

**Redacted minutes of Council Meeting
2:00, Monday 22nd February 2010
9 Red Lion Court, London, EC4A 3EF**

Present Members of Council: Mr Ken Allen, Professor David Coates (Honorary Secretary), Professor Keith Gull, Ms Liz Lakin, Dr Pat Goodwin, Professor Martin Humphries, Dr William Marshall (Honorary Treasurer), Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell (President, Chair of the meeting). Observers: Dr Mark Downs (Chief Executive), Professor Robert Freedman (Chairman, Education, Training and Policy Committee), Dr Chris Kirk (Chief Executive, Biochemical Society), Jen Crook (notetaker)

Apologies Professor Julia Buckingham, Professor John Coggins, Professor Pete Downes, Sir David Read, Ms Sue Thorn, Dr Aileen Allsop and Professor Malcolm Press.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2. The Chief Executive's report included the following points:

- Mark Downs (MD) reported there had been a lot of change, with staff settling and new structures and Committees such as the Animal Licence Committee and Qualified Persons Register being revised. Progress had been made on the financial system.
- MD had written to biologists named in New Year's Honours list. This had received very positive feedback.
- Council approved MD's proposal to award an Honorary Fellowship to Professor Karube and try to establish a number of Fellows in Japan. A further suggestion was India.
- Sue Assinder had been active in setting up a new focus group for Practical Biology. All were happy with Practical Biology becoming a more substantial campaign.
- Meetings had been set up with three qualifications authorities regarding A-level Biology syllabuses.
- The Royal Society of Chemistry had been leading on a general election debate on science policy, working with the Society. This was planned for 9 March.
- The animal licence guidance for course organisers was being reviewed. Professor Paul Brain, Chairman of that Committee for over 20 years, has stepped down; he had also previously been a member of Council. The Society was looking to appoint a new Chairman.
- MD reported on a proposal to establish a Foetal Morphology Register. Approximately six contacts from industry have agreed to form an accreditation panel.
- Council agreed that operationally all the registers and animal license work should be managed by MD with the Education, Training and Policy (ETP) committee receiving a yearly report.

3. Finances

- On financial restructuring, MD reminded Council that the Institute of Biology finances had been handled on a full cost recovery model, which had been complex. He proposed a different approach. MD had been fulfilling the role of Finance Director and had employed accountancy experts "Accountability" to amend the financial systems.
- MD had employed Mercer to handle the pension process.
- Council had agreed by email to invite tenders for the appointment of auditors. William Marshall (WM) and MD would be interviewing two shortlisted candidates on 23 February 2010.
- Sign off of annual report and accounts: WM reported that the annual accounts had been amended slightly since the December meeting. No problems were foreseen. Council approved all accounts.

- MD presented a prudent Q1 forecast.
 - A formal campaign was planned to bring in organisational members. MD confirmed that three or four MOs had been lost as a result of the reorganisation. Council noted and approved the Q1 position.
4. **Charles Darwin House.** MD presented a paper detailing developments in the consideration of a move to Charles Darwin House. Council unanimously approved the recommendations in MD's paper, giving delegated authority to negotiate with all parties.
 5. **Education, Training and Policy – ETP committee.** RF reported that the Committee had an excellent membership representing diverse areas. At the first meeting a number of issues were raised including the crucial question of how we could become the single voice of biology and how we would work collaboratively with Member Organisations. ETP recommended that the Society should take a more active role at a European level to assimilate, distribute and influence policy.
 6. **Education – accreditation.** Liz Lakin (LL) provided an update on accreditation. The working group focus was on integrated Masters-level Degrees. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) were keen to help the Society take this forward. Financial support for this work was being sought. The working group had identified *in vivo* skills and environmental biology as initial areas for consideration. MD reported that he had presented the outcome to the Industry and Higher Education Forum, and had been invited to join their executive committee. Council agreed this. MD was preparing a business plan to attract funding.
 7. **Science policy report** Council welcomed the progress made on our science policy agenda. The Natural Capital Initiative was gaining momentum. A full time appointment had been made by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology; this person would spend some time with the Society. An intern was also working on this for the Society. Council approved the overall direction.
 8. **Membership, Marketing and Communications.**
 - MD reported that individual membership looked on course to hit business plan projections.
 - Management and content of *Biologist* was about to be reviewed. Council accepted Sir Colin Spedding's resignation as chair of the editorial board and thanked him for his work.
 - MD confirmed outsourcing of publishing was progressing.
 9. **MMC report** Sue Thorn, Chair of the Committee had sent her apologies. Council noted her paper and welcomed progress to date.
 10. **AGM plans:** MD outlined plans for the forthcoming AGM
 11. **Remuneration Committee** MD spoke to his paper. Council agreed the recommendations.
 12. **Regulations** David Coates (DC) confirmed some new draft Regulations are needed to replace old Institute of Biology ones. The Transitional Regulations identified terms of office for current members of Council. The Audit Committee function was also discussed.
 13. **Council approval of nominations of Chairs of the College of Individual Members and the College of Member Organisations:** Council approved the nominations of Tim Brigstocke and John Coggins, respectively.
 14. **Council reluctantly accepted the resignation of Professor Malcolm Press** as a result of time constraints.

