

British Biophysical Society

Minutes of the 114th Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 13th May, 1998 at 1.00 pm. at the Biochemical Society, 59, Portland Place, London.

Present: , M. Ferenczi, G. Grant, S. Harding, E. Hounsell, G. Kneale, A. Lane, J. Molloy, A.C.T. North, M. Sansom, W.A. Thomas, J. Thornton (Chair), P. Vigny (guest), A. Wilkinson.

1. Apologies for absence: Rob Cooke, Judith Murray-Rust, Tony Rees, Gordon Roberts, John Helliwell, Robin Leatherbarrow, Len Fisher, Andrew Thomson, Tony Watts and Sheila Radford.

2. Guests.

Dr Guy Grant was welcomed as the representative of Irish biophysics, Professor Paul Vigny as the current chairman of EBSA.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

These were accepted without correction, apart from minor typographical errors.

4. Matters Arising.

(a) The chairman volunteered to write to Keith Fox and David Hulmes thanking them for their service on behalf of the committee. **(Action - JT)**

(b) Under 4. (ii) ACTN discussed the outcome of the Royal Society meeting on adherence to IUPAB. Up to 49% of costs were to be paid by the RS towards adherence. This would mean ~ \$3000pa. would be required from BBS. However if this caused problems special cases would be reviewed individually. The new arrangements could be phased in over several years. The committee still felt that in view of the number of BBS members and the small annual subscription the cost of adherence was still too large.

(c) Under 4. (iii), MF thought the wording relating to discussion of the last EBSA meeting did not truly reflect the opinion of attendees.

(d) Under 5 (a) we are still awaiting the final report and budget for the meeting on "Getting the Most from your Genome". **(Action - EH to contact David Jones)**

(e) Under 5. (g) MS apologised for the failure of communication with respect to the meeting on "Molecular Interactions of Biomembranes" a Faraday Discussion meeting of the RSC. The question arose as to whether LF should continue to be the representative of BBS on the RSC. **(ACTION - JT to talk to LF and the RSC if apt.)**

(f) Under 5. (l) Andrew Thomson should report to the next meeting on his ideas for a meeting on "High Throughput Techniques". **(Action- AT)**

(g) Under 5. (m) ACTN promised to circulate the 1st circular on the Dehli meeting to the committee. **(Action - ACTN)**

(h) Under 6. (c) concerning the drive for new members, JM-R should be reminded that she should ask each committee member to nominate 5 key people to be contacted in industry or academia. **(Action - JM-R)** ACTN pointed out that the UK was out of line with only ~500 current members of BBS. 2-3 thousand would be more appropriate for the size of the scientific community. The push for new members requires someone to be pro-active ie JM-R. Perhaps a multidisciplinary meeting once a year might attract new members. The membership list should be circulated to all members. **(Action JT to discuss with JM-R)**

5. Honorary Secretary's Report: presented by WAT.

(a) The BBS notepaper with the new logo is still in preparation, version II will be out shortly. **(Action - JM-R)**

(b) Some progress was reported with discounted journals for members through JM-R and Current Biology. Committee members (MS?) suggested that Elsevier might also provide discounts. The European Biophysics Journal was mentioned by MF, who should draft an appropriate advertisement to JM-R. **(Action - MF)**

6. Honorary Treasurer's Report:

In the absence of RL no report was tabled.

7. EBSA Meetings: Professor Paul Vigny

Professor Vigny described the current status of EBSA International meetings with respect to the organisation and direction for future meetings. The aim was to have ~~cheap~~, non-commercial meetings to allow young people to attend (650 people attended the last meeting in France which made a slight profit). Responsibility will be shared between the host nation and EBSA. The host society organises the finances. There should be considerable time for posters. IUPAB sponsors a plenary lecture, other expenses were limited to the 4 main speakers.

Meetings may be held every 2 years rather than the current 3 in future. If so Spain may host the 2002 meeting and the UK, 2004 or 2006. The BBS committee was enthusiastic about hosting the meeting. However if 2004 is the projected date we need to know well before the end of 2000. Very few sites in Britain can accommodate >600 people and need to be booked early. Warwick was mentioned as a likely venue. Professor Vigny was thanked for attending the meeting and for outlining EBSA policies.

8. Irish Sub-Section

Guy Grant described the current state of Irish biophysics. Currently there was no formal society or group representing Irish biophysics, although up to 100 university staff members were thought to be biophysics oriented. Although the Biochemical Society has a formal Irish sub-section an alternative format was suggested for biophysics, ie. a National Biophysics Group should be set up in Ireland, hopefully approved and part-funded by the Royal Irish Academy. This would provide a mechanism for getting people together and a representative would then be elected to sit on the BBS committee. The Irish group would include representatives from N. Ireland.

