

**The 178<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting of the British Biophysical Society, held from  
12.30 pm – 4.30 pm on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019 in the York Plasma Institute,  
GN/011 Alfven meeting room, at the University of York**

## **Edited Minutes**

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019

**Present:** Olwyn Byron (Chair), Tharin Blumenschein (Secretary), Ann Dixon (Treasurer), Guy Grant (Meetings Secretary), Tony Watts, Mark Leake, Dave Scott, John Sanderson

**1** **Apologies:** Syma Khalid, Mark Wallace, John Seddon, Ehmke Pohl.

**2** **Approval of Minutes of the 177<sup>th</sup> meeting**

The Minutes were accepted with minor corrections.

**3** **Actions and Matters Arising**

The awards criteria were discussed and edited. See final versions as appendices to these minutes.

Tony has contacted Jim Al-Khalili, and he will let us know if he will be able to attend the Biennial Meeting. Jim has agreed to publicise Biophysics Week on social media. Tony will also contact Brian Cox.

**Action:** Tony

Tony will send Ann the information about the MGMS sponsorship for the IUPAB Congress, which was never paid.

**Action:** Tony

Actions table was updated with other actions that were completed.

**4** **Chair's Report** (Olwyn Byron)

### **BPS Ambassador**

Olwyn applied for the BPS Ambassador Program and was selected as the BPS Ambassador for the United Kingdom. BPS Ambassadors play a key role in promoting biophysics, fostering conversations around biophysics, and sharing relevant local content with the Society so that it can be shared with BPS membership. Olwyn views the role of BPS

Ambassador as a fantastic opportunity to advocate for and promote biophysics to scientists and policy makers at the national level so that our discipline has a bright future and the resources required for its expansion and development are supported by government and other national stakeholders. Her term will begin in 2020, conclude in 2023 and may be renewable for one additional term, at her discretion.

#### Requirements of Ambassadors

BPS Ambassadors agree to:

- Attend the first BPS Annual Meeting that occurs during their Ambassador term, exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis  
*Olwyn will attend the San Diego meeting. BPS will provide \$1,500 (USD) travel stipend and complimentary registration.*
- Write at least 2 articles/posts for BPS blog/newsletter per year of their term.  
*In 2020 Olwyn will write 1 article/post on the 60th anniversary meeting and perhaps one on the impact of Brexit as viewed by the BBS. Article could go into "The Biophysicist".*
- Serve as BPS point of contact in country/region & assist current and potential BPS members seeking societal information
- Host/participate in a Biophysics Week event every year of their term  
*The Scottish structural biology community meeting in Glasgow in March 2020 will be badged as a Biophysics Week 2020 event. BPS will reimburse Ambassadors for reasonable costs related to event planning, membership development, and printing.*
- Disseminate BPS information & program/meeting opportunities to members & interested parties in country/region.

The committee agreed that we should have a BPS section on our website, and a regular slot in our Newsletter for this. We should also use this connection to publicise BBS activities to BPS members.

**Action:** Mark W. and John Sanderson

- Provide an annual report to BPS detailing activities Ambassador has undertaken during calendar year
- Participate in at least one formal check-in with BPS per quarter for duration of Ambassador term.

#### Expectations of Ambassadors

BPS Ambassadors are also expected to:

- Seek opportunities to advocate for & promote biophysics to local scientists & policy makers
- Keep abreast of developments political and legal activities related to science in your country/region

- Provide alerts to BPS about important conferences & events taking place within their country/region of representation  
*Start with BBS 60th!*
- Represent BPS at a Thematic Meeting, if it is in their country/region  
*Look out for local Thematic Meetings – BPS will provide complimentary registration*
- Seek to promote biophysics by working closely with the region's biophysics communities & develop relationships with other like-minded scientific societies & communities  
*Who are our biophysics communities? We should bring new communities forming around emerging areas into our meetings, so we become their natural home.*  
*Like-minded scientific societies/communities: Biochemical Society, IoP, CCPX, PoLNET....*
- Seek and, when possible, execute opportunities for BPS to collaborate with individuals or likeminded scientific societies on programs or events in their county/region.  
*The PoLNET interaction is an excellent example – e.g. this year's December meeting. Other examples are meetings we support via bursaries etc.*

