

**The 172<sup>nd</sup> Committee Meeting of the British Biophysical Society, held from 12.30 pm – 4.00 pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017 in the Institute for Life Sciences, room 6005, at the University of Southampton**

## **Edited Minutes**

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**Present:** Anthony Watts (Chair), Tharin Blumenschein (Secretary), Guy Grant (Meetings Secretary), Jeremy Craven (Treasurer), Syma Khalid, Ann Dixon, David Scott, Olwyn Byron, Ellen Meek (EPSRC), Peter Smith (Institute for Life Sciences Director) and Alexandra Mant (Institute for Life Sciences external collaborations coordinator)

### **1 Tour of facilities for Biennial Meeting**

The committee saw the lecture theatres and other facilities for the 2018 Biennial Meeting, and it all looks very good.

### **2 Apologies:** John Seddon, Mark Leake, Svetlana Antonyuk, Robin Leatherbarrow, Peter Crowley, Tuomas Knowles, Ehmke Pohl, John Sanderson, Mark Wallace and Rob Cooke

### **3 EPSRC presentation**

Ellen Meek presented different aspects of the EPSRC strategy and plan, and emphasised that the EPSRC is looking to grow Biophysics in its portfolio. Currently, 60% of the EPSRC funding is directed to standard mode, while the other 40% is strategic. This proportion is expected to be maintained. When grants fall across two Research Councils, the reviewers are jointly chosen, and if funded, the proposals are partially funded by the other Research Council involved.

Ellen presented “Technology Touching Life”, a joint initiative across EPSRC, MRC and BBSRC to develop new tools and techniques which will address science-led questions. Current activities involve a joint website, and guidance for reviewers and panel.

#### 4 **BBS Biennial Meeting 2018**

A working version of the programme was circulated. Accommodation is currently booked for 120 people. The IoP will be involved and cover the costs for their speakers, and will help with organisation support for the meeting.

#### 5 **Approval of Minutes of the 171<sup>st</sup> meeting**

The Minutes were accepted with minor corrections.

#### 6 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### 7 **Chairman's Report** (Anthony Watts)

**RSB** – AW attended one of the dinners organized by the RSB to address issues such as Science Policy, Education Policy, Publishing, membership and public engagement interests, with suggestions for other areas very welcome. This dinner was for “science policy” and had attendees from various life sciences – AW was the only “biochemist/biophysicist”. A major issue is to resolve ways of targeting those in positions of policy making and decision making (BEIS, Government CSO, etc).

It is recommended that BBS should stay engaged with these initiatives and, after 1-2 years, reassess effectiveness of their actions.

**IUPAB/EBSA/BBS/IoP Congress:** Presentation prepared and a surplus (yet to be determined) will come to BBS.

**AGM:** The BBS Annual General Meeting took place in Edinburgh during the IUPAB/EBSA/BBS/IoP Congress and was chaired by AW.

**BBS Honorary Members' Dinner:** A dinner was organized in Edinburgh at the Sheraton for those Hon members able to attend (**present:** Judith Howard, Alan Cooper, Anthony North, Bonnie Wallace, Chris Dobson, Hagan Bayley, Jane Clarke, Paul Engel, Richard Henderson, Sheena Radford, Tom McLeish, Venki Ramakrishnan, Andrew Miller) and BBS committee members (**present:** David Scott, Ehmke Pohl, Gordon Roberts (Hon Member), Guy Grant, Jeremy Craven, John Sanderson, John Seddon, Robin Leatherbarrow, Rob Cooke, Svetlana Antonyuk, Tharin Blumenschein, Tony Watts, Peter Crowley, Mark Leake, Mark Wallace, Olwyn Byron), and some guests (Richard Strange, Jade Henderson, Valerie Watts, Rosemary Miller, Margaret North) who were attending the IUPAB/EBSA/BBS/IoP Congress. Tom McLeish (Hon Member) gave an after dinner speech and AW welcomed people and gave a short summary of the congress.

**Royal Society pairing scheme:** In an effort to engage MPs who are involved in S&T decisions, AW applied for, and has been selected to pair with an MP in December 2017. The intention is to talk with the MPs on the S&T Committee of the HoC.

