

**The 179th Committee Meeting of the British Biophysical Society, held from
12.30 pm – 4.30 pm on Monday 27th January 2020 in the Pennington Room, Grey
College, at Durham University**

Edited Minutes

Date: 27th January 2020

Present: Olwyn Byron (Chair), Tharin Blumenschein (Secretary), Ann Dixon (Treasurer), Guy Grant (Meetings Secretary), Mark Leake, Dave Scott, John Sanderson, Ehmke Pohl, Mark Wallace. Syma Khalid joined via Skype.

1 **Apologies:** John Seddon, Peter Crowley, Robin Leatherbarrow, Rob Cooke.

2 **Approval of Minutes of the 178th meeting**

The Minutes were accepted with minor corrections.

3 **Actions and Matters Arising**

Mark Leake will be the contact for the IoP, while Mark Wallace will focus more on liaising with the RSC.

Action: Mark Leake and Mark Wallace

We could invite Steve Lee (RSC) to the biennial meeting in Nottingham.

Actions table was updated with other actions that were completed.

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

Chris Dobson

The BBS is sad to note the passing of BBS Honorary member Chris Dobson. The London NMR Forum meeting on 26 September was held in his memory. The BBS Meetings Secretary, Guy Grant, was kind enough to represent the BBS at the memorial service for Chris Dobson this month. Many thanks to Guy for doing this.

BPS Ambassador

Olwyn participated in a BPS Ambassador Welcome & Orientation Zoom meeting with BPS administrators, the CEO, Chair Elect and the 3 other newly elected ambassadors. They discussed what they hope to achieve

during their tenure as ambassadors and how the BPS can help with this. Matters arising from these discussions relevant to this committee meeting are:

Should the BBS catalyse

- a UK BPS student chapter? These exist outwith the US in other countries that have their own Biophysical Societies (e.g. Canada).
- A BPS thematic meeting in the UK?

In her capacity as a BPS Ambassador, Olwyn is participating in the next BPS meeting in San Diego. At this meeting, Ambassadors will be introduced in the same session as the BPS Lecture and Awards. This will be a good opportunity to let UK scientists taking part in the BPS meeting know more about the BBS. Olwyn and other committee members attending could take BBS postcards and target posters from UK-based presenters at the Biophysical Society meeting,

Action: Olwyn, Tharin, Syma, John Sanderson

Biophysics Week 2020

The Scottish Structural Biology Community Meeting in April 2020 has been successfully funded (to a maximum level of \$500) by the BPS Membership Committee as a networking event (<https://www.biophysics.org/upcoming-networking-events>) and will be badged as a Biophysics Week 2020 event. Other committee members could organise other events.

BBS Committee refresh

Rob Cooke does not feel he can dedicate the time required to continue to be a member of the BBS committee properly and thinks it would be for the best if he did step down. Rob confirmed that he has always enjoyed being involved in the work of the BBS and would be happy to help out in the future if needed. On behalf of the committee, Olwyn thanked Rob very much for all he has done for the BBS and assured him that the committee would indeed call on him for help from time to time in the future. The committee approved a vote of thanks to Rob.

Now that two committee members have stepped down, we should start to recruit a postdoctoral and a graduate student committee member. Olwyn will send a mailshot to heads of department mentioning the calls for new committee members and award nominations. The new deadline for awards will be 31st March, this needs to be updated on the website as well.

Action: Olwyn, Mark Wallace

RSB Christmas Parliamentary Reception

Olwyn represented the BBS at the RSB Christmas Parliamentary Reception on 16 December.

Olwyn had quite a long chat with Stephen Metcalfe, opening the channels of communication. She also talked with a few others including Stephen Benn, who is Director of Parliamentary Affairs for the Royal Society of Biology and a Vice-President of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, which is a forum for scientific and technological issues in the

UK. The P&SC enables a link between UK parliamentarians, scientific bodies, science-based industry, and academia. It informs members of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords on matters pertaining to public interest and national policy development. Olwyn mentioned to Stephen Benn that it might have been helpful to have some sort of briefing in advance of the event, but he advised her that it was just a social occasion.

[RSB Trustee vacancy: call for nominations](#)

Last week Olwyn received an email from Ana Ilic, Development Officer at the RSB, inviting the BBS to nominate someone to serve as a Trustee on the RSB Council. This is apparently one of the best ways to help to influence how the RSB delivers its charitable aims and works in partnership with the BBS. This year there is one vacancy open to representatives of RSB Member Organisations (MOs) at the Full Member level. The BBS may nominate any person to represent us, provided they are a member of the BBS.

Nominations must include the names and signatures of two other BBS members, supporting the application and a personal statement from the nominee. Nomination forms and role descriptions are available to download from the RSB website. The deadline is 10am 21 February 2020. In the event of more than one nomination there will be an election.

