the committee

6. Membership Fees

6.1 The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis.

6.2 For u3a members who can prove membership of another u3a Hitchin u3a will reduce the cost of membership by the amount that is paid to the Trust for each member.

7. Asset Register

7.1 An asset register is maintained by the Treasurer which records all assets held including their initial purchase price, date of purchase and location. The register is reviewed annually.

8. Reserves

8.1 Hitchin u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover a minimum of six months of regular operating activity. This is a reasonable level for this type of charity.

8.2 Social activities are excluded from this figure as these activities are inflated by high-cost activities such as theatre visits and days out and are entirely self-funding.

Reviewed On: 27th November 2024