15. Special interest groups

- **UK Biology Competitions** Ken Allen reported that the constitution was now signed. Liz Lakin agreed to sit on the SIG Committee as the representative of Council.
- **Animal Sciences Group** Council noted the draft constitution and agreed its direction. MD reported the first meeting of this Special Interest Group would be 18 March.

16. Launch There had been an excellent response, 293 acceptances for 300 places. A dedicated publication was being prepared. MD reported that we were undertaking a MORI poll to inform media work.

17. Book prizes To promote the Society's endeavours William Marshall proposed establishing an annual programme of book prizes. Council agreed. A detailed proposal will be compiled for the next meeting.

18. AOB

- Council agreed that David Coates should write to the Higher Education Academy regarding proposed cuts.
- The Council Away Day was confirmed for 14 April.
- MD reported that for the International Year of BioDiversity (2010) the Society would be running a photo competition with a top prize of £1000. Sponsorship is being sought. Council agreed.
- MD reported that the first International Accreditation approval for training in the animal licensing field had been completed.

19. Date of next meeting: 3 June 2010

Council away day – 14th April 2010 (14:00-18:00)
Ramada Piccadilly Hotel
Manchester

NOTES & ACTIONS – RECORD FOR MEMBERS

Council held an away day on 14th April 2010, which was devoted to discussion, under 4 headings, of how we can work towards realising the Society's vision and strategy over the next 5 years. Key points from these discussions are summarised below.

1. What should the Society look like in 5 years time? What are the priorities?

It was agreed that our primary focus should be to act effectively as the 'single voice' for UK biology. Critical steps to achieve this include:

- Providing a welcoming environment to promote effective working across both individual and member organisations, making maximum use of everybody's strengths and expertise. Education and Science Policy are key areas for joint working
- Reaching out to more organisations (e.g RSPB, Kew, RHS as well as smaller organisations) to ensure we are fully inclusive across all areas of biology
- Supporting career development for biologists, including accreditation and Continuing Professional Development
- Moving to Charles Darwin House, London in order to be co-located with other bioscience learned societies to help create a bio-science hub,
- Obtaining the 'Royal' title

2. Mapping the route to realise the vision – how do we match strategy and delivery?

Critical to this is defining the role of and interactions between the Colleges, Committees, and having clarity on the benefits and rights associated with the different categories of membership.

The Colleges have been established primarily for statutory and voting issues. To ensure good communications **it was agreed that the College of Member Organisations should send two observers to Council meetings**, on a 6 month rotating basis. (The British Ecological Society and the British Pharmacological Society will fulfil this role from June – Dec 2010)

It is anticipated that there will be interaction at many levels between the *Colleges* and the *Committees* (Education, Training and Policy, and Membership, Marketing and Communication), and that this will evolve as Task Forces and other activities are put in place. **It was proposed that each member of ETP and MMC should lead in a specific area, linking strategy and operational delivery, with working groups established as necessary on a 'task and finish' basis.**

The Branches are foci for individual members and their local community, and they were encouraged to be proactive in making links with their local schools and Higher Education Institutes, and if appropriate be involved in meetings of Member Organisations in their area. Given the diversity in the Branches, **it was agreed that it is timely to review Branch activities, including a survey of members** (autumn 2010 and spring 2011)

The benefits and responsibilities of *members* were discussed. Ideas included offering travel grants for students and prizes/awards to mark outstanding contributions to biology. The status of biologists who 9 Red Lion Court, London EC4A 3EF Tel: +44 (0)20 7936 5900 info@societyofbiology.org www.societyofbiology.org

belong to Member Organisations, but are not individual members of the Society, needs further discussion. Council agreed that membership was a two way relationship where the Society should provide direct member benefits but with members supporting the charitable activities. In this regard, part of the membership fee was philanthropic. Current member benefits include the *Biologist*, professional recognition and development, networking opportunities and a regional branch structure, and representation as a single voice for biology. The latter had the potential to bring significant benefits to both Colleges through direct influence over science policy, funding, education, public engagement and careers.

