

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).

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.

4 Groups' finances

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. The funds of these groups belong to the u3a. Groups are permitted to make minor expenditure. e.g. the purchase of refreshments, deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership and can withdraw money on request from the ring fenced funds held by the u3a on their behalf, as appropriate. The Treasurer, Group's Co-ordinator and Group Leader(s) need to agree what records they need to keep of the groups' transactions in order to:

- Allow the Treasurer to keep accurate accounts for presentation to the AGM, for discussion with the trustees and to meet regulatory requirements.
- Allow the group members to understand how their monies are being managed.
- Maintain transparency and trust for all concerned.
- Minimise the risk of error and potential loss of funds.

4.1 Receipts

To manage the handover of money to be paid into the Ash u3a bank account the committee has decided that:

- Ash u3a members may pay their annual Membership Subscriptions by card using the current Beacon system payment method.
- Ash u3a members may pay their annual Membership Subscriptions, Group Subscriptions and other monies directly into the Ash u3a bank account. Ash u3a members paying such items by cheque must make the cheque payable to Ash u3a.
- Group monies collected by Group Leaders from the Group members may be paid over to Ash U3A by Group leaders paying online through their own bank account or by sending their own cheque to the Treasurer. Any cheques collected by Group Leaders from Group members should be passed to the Treasurer for banking.
- Where applicable receipts will need to be given to group leaders, or acknowledged by email.
- Where net sums are being paid over this needs to be fully demonstrated to the Treasurer.
- The Committee may approve new methods of payment to take advantage of innovations introduced by the banks.



4.2 Payments

The committee will inform relevant group leaders as to the approved process for payments relating to:

- All payments, except for minor expenditure such as Group refreshments retained from Group Subscriptions, will be made by Ash u3a.
- All venue bookings for regular meetings will be booked by the Committee. The Treasurer will verify invoices for these bookings against records produced by the Venues Secretary. Bookings for non-regular events such as Hotels, Restaurants and Theatre tickets can be booked by the Group Leaders subject to prior consultation with the Treasurer.
- Reimbursement of authorised expenses.

Outside speakers should be asked to state their fees and any travel costs at the time of booking. At the time of the event an invoice should be forwarded to the Treasurer for payment.

Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, they must provide evidence of their self-employed status and invoice the u3a as agreed.

The committee (via the Treasurer) will monitor the income and expenditure of the groups. Group leaders need to provide regular information, as agreed, to the Treasurer. Where groups do not comply then the committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

4.3 Social activities

Events such as theatre trips, visits or educational days out must be charged at cost and all participants pay appropriately. The costs paid by members must cover out-of-pocket expenses.

The organiser of an event must not benefit from any discount (e.g. a free place) offered by the organisation providing the event. The value of free places must be shared out among all participants to the event.

Out-of-pocket expenses can be paid to an organiser out of the money collected for the event. As all u3a members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event.



4.4 Payments 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.

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 will be authorised by the executive committee and 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. Overnight accommodation and restaurant meals for Ash u3a organised events, such as Walkers' Weekends and festival celebrations, which have been previously agreed with the Treasurer, are a legitimate expense.

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 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 or disposal of assets and reviewed annually.



8 Reserves

Ash u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover the cost of replacing its most expensive asset. This is considered by the committee a reasonable level for this type of charity.

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

Name...DIANA WILSON.....

Role ...Chairman.....

Date ...13 February 2023.....