#### Biophysical Society Commitments to Ambassadors

In exchange for their commitment to serve a full term as a BPS Ambassador, BPS will:

- Provide a max of \$1,500 (USD) travel stipend to each Ambassador to attend 1 BPS Annual Meeting during their terms
- Provide a complimentary registration to 1 BPS Annual Meeting and to any Thematic Meeting in the Ambassador's country or region
- Recognise Ambassadors at the BPS Annual Meeting & on BPS website & newsletter
- Provide special gift and program materials to Ambassadors
- Provide Ambassadors with programmatic support to ensure they can effectively contact BPS members in their country/region
- Reimburse Ambassadors for reasonable costs related to event planning, membership development, and printing
- Provide Ambassadors access to an international conference call line to ensure smooth coordination between Ambassadors & Society staff.

The committee has agreed that the BBS can contribute, at least partly, to the extra costs incurred for going to BPS meetings and carrying out the duties expected of the post.

#### Biophysics Week 2020

The Scottish structural biology community met for the first time in many years on 12 Sep in St Andrews. It was agreed that they would meet twice each year from now on. The next meeting will be in Glasgow in March 2020 and will be badged as a Biophysics Week 2020 event. Olwyn will apply to the BPS Membership Committee for financial support

(up to \$500) for this as a BPS-sponsored networking event (they support these events globally). The venue and format of the event are up to the organiser; BPS is looking for ideas that will promote interactions between member and non-member biophysicists in geographic areas not well served by the Society's Annual Meeting – I think Scotland counts!

#### "Join the BBS" slide set

At the Scottish Structural Biology Meeting Olwyn presented a new "Join the BBS" slide set and distributed BBS postcards to encourage colleagues to join. These slides will be made available to BBS committee members via our webpage.

**Action:** Mark Wallace

Olwyn would like to hear what people think of the slides and is happy to modify them if colleagues have suggestions.

#### BBS Committee refresh

On 22 July Olwyn emailed two committee members to ask if they wished to remain on the committee. The committee thanks Tuomas Knowles, who is stepping down, for his valuable service in the committee.

#### RSB Christmas Parliamentary Reception 16 Dec

Olwyn is representing the BBS at the RSB Christmas Parliamentary Reception on 16 Dec.

#### Other things

Guy's role in developing Biophysics education nationally is still awaiting the reshuffle of roles within the committee. Syma will take on the newsgroup role, freeing John Sanderson to be the meetings secretary.

**Action:** Olwyn to discuss with Syma

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### Treasurer's Report (Ann Dixon)

1. **Balances:** The Society's accounts look healthy.
2. **Gift Aid:** Ann has been added as an official for our organisation to the HMRC records, and has drafted a letter to ask whether Gift Aid can still be received from the donations made last year, and whether we can claim Gift Aid from membership payments. She has sent this letter and is awaiting a response.
3. **Payments:** We are up-to-date on all claims and payments.
4. **IUPAB Congress:** We have now been paid in full from the IOP for the IUPAB/EBSA Congress in Edinburgh.
5. **Bursary budget:** Ann will work with Guy and other committee members on defining a budget for bursaries given out by the BBS. Some key parameters we need to decide on are the amount of the bursary, who can apply, and what the bursary will cover. We should also define our requirements regarding the level of

participation in the meeting, reporting after the meeting, and how the BBS is acknowledged.

The committee agreed that in years when an EBSA Congress takes place, bursaries will be offered only for the EBSA Congress.

Travel to the biennial meeting is not as costly.