GG thought it might take about a year to set things up with the Academy. The committee thought the proposal excellent. A BBS sponsored meeting in 2000 was suggested. In addition the possibility of a BBS Visiting Lecturer was raised, giving talks in Cork, Dublin and Belfast, sponsored by BBS on a bi-annual basis, starting in 1999. Both these suggestions were approved by the committee. **(Action-GG)**

9. Honorary Meetings Secretary's Report: presented by EH.

(a) "Getting the Most from your Genome" Warwick, Dec. 1997. Report and budget still awaited from David Jones.

(b) "Structure, Function and Dynamics of Nucleic Acids", Surrey, Jan. 12-13, 1998. Final budget tabled by AL. Balance in credit £33.03.

(c) "5th Analytical Ultracentrifuge Users' Meeting", Nottingham, 26-27 March, 1998. Report tabled by SH. Budget to follow shortly. 80 delegates, successful meeting, £500 support by BBS.

(d) "Functions of Channels and Pores", Southampton, April 3rd, 1998. BBS offered £250 in support of this joint meeting(with the Membrane Group of the Biochemical Society). No answer yet.

Future Meetings

(e) "Computers in Structural Chemistry and Molecular Biology", Manchester, June 16-17, 1998. 40 registrants so far, slow bursary take-up, £1000 offered if required by BBS.

(f) "Structure and Mechanism of Molecular Machines" reorganised by JM to take place in Leeds, 5-7 January, 1999. Joint meeting between the Anatomical Society (GB&I) and BBS. Expect ~100 people. Offered £2K by Anatomical Soc. and £2K by BBS. There is a slight problem with the registration fee, which could include the cost of joining the BBS (or the Anatomical Soc.) . Possible poster prize from BBS? Details must be in the next Newsletter and the Biochem. Newsletter. UK speakers not yet organised. Budget and progress by the next BBS committee meeting. The BBS AGM will take place at this meeting, at lunchtime on 6th Jan. **(Action-JM)**

(g) "Enzymes which Interact with DNA", Glasgow, 7-9 April, 1999, organised by Keith Fox, GK and Bernard Connolly. Joint meeting with the Nucleic Acid Group of the Biochemical Soc and BBS. £25 registration for BBS and Biochemical Soc. members. The BS will give up to £4K and BBS up to £1K towards costs. Mechanics to be decided. Form to be in next Newsletter. GK to negotiate BBS contribution with Biochemical Soc. A possible solution would be to offer £500 towards costs, with permission to raise to £1000 if required. Bursaries for students' travel to be offered. The BBS form must be sorted out with the BS. **(Action-GK)**

(h) "Millennium Meeting", Dec., 1999. Speakers should be partly historical, partly current and partly looking to the future. Many names suggested. **(Action-JT)**

(i) "Solvation/Hydration Problem in Solution Biophysics", a 1 or 2 day meeting proposed by SH for April, 2000. Speakers suggested. Approved by Committee. nb. IUBMG, July 2000.

(j) A meeting on "Membranes" was raised as a possibility by MS and AW for Dec. 2000. With the EBSA meeting in Munich in summer 2000, Dublin in Spring 2001 could be an alternative.

(k) "Crystal Growth" suggested for Jan. 1999 as a 1 day meeting co-hosted by Glaxo-Wellcome, Organiser Onkar Singh.

10. AOB UKLSC Matters

In GCKR's absence, he asked the Committee to consider whether UKLSC was doing a good job and are there issues in which UKLSC should be pro-active. He also asked the Committee to suggest areas of biophysics which will be important in the future, explained in terms that can be put over to politicians.

The Committee were happy with the job done by UKLSC and with the efforts of the BBS rep. (GCKR). 3 most important advances in biophysics which could be relayed to politicians were; **Biomolecular structure determination, Imaging techniques in medicine and Human genome mapping.**

It was pointed out that the structure of DNA was determined some 40 years ago when there was little sign that anything useful would come of it. Among other things to look out for in the future were **single molecule biology, atomic force microscopy, targeting of therapeutic agents and the use of biomolecules at the nanomolecular level (biocomputers etc.)**

Finally it was pointed out that academic research is being damaged by the dual funding system, particularly with the battles with respect to overheads.

(11) Date of next meeting - Tuesday 29th September 1998.