It was agreed that the launch of the Society had been very successful and there was some discussion about holding further events/conferences. Another approach might be for the Society to devote a day to a particular aspect of biology, which Branches and MOs up and down the country could contribute to – maybe along the lines of the RSPB winter bird watch weekend.

It is early days in the life of the Society but it was agreed that so far there has been a good match between vision, strategy and delivery. Going forwards it **was proposed that:**

- **members views should be obtained via a questionnaire (spring 2011)**
- **Council members should be assigned to lead in specific areas (summer 2010)**
- **Council should review the strategy and business plan regularly (September 2010)**

3. Raising our profile

This is critical to success and several ideas were proposed including:

- Local press coverage of regional Branch activities
- Developing an activity programme around the Olympics, linking to the activities of Member Organisations as appropriate
- Ensuring we comment rapidly on important and/or controversial topics, linking with the Science Media Centre, Sense about Science etc. as appropriate
- Campaigning/lobbying on topics such as the funding of University biological sciences departments, making use of early day motions and parliamentary questions if appropriate.
- Making use of celebrities
- Exploring opportunities to coordinate Member Organisation's media activities as appropriate
- Encouraging members to give Society-badged lectures and creating a database of speakers/topics
- Developing plans for a high profile conference.

4. Financing the vision – income generation and increasing membership

Generating more income is essential if we are to realise the vision. Most of our income comes from membership fees, so recruitment of new members at all levels is critical. It was suggested that it would be useful to do some financial modelling and projections, looking at subsets of the membership as well as the membership as a whole. Other aspects of fundraising need to be considered.

**Redacted minutes of Council Meeting
12:00 Thursday 3 June 2010
Room 4.005 AV Hill Building, The University of Manchester,
Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PT**

Minutes

1. Welcome and present:

In the absence of the President, the Honorary Secretary, Professor David Coates (DC) took the chair and welcomed members of Council and observers attending the meeting.

Dr William Marshall (Treasurer), Mr Ken Allen, Ms Liz Lakin, Dr Pat Goodwin, Prof Martin Humphries, Dr Aileen Allsop, Professor John Coggins, Professor Keith Gull, Professor Pete Downes, Dr Mark Downs (Chief Executive), Ms Chris Trimmer (SEB, Observer), Ms Sue Thorn (Chair MMC committee), Mrs Kate Baillie (BPS, Observer), Ms Jen Crosk (Minutes), Mr Jon Kudlick (Director of Membership, marketing and communications, item 7 onwards)

Apologies: Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell (President), Professor Sir David Read, Professor Julia Buckingham, Professor Robert Freedman (Chari ETP committee), Mr Tim Brigstocke

2. Minutes of previous meeting were agreed.

Professor Rosie Hails was proposed as a new member of Council (co-opted) to replace Professor Malcolm Press. Mark Downs (MD) reported that Rosie was also a member of Council for the British Ecological Society and a key leader of the Natural Capital Initiative. Council unanimously approved her appointment.

3. CEO Report

The Chief Executive's (MD) report included the following points:

- Since the last Council Meeting there had been a Council "Away day", the Society of Biology Launch and AGM. Structural changes were almost complete.
- Staff had been actively involved in a budgeting and forecasting process for next financial year.
- New Honorary Fellows were discussed. Council agreed the proposals.
- MD reported that The Australian Institute of Biology had asked the Society to consider running their membership function, possibly as a new Branch. MD also reported that he was

looking at possibilities for a Gulf Society of Biology and a Japanese membership branch. Council asked MD and the Branches coordinator to review these options and to report back.

- MD noted that there had been reasonable media coverage since the SB Launch. The Sunday Times and Telegraph had covered dissection in schools. The Society had also been included in briefing for press thorough the Science Media Centre leading to coverage in the *Mirror*. MD had submitted an obituary for Dax Copp former DG of the IoB which the *Times* had published.
- An article published in the *Biologist* by Harold Hillman had provoked member concern. Council requested a rebuttal be published.
- Staff news: Bill Parry and Emma Southern had resigned. Niamh Johnson had started on 1 June to work on the accreditation programme, supported by BBSRC. A new intern has started in membership. Jen Crook had started on 1 March as MD's PA.