Circulate the vacancy to committee members and honorary members.

Action: Tharin

[Astbury Conversation 2020](#)

The Astbury Conversation 2020 will take place at University of Leeds, 23 & 24 March 2020. In 2018 BBS contributed 2 bursaries ≤ £200 to cover registration, accommodation and travel for a UK participant. BBS also arranged for material to go into the welcome pack and for a stand at the event. We are going to support these bursaries again. Tharin and Syma are planning to attend, Syma can bring the banner with her.

5 **Treasurer's Report** (Ann Dixon)

1. **Balances:** The balance in all accounts remains healthy.
2. **Gift Aid:** Ann has yet to receive a response from HMRC, she will keep chasing.
3. **Payments:** Ann is up-to-date on all claims and payments.
4. **A summary of previous year's finance** was presented to the committee. For the BBS Biennial meeting, we will offer bursaries to BBS members only, to cover travel expenses only. Requests should be made to Guy.

6 **EBSA/IUPAB Activities** (John Seddon was absent, Tony sent an email).

EBSA – The EBSA Congress will take place in Vienna in July 2021. The organisers are looking for suggestions of speakers.

- There are travel fellowships available for UK workers to visit other European countries.
- Brexit will not affect the UK membership of EBSA.
- EBSA membranes workshop being organised for June, in Spain.
- Croatian Biophysics School will take place in late August/early September.

Advertise the travel fellowships, workshop and Biophysics School on the newsgroup and social media.

Action: John Sanderson and Syma

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.

- There are generous bursaries for students to attend a post-congress one-week workshop in São Paulo.
- Michele Auger young scientists' award received over 30 nominations, 1 from the UK. It's a very generous award and we should look into nominations in 3 years' time.
- IUPAB is doing much better financially now, with the new committee.
- Nominations for the new officers and President are due by Easter and voting will take place at the Congress in October by representatives.
- BBS will need to nominate two voting members for the General Assembly. (EBSA will have 3.) Tharin and Syma are planning to attend.

7 IOP Activities (Mark Leake)

There are a number of meetings sponsored by the IoP Biophysical Group. We should advertise them on the newsgroup and Twitter.

Action: John Sanderson and Syma

Meetings coming up in 2020 are:

- *Advanced Photonics Techniques in Biology*, Early September, Manchester, 2-day meeting;
- *Single molecule bacteriology*, 13-16th September, Oxford, 4-day meeting;
- *The Physics of Brains*, York, 2-day meeting;
- *Advanced Photonics Techniques in Biology: Cutting Edge*, Open Source and AI, Manchester, September 2020;
- *Liquids/complex fluids graduate school*, 'Fundamentals of active growing matter', 1-day meeting, Edinburgh;
- *'International Conference on DNA Programming and Molecular Computing'*, 1-day meeting, Oxford.

There will be a video competition, with a cash prize, on Biological Physics:

- Maximum 3 minutes
- Deadline 27th March
- Self-produced by early career members
- With permission of the PI
- The competition will be open to the members of the Biological Physics group
- Pitched at physics undergraduate level

There was a discussion that we should have some joint meetings to avoid spreading the community over too many meetings. Maybe we could organise a joint meeting for 2022, for our biennial meeting. The next IoP BPG committee meeting is in a few months.

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

[Building Collaboration at the Physics of Life Interface](#)

- It is anticipated a second funding call of similar scale will be announced in 2021, for 2022 grant start dates.

[PoLNET December meeting](#)

The PoLNET2 Town Hall Meeting took place on 3 December 2019 in the Wellcome Trust Lecture Hall at the Royal Society. The BBS hosted a super lecture from Professor Adam Perriman (BBS Young Investigator Awardee 2016). The whole day was excellent. Olwyn, Tharin, Ann and John Sanderson attended.

Community sustainability beyond January 2020

- After the December meeting it was announced that PoLNET3 has been funded by the EPSRC. Details to follow. The Rosetrees Trust has also funded Physics of Medicine.

9 RSC Biophysical Chemistry Group Activities

The RSC Biophysical Chemistry committee is looking for new members. It'd be good to have a BBS committee member joining their committee.

Action: Mark Wallace or John Sanderson

10 Royal Society of Biology Activities (Tharin Blumenschein)

1) *Newsletters continue to be circulated to the committee.*

2) *Royal Society of Biology Diversity and Inclusion group* – Tharin attended a meeting during the strike. It was very interesting to finally be able to attend a meeting in person, and pretty useful. The discussions often are around sharing good practice. For instance, the Physiological Society had preferred pronoun stickers at their conferences. The Society for Applied Microbiology has a Diversity post in their committee, and is holding “community conversations” around D&I topics.

We could have an event code of conduct for conferences, which is on the website and linked to from the registration page.

