

## Ash u3a Financial Policy

### 1 Purpose

All charities are required to determine their “Internal Controls” for running the charity, one of these being the Financial Policy.

Where applicable “Trustees” includes Board of Trustees / Board of Directors or committee members.

### 2 Trustees’ financial responsibilities

The Trustees of Ash 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. Accounts will be prepared on a receipts and payments basis observing the matching principle where appropriate.
- The accounts should show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the u3a.

Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. These include those of the u3a and all the interest groups, sub-groups etc, where appropriate.

To enable the Trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures detailed below will be followed.

A copy of this policy will be given to all Trustees on their election/appointment to the committee and made available to members on the website.

The policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary.

### 3 Banking

#### 3.1 Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of Ash u3a, otherwise known as Ash Branch u3a, and operated by the Trustees.



- New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the Trustees, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the Trustees, which must be minuted.
- The authorised signatories are the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer and any other Trustees designated by the Committee. This responsibility cannot be delegated.
- Where possible all payments, including cheques, must be authenticated by two signatories. (See Section 3.3 below)
- The Committee must retrospectively approve all payments made by Ash u3a.
- All bank statements must be sent to the Treasurer directly.
- Blank cheques will never be issued.
- Blank cheques will never be signed by one signatory for a second to complete later.

### **3.2 Online banking**

Only Trustees approved by the committee will have access to the online operation of the bank accounts. The security of the online system is in line with the arrangements offered by Nat West and such other banks as the Trustees authorise accounts to be opened with and in accordance with the mandated approval limits.

### **3.3 Payment by bank cards**

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. All payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate. Access to the online accounts varies from bank to bank and may be via a card reader and personal access card or by logging on to the bank system with a personal password and access code. The issue of any bank debit or credit card in the name of Ash u3a will be approved by the committee. The use of these cards overrides the dual control aspect of the payment authorisation process, but is permitted, where agreed in advance with the Treasurer, in recognition that online purchases for certain goods and services represents the most effective, and in some cases, the only method of completing the purchase (e.g. theatre tickets).

Only the authorised user should have access to the card. The card number and PIN or Security code should never be disclosed to anyone else. The Ash u3a debit credit card should be used for payments wherever possible, rather than a personal card.

### **3.4 Personal debit or credit cards**

The use of personal debit or credit cards for interest group activities needs to be closely managed. Permission must be sought from the Treasurer where a group feels that there is no other viable way to make payments.



Prior approval must be given by the committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Ash u3a or specific interest groups. In these circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim.

All invoices must be issued in the name of Ash u3a.

### **3.5 Receipts**

To manage the handover of money to be paid into the Ash u3a bank account by new members and those renewing their membership the committee has decided payments may be made:

- using the Beacon system payment method.
- bank transfer to the Ash u3a bank account.
- cheque made out to Ash u3a.
- cash.

The preferred method is to use the Beacon system

## **4 Groups' finances**

Accurate accounts of group finances shall be maintained by the Treasurer for review at Ash u3a committee meetings and for presentation at the AGM. Ash u3a provides Group Leaders with all the necessary financial information within the Finance section of the Ash u3a Group Leaders Handbook to which the reader should refer. The Treasurer, Groups' Liaison and Chair shall agree the Finance Section of the Ash u3a Group Leaders handbook which shall cover the following:

- Payments by group members (receipts to the Ash u3a).
- Expenses paid in relation to group activities.

## **5 Expenses policy**

Out of pocket expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed. Expense claims must be submitted with receipts. Expense claims shall be authorised by two members of the Ash u3a Committee with bank authority to do so. No committee member should authorise their own claim. Expenses will include – with committee approval – attendance at the Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops.

All claims need to be made on the appropriate form (copies available from the Treasurer or the Web Site) giving sufficient detail as to the nature of the expense.

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.

Overnight accommodation for such items as the Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and will need the prior agreement of the executive committee.

## **6 Membership Fees**

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. Ash u3a is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all members.

## **7 Payment to other Charities**

In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. Ash u3a will make payments to speakers who have indicated that they intend to donate their fee to a specific charity but not direct to their nominated charity.

## **8 Asset register**

An asset register is maintained by the Equipment Manager, or such other person as designated by the committee, which records all assets held including their initial purchase price, date of purchase and current location.

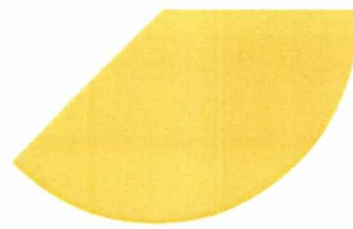
All assets are fully written off against receipts in the year of purchase. The register is updated on the acquisition, change of location or disposal of assets and reviewed annually.

## **9 Reserves**

Ash u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover:

- The cost of replacing its most expensive asset
- One month's hall hire (see note below)
- 10% less members join Ash u3a than the previous year

Note: Group Leaders will be advised to keep a reserve of one month's hall hire for the monies ring fenced for their group



## 10 Retention of Financial Records

It is a legal requirement for financial records to be retained for at least 6 years from the end of the financial year of the charity in which they are made. Membership records of those members who have signed a Gift Aid declaration will be kept for a minimum of 6 years after the end of the tax year they relate to. Financial records include accounts, HMRC Gift Aid claims, invoices, receipts and expense claims. Information may be retained in electronic or paper format.

Signed ...*Diana Wilson*.....

reviewed and amended 13 July 2024

Name...DIANA WILSON.....

Role ...Chairman.....

Date 13 February 2023 .....

13 July 2024

Signed ...*D Milton*.....

Name ...DEBORAH MILTON.....

Role ...Treasurer.....

Date ...*13 July 2024*.....