

A REPORT FROM YOUR REGIONAL TRUSTEE

Since my last newsletter in July, there has certainly been a great deal of discussion by the TAT Board and the Pilot Council of the so-called Fit for the Future proposals.

I think by now everyone is familiar with the existing structure of the membership of TAT being all of the u3as in the UK, the Board of Directors consisting of the National Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer (elected by the whole membership) and the twelve Regional and National Trustees (elected by the u3as in their regions or nations) and the six standing advisory committees, all reporting to the Board, and everyone will also be familiar with the role of the Pilot Council and also the current proposals and the reasons advanced for them.

Fuller details including a timeline for implementation were recently released, including the winding-down of all six committees and a “communication/marketing exercise” running since September 2023 until March 2024.

Key features of the proposals which have now emerged are that the proposed new Board will consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, u3a Council Chair, the Chair of Third Age Trust Trading Limited and 4-5 others recruited and elected from the u3a membership as having relevant skills/backgrounds.

If approved by the Board in June 2024, resolutions will be proposed at the 2024 AGM. If they are passed, they will be implemented between October 2024 and the 31st March 2025.

The current Board will disband on the 31st March 2025, and the existing Regional / National Trustees will be required on the 1st April to choose either to transition to the u3a Council or to seek nomination and election to the new Board on the basis of the skills they possess.

Everyone should have received a mailout in November asking for topics, questions and ideas to be included in the agenda for meetings of the Pilot Council via Zoom on the 13th December or in person on the 28th February. Some may think the December deadline was too short bearing in mind the need to discuss the proposals in committee.

Everything I do and say as your Regional Trustee is driven by you, and I need to know what you think of these proposals before deciding whether I should support them as being in the interests of members in the East Midlands.

Key questions for me are whether the replacement of the existing Board structure of 12 Regional / National Trustees and 3 others with one representative of the u3a Council and 8 / 9 others would be a sensible or beneficial change, how the wishes of the members would be represented and carried into effect and whether the scheme will solve the perceived problems of overload and inefficiency of the management.

Now is the time for the members to make their voices heard about these far-reaching and radical proposals and to shape the policies and governance of the u3a movement for many decades to come. Now is definitely not the time for u3as and networks to falter or give up hope.

I am here to represent your interests to the Board, so please feel free to contact me to discuss any questions or comments.

John Lewis

East Midlands Regional Trustee

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