There will be a workshop (by STEMM-DAC or the Athena Forum) on writing good nomination cases, for people interested in increasing the diversity of awards nominees. Digital Science is happy to train people to edit Wikipedia.

IoP is forming a harassment working group with other organisations across the Athena Forum. The Royal Academy of Engineering has a good statement.

STEMM-DAC is pioneering an idea of a disability “passport” that can be taken from one employer to the next. They also have a good website and resources. The Science Council has a checklist and spreadsheet available.

There were ideas for a D&I meeting, with networking and workshops such as bystander training. Some discussion centred around who this meeting would be for – preaching to the converted? – but the overall idea was that good practice could then be disseminated back to the member organisations.

11 Secretary's Report (Tharin Blumenschein)

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

- 2) We should prepare a “Why join the BBS” flier, based on the content of the slides that Olwyn has already prepared. We can distribute them at the Astbury meeting.

Action: Olwyn

- 3) *Privacy notice* – the Metals in Biology network, based in Durham, has a very good example of a privacy notice. https://sites.durham.ac.uk/mib-nibb/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2019/11/E3B_privacy-new-logo-v3.0.pdf

- 4) *Emeritus member* – I have received an email from Pradeep Luther asking to become an emeritus member. He has been a member for many years and retired at the end of 2016. He emailed in December because of the standing order coming in January, so we also need to decide if we want to reimburse him if he paid in January.

The committee has approved his emeritus membership, and his fee will be refunded. Tharin will inform him.

Action: Tharin and Ann

- 5) *Ex Ordo* contacted Tharin. They are a company that provides conference service, especially for peer review of abstracts. They receive the abstracts, organise log in for reviewers to approve etc, create the programme and have a mobile app. They can also handle registration. £1500 for the review process up to 125 attendees.

- 6) *IUPAB subscription* – The Royal Society is no longer automatically paying for (part of?) our subscription to IUPAB; there is now an application form that needs to be completed by 29th February. They also had booked a meeting for last week, but that got cancelled as it was such short notice that no one could attend...

Action: Ann

12 **Meetings Secretary’s Report** (Guy Grant)

2019

December meeting – The PoLNET meeting was a very good meeting, BBS committee members distributed postcards about the BBS, and showed the “Why join the BBS” slides.

2020

July Biennial Meeting, Nottingham – 1st to 3rd July 2020.

Title: “*Biophysics in time and space*”.

The website is now live. We need to advertise.

Action: John Sanderson and Syma, everyone else to use their networks

Create a Facebook event for it.

Action: Tharin

We should try to get more sponsors.

Action: Tharin, John Sanderson, Syma, Olwyn to talk to exhibitors at
BPS

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 –allostery meeting in Glasgow, is being organised by Guy and Alan Cooper.

Action: Guy

2021

24th-28th July, EBSA Congress, Vienna

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

Action: Tharin and Ann

Meeting in Ireland – “If we cannot form a Society, at least we can build a community”. A general meeting, without EBSA funding, BBS can fund some British speakers.

Action: Guy and Peter

2022

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.

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

John has a few items to send.

Our Twitter account seems to be doing well. We should organise a virtual event for Biophysics Week – a poster Twitter conference, or a “Describe your PhD” competition. The best date is Thursday 26th March.

Draft an invitation for participation, making clear that students and postdocs should seek the supervisor’s permission before sharing data.

Action: Syma.

14 Website (Mark Wallace)

Lots of updates were done, the site is almost current. Instructions to access to the committee members area needs to be circulated again.

Action: Mark

34sp will cover our fees again, from their charitable programme. We need to add an acknowledgement to them on the website.

Action: Mark

15 Membership (Ehmke Pohl)

Last year there wasn't a proper meeting in December, so we had fewer new members join. We need to check that new members who joined in the last year have now paid by standing order.

Action: Ann and Ehmke

We need separate members and non-members rates for the biennial meeting.

Action: Dave

17 Irish Sub-section (Peter Crowley)

We need to ask Peter about the Irish tour.

Action: Guy

18 Honorary members

[Honorary Members website](#)

Olwyn and Mark W. updated the Honorary Members section of the BBS website recently.

[Honorary Members 2020](#)

The following were nominated as HMs by the committee, invited to accept the nomination by Olwyn and accepted the nomination.

- Professor Steve Harding, University of Nottingham
- Professor Simon Phillips, Research Complex at Harwell
- Professor Alison Roger, Macquarie University

These nominations will be put forward for approval at the next BBS AGM (in Nottingham). Alison was also invited to give a talk at the BBS 60th Anniversary meeting in Nottingham and has agreed to do so.

[Honorary Members 2021](#)

Committee members are encouraged to start thinking of nominations for 2021 and are particularly encouraged to identify potential female HMs.

Action: all to think of nominees

19 AOB

None.

20 Date of Next Meeting

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