

MINUTES OF MEETING (Draft)
District 9675 Cluster 10
29 August 2017, 10am-12noon
Club Burwood RSL, Burwood

Chair: Ian Morrison

Attendees: Ian Morrison, Strathfield South
Yvonne Pugh, Drummoyne Probus
Des Reilly, Drummoyne Probus
Elizabeth Spillane, Burwood Ladies
Judy Mitchell, Burwood Ladies
Judy Love, Concord
Sandra Da Silva, Strathfield Ladies
Wayne Bredin, Five Dock Mens
Gwen Burford, Ashfield Combined
Dick White, PSPL
Julia Oliver, PSPL

WELCOME AND ROUND TABLE INTRODUCTIONS

A short introduction around the table was done.

GUEST SPEAKER

Guest Speaker Colin Clay, Carlingford Mens Club Ambassador was introduced. Col talked about the membership development plan his club had embarked on in 2015 when the club realised that they were losing membership.

- First step was to acknowledge there is a problem early
- Do a health and age check of the club
- Draw up a plan of action
- Ensure that all club members buy into the plan of action

The strategy called for an intensive membership drive:

- Introduction of a prospective member by a current member
- flyer distribution in the local area, including local businesses
- advertisement in local paper and radio
- local shopping centre information desk
- talking to Executive Committees of clubs in the area with waiting lists.

Implementation was overseen by a sub-committee of 4 people – 2 from the Executive Committee and two from general membership, with full support of members who were kept fully informed of progress at each General Meeting.

The strategy had been very successful and 17 new younger members were recruited in an 18-month period, who have also put their hands up to fill in committees.

MENTORING

Dick White spoke about strategies to ensure that Executive Committees do not get recycled; if an executive has been in a position for more than 3 years, this is a sign that the club is in trouble.

- Have greeters at the door to ensure that current, new or prospective members are made to feel welcome
- It is important to establish relationships in a club and this needs to be undertaken by the Committee
- Once personal relationships are established, it is easier to ask for help, involvement and support from the member
- A member would start to feel more comfortable about Committee roles after helping out with some tasks
- Once the Executive Committee steps down, there is a round robin of roles where the Vice-President takes on the President's position and members who have assisted in various committees can then step up to the role.

FORMATION OF NEW CLUBS

It is usually hard for a club to turn around once membership attrition happens due to age and do not have a product to 'sell', eg activities that will appeal to younger retirees. Amalgamation with another club is an option to stem membership attrition but can be difficult due to different club cultures.

It is easier to form a new club than revive an ageing one and has a better chance of attracting younger members. The process by which new clubs are formed was explained – from investigating areas where clubs have long waiting lists, to researching the potential of setting up a club using the Census population data, looking at the 55-79 age range.

IDEAS FOR COLLABORATIVE CLUSTER PARTICIPATION

Alison Manno, to whom suggestions were to be emailed was, unfortunately, unable to attend the meeting. It was however reported that Ashfield Probus is setting up a stand at the Dulwich Hill Village Fair on 10th September and also at the Summer Hill Neighbourhood Feast on 8th October. Peter Jager is coordinating this.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

The question of the Breakfast Point and Cabarita Breakfast Point clubs' reasons for opting out of the Ambassador program remains unanswered.

WEBSITES/TECHNOLOGY

The importance of having a website was once again emphasised. This gives a club visibility especially amongst younger retirees. Currently there are only 5 of the 15 clubs in the cluster who have websites. The cluster was again reminded that PSPL can set up a basic website for clubs, free.

HOW CLUSTERS BEST SERVE THE NEEDS OF CLUBS

- Suggestion of inviting Presidents of successful clubs to speak about how they achieved their success
- Possibility of approaching Breakfast Point and/or Cabarita Breakfast Point to talk about their website
- Clusters provide the opportunity for clubs to exchange ideas, what works and what does not

OTHER MATTERS RAISED

- Waiting lists
- Probus should be about the 3 Fs – Fun, Fellowship and Friendship
- How is a successful club defined? Is it the number of members it has (quantity), or the camaraderie of members even if it is a small club (quality)?

Des Reilly from Drummoyne Probus had put his hand up to be the next meeting Chair, to be confirmed. The next meeting was set for end-November and venue, both to be advised.

The meeting closed at 12.00pm.