

Brighton Astro - Steering Committee - Minutes

23rd May 2023

The Dorset, 7:30pm-9:30pm

Present: Pete, Phil, Keith, Leena, Sue, Jason

Apologies: Christine

Welcome

- Discussion on why we have formed a steering committee and what we want it to do:
 - Provide Pete and Phil with feedback and wider perspectives on the group
 - Provide scrutiny, ask questions, make sure money is spent correctly

Brighton Astro status update

- Brighton Astro is now a member of the FAS, and is covered by their public liability insurance
- Pete is the club secretary, Phil is the treasurer
- Keith, Leena, Sue, Jason and Christine are members of the steering committee
- Brighton Astro has adopted a constitution, documenting a plan to hold steering committee meetings twice a year, an AGM once year, to share minutes with the email group and to keep accounts

Wagner Hall

- All members of the committee are happy with the new venue, seeing it as welcoming and relaxed with a nice feel
- We plan to chat with Penny and Steve about potentially looking into the costs associated with hiring a bigger screen/projector in Wagner Hall

Monthly meetings

- The current search for speakers was discussed and ideas proposed for who else we could approach to speak at future monthly gatherings.
- An additional 5 minute "what's in the sky this month" talk could be trialed before the main talk, Jason has volunteered to start this.

Money

- The current setup was discussed with the steering committee:
 - Brighton Astro has a MetroBank account that Phil and Pete both have access to
- SumUp card reader
 - Brighton Astro has bought a SumUp card reader that is used to accept donations at the monthly meetings
- The regular expenses were discussed:
 - Wagner Hall, which costs £150 per monthly meeting
 - Meetup, which costs around £90 every 6 months
 - Speakers, who are offered expenses and on occasion a speaker's fee

- FAS, which will incur an annual membership cost plus the price of public liability insurance

Volunteers

- The possible need for more volunteers was discussed:
 - Brighton Astro regulars could be asked if they would be willing to volunteer for a rota system for welcoming people to the monthly gatherings, with the possibility of getting t-shirts printed.
 - Brighton Astro regulars could be asked if they would be willing to help out with the housekeeping/introduction part of the monthly gatherings.
 - Brighton Astro regulars could be asked if anyone would be interested in forming an “outreach team” to respond to the occasional requests from schools and scout groups (etc) to talk about space and astronomy.
 - Brighton Astro regulars could be asked if anyone would be willing to help out with fundraising activities.

Observing

- The possibility of organising one-off or regular observing sessions was discussed:
 - The committee are conscious of time commitments of all volunteers, and so propose starting with a one-off observing event and to judge interest levels of the group from there.
 - Another beach hut astronomy session was proposed for late August, to coincide with the first week of a new moon.
 - This could potentially be followed up with a session at Devil’s Dyke (or similar).
 - A telescope ‘workshop’ session could potentially be arranged, provided there were enough members with telescopes who would be willing to help with advice.