**REF invitation:** BBS has been asked to suggest members of the next 2021 REF exercise and feedback information that can be considered in the assessment. Letter passed to Secretary and circulated to committee members for comment.

**Action:** Tony to contact Mark Wallace and see if he would coordinate this.

**Honorary Members:** The prospective new Hon members (Andrew Miller, U. Edinburgh; Paul Engel, UCD; Richard Cogdell, U. Glasgow) were contacted before the AGM in July, and then contacted and informed of their election following the AGM. All nominated Hon Members agreed to be nominated and all were adopted *nem con*.

**Committee membership** – After consultation with the Committee, Ann Dixon (Warwick) was invited to join the BBS committee. Ann has just completed a term on the RSC Biophysical Chemistry sub-group, and accepted the invitation.

**Biennial BBS Meeting** – The IoP and RSC sub-groups for biophysics have agreed to join the BBS Biennial Meeting in July 2018 in Southampton, to represent and include as much of the UK Biophysics community as possible.

**EBSA:** AW assumed EBSA Presidency from July 2017 until July 2019, then past President, 2021.

**Resignation:** with the new role on EBSA, AW is stepping down as the committee Chairman. Olwyn Byron will be the new Chair of the committee, and all the paperwork needs to be accordingly transferred to her.

The committee approved a vote of thanks to Tony Watts, for his dedication and excellent work done as Chairman of the British Biophysical Society. Despite stepping down, Tony will remain in the committee.

## 8 **Treasurer's Report** (Jeremy Craven)

The Society's accounts look healthy.

## 9 **EBSA/IUPAB Activities** (John Seddon)

**EBSA** – Tony Watts is now EBSA president. The past president is Helmut Grubmüller, and the vice president is Jesús Pérez-Gil.

**IUPAB** – has a new president elect, Manuel Prieto (Portugal). John Baenzinger (Canada) was elected Treasurer, and Juan Carmelo Gómez-

Fernández (Spain) was elected Secretary-General. Marcelo Morales (Brazil) has become president, and Zihe Rao, past president.

Kyoto was chosen as the location for the IUPAB Congress in 2023.

For the IUPAB/EBSA/BBS/loP Congress, EBSA and IUPAB awarded 60 travel bursaries each.

**10 IOP Activities (Mark Wallace)**

Nothing reported.

**11 Physics of Life Network (Olwyn Byron/Mark Leake)**

There was a PoLNET2 steering group meeting on 17 July (at the IUPAB/EBSA/BBS/loP Congress). OB and ML attended. Topics discussed included reports from workshops and sandpits, and future workshops, upcoming and in planning. There was also discussion of funding opportunities.

Further PoLNET links with funding bodies were also discussed, along with the importance of having a collective voice.

**12 RSC Biophysical Chemistry Group Activities**

The group has 266 RSC members, with a broad spectrum of research, and is chaired by Steven Lee (Cambridge). The RSC BCG lead the organization of the very successful first Faraday Joint Interest Group Conference, in April, with over 400 registered and over 80 speakers. The conference chair, Ann Dixon (BCG Secretary) was the meeting organizer, and the BCG also organized a parallel session on Biophysical Chemistry. The conference had good support from both RSC Faraday Division and 18 Industrial sponsors, but despite this success only broke even financially. In addition to this activity, the BCG also sponsored student bursaries for other conferences, including the IUPAB meeting in Edinburgh in August.

**13 Secretary's Report (Tharin Blumenschein)**

- 1) *Royal Society of Biology emails* – Newsletters have been circulated to the committee. A few consultations still taking place.
- 2) *Royal Society of Biology Diversity and Inclusion group* – had a meeting back in July, report circulated. Another meeting late September, TB will try to join via conference call but has a conflicting meeting for the first half. There will be a week of (mostly) virtual activities in November.
- 3) *Cambridge Theory of Living Matter Group* – a non-profit researcher network with the aim of organising seminars and workshops to

bring together theorists and experimentalists at the interface between Biology and Physics, mainly PhD students and postdocs. 300 researchers have signed up so far. They have added a link to our webpage in theirs. They organise pub tutorials, in which topics are explained for people who are not familiar with them – in the pub (cost £100), and General Meetings, with 2 external speakers (£300). Have in the past been supported by Gurdon Institute, Cavendish Lab and The Company of Biologists. Maybe sponsor 1 GM or 2 pub meets? They have also started thinking about organising a day-long workshop.