4. Launch

This had been a successful event, with good sponsorship, high turnout and positive responses. The AGM had also gone well.

5. Away day

MD summarised next steps highlighting in particular the proposed two new major conferences. There was agreement that market testing was essential before committing significant time or funds. Council asked the MMC committee to consider the options, using a small task force as appropriate and report back

6. Charles Darwin House (CDH)

Council noted on-going discussion with Pension Trustees. All agreed that moving to CDH was essential for the Society. The strategic relevance and operational cost savings were substantial.

7. Education Training and Policy Committee (ETP)

At ETP's most recent meeting the focus had been on the Natural Capital Initiative, SCORE and the Chartered biologist and CPD system. ETP were strongly supportive of the Natural Capital Initiative and recommended on-going support from Council. They also agreed the strategic direction of SCORE. ETP concluded that CPD and the Chartered status remained an important member benefit but that they need further enhancing to create a gold standard.

7.1 Accreditation of Bioscience Degrees

Council noted that the Accreditation Working Group had made substantial progress since the last Council meeting. There was a cautious but positive response to the Society's proposals from universities. BBSRC funding had been secured for five months and a new Policy Officer had been recruited, Niamh Johnston,. A number of universities had already expressed interest including Russell Group and post 1992 with regional spread.

7.3 Education Update

MD reported that the BBO award ceremony will take place on 1 July at the Bloomsbury Theatre and that he planned to meet the new Chair of SCORE, Professor Graham Hutchings in July.

7.4 Practical Biology

Sue Assinder had held a successful two day workshop on taking forward the practical biology agenda. A draft report has been prepared for Council. The ETP committee would now look at the strategy for taking this forward with a public report and campaigning.

7.5 Science Policy Report

- MD highlighted that the Natural Capital Initiative would be holding a large conference in September and that the British Library would host the event. Council supported the current contribution levels to NCI.
- MD had written to all parliamentary candidates with a science background and had a meeting scheduled with Julian Huppert MP. Nancy Rothwell had, collectively, written to David Willetts. MD had met Prof Harries, the new Welsh Chief Scientific advisor whilst speaking at the Welsh Assembly day and would be briefing on the Society in detail shortly.
- MD reported that we were encouraging members to participate in the CASE blog; had written to many new MPs; had written to support the formation of a new S&T select committee; were briefing GO-Science and were participating in the Parliamentary Links day on 22 June. The team were also working closely with IoP and RSC on joint lobbying.

8. Membership, Marketing and Communication

- Sue Thorn (ST) reported that her focus had remained on publications. JBE had been contracted to move to Taylor and Francis next year. The *Biologist* had gone to BioPharma, with a new Editor in Chief, Sue Nelson just appointed. She reported that the focus of the *Biologist* be changing slightly with more articles on politics, people and news items whilst retaining the core articles on a range of biology topics. Council noted progress and approved the appointment of Sue Nelson as Editor of the *Biologist*.
- Jon Kudlick reported that individual membership had grown since last year but was still may below the peak of ten years ago. A number of organisations were working with the team on supported membership to obtain Chartered status through CPD.
- JK highlighted a new partnership formed with the Science Museum with discounted membership.
- Council were asked to note that Membership services had now been outsourced and that the telephone help line there would go live within days. Membership renewals had also been outsourced. This would mean that members could speak to a representative at weekends.

8.3 Biologist/JBE update

Council noted the paper presented. Peer review for JBE needed to be much quicker.

9. Book Awards

Council agreed the proposals to establish book awards next financial year..

9.1 HUBS

David Coates declared an interest for this item and handed the chair to William Marshall (WM).

WM asked Council to agree the proposals set out in the papers that HUBS should become a special interest group of the Society. The Charity Commission would need to be advised. Council strongly supported and welcomed this development.

10. Finance

- MD reported that the Society's financial position was sound but with little slack for new work..
- Council agreed that that WM should Chair the new Finance committee and that MD would be an observer, with the following membership, drawn from Council and observers: Aileen Allsop, Ken Allen, Pat Goodwin, Tim Brigstocke, Martin Humphries, Kate Baillie.
- Council noted the forecast and agreed the approach proposed for the 2010-11 budget and asked for a final budget, ready for approval at the next meeting, cleared through the finance committee.
- Council identified a number of priority areas for next financial year subject to income.