For these and other meetings, eligibility for a bursary requires being a BBS member, having an abstract accepted at the conference, and acknowledging the BBS in presentations.

Commercial meetings will not be eligible for bursaries.

Recipients of a bursary will be required to provide a report from the meeting.

**Action:** Ann to look at what we can reasonably afford.

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

**EBSA** – The EBSA Congress took place in Madrid in July.

- There was a pre-congress summer school, including 2 British students.
- Over 1000 attendees at the Congress.
- Tony Watts is now past president of EBSA until the Congress in Vienna in July 2021.
- There will be a membranes workshop in June 2021, in San Sebastian.
- EBSA committee will need new UK members in the future.
- Elena Pohl is the president elect, and Jesus Perez Gil is the president. John Seddon is the secretary, Tony Wilkinson (York) is the Treasurer, and Rob Gilbert is the editor of the EBJ.
- EBSA subscription was paid in June.

**IUPAB** – the next Congress will be in October 2020, in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, organized by the Brazilian Biophysical Society and the Brazilian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

- A pre-congress workshop for students will take place in São Paulo, heavily subsidised.
- Marcelo Morales, the president, has become Secretary for Research and Development Policies in the Brazilian government. Manuel Prieto is the president elect.
- The 2024 IUPAB Congress will take place in Kyoto.

## 7 **IOP Activities** (Mark Leake)

Mark Leake is the new secretary for the IoP Biological Physics Group.

**Action:** Mark Leake to speak to Mark Wallace about who should have the role of IoP liaison

Meetings coming up are:

Advanced Photonics Techniques in Biology: Cutting Edge, Open Source and AI, Manchester, September 2020;

Physics meets Biology 2021, Oxford, September 2021.

There is a video competition, with a cash prize, on Biological Physics.

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

PoLNET2 finishes in December 2019/January 2020.

PoLNET is organising a final Town Hall meeting for December, to take place at the Royal Society on 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> December. Adam Perriman will give a BBS badged lecture. Olwyn will introduce him and present the advantages of BBS membership. We will take postcards, etc.

**9 RSC Biophysical Chemistry Group Activities**

Mark Wallace was not able to attend, action points to be kept in actions table.

**Action:** Mark Wallace

**10 Royal Society of Biology Activities** (Tharin Blumenschein)

- 1) *Newsletters continue to be circulated to the committee.*
- 2) I attended the AGM on 15<sup>th</sup> May. Usual approval of accounts etc. – a news item describing it is on the RSB website. The Charter Lecture was given by Kim Hardie on ways bacteria evade antibiotics, including the formation of biofilms, and it was very interesting.
- 3) *Royal Society of Biology Diversity and Inclusion group* – continues happening but I haven't been able to join any meetings.
- 4) *Member organisation Twilight event* about being relevant to industry. Tony attended, I circulated the slides recently.

Key points highlighted by Tony were that the successful models included scientific sessions in their meetings that were of interest to industry, although not necessarily targeted to them. Lunchtime workshops for exhibitors were also welcome.

- 5) *Parliamentary reception for Biology Week* – taking place 9<sup>th</sup> October, Syma and Tony to attend.

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

- 1) *Biochemical Society summer party* – it was a really nice event, despite the on and off rain, and it was good to see some acquaintances. On the more relevant side, the Biochemical Society released their 3-year strategy, and there was a lot about working with other societies. We should keep this in mind and approach them with concrete proposals.

Rivka Isaacson is currently chair of the Research Area II: Molecular Structure & Function committee – we could propose a joint one-day meeting in 2021, to be organised by Tharin, Ann and Rivka.

**Action:** Tharin to approach Rivka

- 2) *Biophysics Week 2020* – 23-27 March.

**Action:** all to organise events

- 3) *Privacy notice* – the Metals in Biology network, based in Durham, has a very good privacy notice. Do we want to have something similar?