- 4) *Digital poster sessions* – Prezzidium is offering to sponsor a digital poster session at the meeting next year. Their idea is that the posters can be viewed on screens or online, and can be also made available for longer than the conference itself. Posters can be browsed, then arrangements can be made to meet the author if desired.
- 5) *AGM* took place at the IUPAB Congress.
- 6) *Biophysics Week* – Dates for next year are 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> March, and this year the Biophysical Society is inviting partner organisations. “We ask that partners agree to promote Biophysics Week through the following means (as applicable): on your website, in your newsletters, on your events calendar, and in your emails to members. Also, we ask that you encourage your members to get involved by planning a Biophysics Week [affiliate event](#) or by participating in one already scheduled. The Biophysical Society will help advertise affiliate events and will offer a complimentary Biophysics Week t-shirt to event organizers who register their events by January 15, 2018, with the Biophysical Society. In return, the Biophysical Society will feature your organization’s name and logo on the [Biophysics Week website](#), will provide recognition in the Biophysics Week newsletter, and will distribute materials developed by your organization as part of Biophysics Week.”

## 14 **Meetings Secretary’s Report** (Guy Grant)

### **2017**

*16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July: Joint IUPAB / EBSA / BBS / IoP Congress*, Edinburgh. Went very well. Congratulations to the organisers, especially Tony Watts.

*10/11 Hydrogen Bonds in DNA – 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* (Nottingham – RSC/BS – Steve Harding). The committee agreed that this meeting can be BBS badged, and to support a poster prize or lecture.

*December – Cancer Biophysics, from the lab to the clinic*, London (Pinar Onganer, University of Westminster).

### **2018**

22-23 February – Joint meeting with the Belgian Biophysical Society, Brussels. (Andre Matagne). The BBS has agreed to provide £1600 to cover travel costs for UK speakers.

26-27 February – *The Artificial Cell* (Royal Society, Milton Keynes – Barbara Ciani) – the BBS will provide a poster prize.

April or November – *Inaugural Meeting of the Irish Biophysical Society.* (Peter Crowley)

11-13 July: *BBS Biennial Meeting*, Southampton. (Syma Khalid)

December: possible meeting

**Action:** Guy

## **2019**

April – Joint meeting with NMRDG.

**Action:** Tharin to email Stephen Byard

July – *EBSA Congress, Madrid*

December meeting – volunteers required

## **2020**

July *Biennial Meeting* – the committee agreed that a joint meeting with the Irish Biophysical Society would be a great idea.

### **15 Newsletter/Publicity Officer** (Syma Khalid/John Sanderson)

Nothing to report.

### **16 Website** (Mark Wallace)

Nothing reported.

### **17 Membership** (Ehmke Pohl)

(i) Memberships enjoyed a healthy boost before the IUPAB meeting but naturally slowed down over the summer. We are in a period of sustained and healthy growth. Future meetings will always produce a boost – point (ii) below notwithstanding.

(ii) EP requested that all committee members encourage PhD students and postdocs in their group to consider BBS membership, pointing out the advantages in terms of travel bursaries, poster prizes etc.

(ii) Corporate Memberships: This is a good time to get started, EP spoke to a couple of companies at the IUPAB meeting (Molecular Dimension, Nanotemper etc.) and they were certainly interested. Ehmke asked for suggestions.

**18 Irish Sub-section (Peter Crowley)**

Funds may be provided from EBSA to help the start of the Irish Biophysical Society.

**19 Honorary members**

Richard Cogdell (Glasgow), Paul Engel (UC Dublin) and Andrew Miller (Stirling) were approved as honorary members at the AGM.

**20 AOB**

The Howard Prize Lecture from the Biophysical Sciences Institute, Durham University, will be presented by Dr. Susan Cox, Kings College London on October 30th. It would be great if committee members were able to join them and celebrate.

Conditions for membership of the committee were discussed. It was agreed that a review of attendance and apologies will be conducted.

The Young Investigator Medal and Award needs to be advertised, to be awarded in 2018.

**21 Date of Next Meeting**

The next committee meeting will be in January 2018. The date will be decided after a Doodle poll.

**Action:** Tharin to organise poll

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