**Action:** Tharin to circulate to committee for comment. Also check JISC

- 4) *AGM* was held in Oxford, on 9<sup>th</sup> September. We had 11 people attending, if I remember correctly. Officers were elected, including the new role with John Sanderson as Meetings Secretary. We will need a transition time. Honorary members were also approved.

- 5) *Sexual harassment at conferences* – if you're on scientific Twitter, you must have seen it as a hot topic. One of the key things seems to be having a policy and a clear place to report. Should we have a small notice in the programme for Nottingham saying that "Sexual harassment, racial abuse or any other form of harassment will not be tolerated. Any occurrences should be reported to..."?

The committee agreed that a short notice on the programme would be a good idea. In Nottingham, any occurrences should be reported to Dave or Claire, as meeting organisers.

- 6) *Exchanged emails with Olwyn and Karis about the PoLNET meeting in December*. More details were given in the Chair's Report.

**Meetings Secretary's Report** (Guy Grant)**2019**

*December meeting* – Joint meeting with PoLNET workshop which is being organised for 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Action:** Olwyn to coordinate with PoLNET

## 2020

*July Biennial Meeting, Nottingham – 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020.*

Title: “*Structure in 4 dimensions*”.

Rooms for talks, posters and exhibitors have been booked, as well as accommodation, initially for 100 people. Speaker slots are gradually being filled.

**Action:** Dave Scott to circulate letter requesting sponsorship

**Action:** All committee members to send letter to contacts

Ideas for an outreach event were also discussed. There is infrastructure from the University of Nottingham that could help us with that.

Ideas for evening events have been discussed.

**Action:** Dave Scott to send a budget spreadsheet to Guy

*8-10 September – Faraday Discussion on Membrane-peptide interaction, Burlington House, organised by John Seddon and Paul O’Shea.*

*December – possible allostery meeting in Glasgow, organised by Guy and Alan Cooper.*

**Action:** Guy

## 2021

*24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> July, EBSA Congress, Vienna*

*Joint one-day meeting on NMR for Structure and Function with Biochemical Society.*

**Action:** Tharin and Ann

## 2022

*Joint BBS Biennial Meeting/Irish Biophysical Society meeting, organised by Guy and Peter. (Moved from 2021 as EBSA funds are not available then.)*

**Action:** Guy and Peter

We need more smaller meetings in the pipeline, organised by members. Perhaps we could organise a publicity drive calling for meetings.

**Action:** Guy to craft a text for the newsletter, Twitter etc.

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**Newsgroup/Publicity Officer** (Syma Khalid/John Sanderson)

John has a list of emails to send, many to be sent as individual items. In the future, a link to the privacy notice should be added to the bottom of the email.

Syma was not able to attend to report.

14            **Website** (Mark Wallace)

Mark was not able to attend to report.

15            **Membership** (Ehmke Pohl)

Ehmke wasn't present at the meeting, but sent a report by email.

Not much to report, slow but steady new members, the website link was down for a while but this is now sorted out. Almost all people go for standing orders, but we have not checked if they actually pay. Ehmke suggests doing that in January.

Overall, it would be nice to have another membership drive, i.e. an initiative led by all members of the committee to entice colleagues and students to join. Small bursaries at the beginning of a career are always the best way.

We have not tackled the corporate membership yet, something that is worth doing but Ehmke simply didn't find the time to do. If there are any volunteers on the committee to help him out that would be great.

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

Stephen Mann has been suggested as a speaker for an Irish tour.

**Action:** Guy to chase him for a tour next term.

18            **Honorary members**

Three names suggested as honorary members for 2020.

**Action:** Olwyn to contact them and ask if they're willing to be nominated

**Action:** all to think if we need more nominees

19            **AOB**

Guy suggested that we circulate meeting papers electronically, instead of on paper. The committee agreed.

20            **Date of Next Meeting**

The next committee meeting will be in January 2020, in Durham. The date will be decided after a Doodle poll.