11. AOB

Royal title Status: MD said there was no news but that further discussion was planned – it still looked positive.

12. Date of next meeting: 9 September, pm in London.

Council Meeting
13:00 Thursday 9 September 2010
Council Room, 9 Red Lion Court, London EC3A 4EF

Redacted minutes

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members of Council and observers and presented apologies.

Present: Prof Dame Nancy Rothwell (Chair)
Prof David Coates (Honorary Secretary)
Dr William Marshall (Treasurer)
Dr Pat Goodwin
Prof Keith Gull
Ms Liz Lakin
Mr Ken Allen
Prof John Coggins
Mr Tim Brigstocke
Prof Pete Downes
Prof Julia Buckingham

Observers: Dr Mark Downs (Chief Executive)
Kate Baillie (BPS)
Jen Crok (Minutes)
Prof Robert Freedman (Chair ETP Committee)

Apologies: Ms Sue Thorn (Chair MMC Committee)
Prof Martin Humphries
Prof Rosie Hails
Dr Aileen Allsop

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Review of action points not covered elsewhere.

Biologist – A rebuttal related to an article by Prof Hillman had been published in the last Biologist.

Royal Title - this was being actively pursued.

2.2 Comments on the minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes were signed as a true record of the previous meeting after minor adjustments. The Redacted Minutes were approved for publication.

3. CEO Report

Mark Downs highlighted that the Parliamentary Links day had fallen on the same day as the budget, resulting in very few MPs attending, although there were more peers.

The Institute of Physics were the latest recruit as a Member Organisation. The Society of Radiology had left.

The UK Biology Competition Awards had been held in July, this had gone well and all three team members had won medals in the Olympiad, for the 15th successive year.

Mark Downs reported that the Society currently had more capacity than at any other point over the last year following the end of maternity leave for one member of staff and long term sickness for another. The Society had three interns over the last six months, resulting in updated careers pages on the website and good work with the Natural Capital Initiative. Nancy Rothwell felt that a decision needed to be made on what to drive now that the Society was fully staffed.

An opportunity had arisen with the Science Curriculum suggesting that the Society should be involved in a new approach to curriculum development and exam specifications. Keith Gull felt that a comparison of the International Baccalaureate curriculum with A level would be useful.

4. Finance Committee Report

William Marshall reported that the Finance Committee meeting had been very successful. The Committee now consisted of members of Council and observers: financial processes were now much clearer, making it more understandable. He thanked the Chief Executive for his work on this.

- 4.1 The forecast for the year end was positive. Against a backdrop of considerable unexpected expenditure the forecast looked excellent.
- 4.2 The new Auditors had attended the meeting. The procedures stated in the Auditor's letter had been agreed. The Auditors had asked whether Council concurred with management over the risk of fraud which was reported as low. Council agreed.

Financial year 2010-11

- 4.3 Mark Downs explained that all the key activities were now shown as cost centres/departments. The main budget cost centre was overheads, which included staffing. There was a small surplus proposed for next year. The Finance Committee were concerned that this was low but agreed to recommend the

budget and review progress at Q1. However, the figures were based on the Society not moving to Charles Darwin House. If the move were to proceed, the bottom line would improve.

Council approved new staff commitments for degree accreditation and administration support. A new media officer would start in November.

Mark Downs reported that their key risk was income and not expenditure, i.e. if individual members suddenly started to drop or member organisations left. Pete Downes asked what the risk mitigation strategy was. Mark Downs proposed managing the relationships as closely as possible through more promotion and marketing work. Arrangements were in place for a meeting with Member Organisations in November to keep dialogue open.

William Marshall reported that Charity Commission best practice required the Society not to have large free reserves without clear justification. The range agreed was £400k-£600k as a consolidated sum. Council agreed.

5. Charles Darwin House

As a declared interest, the Council noted that John Coggins (JC) was now Chairman of the Biochemical Society's publishing company, Portland Press.

Pension Trustees had agreed to support the Society in its endeavours to relocate

Red Lion Court was about to be placed on the market, the website had been built and a booklet was being published. Mark Downs had formally written to request a move to Charles Darwin House, Roger Street, London on an equitable purchase basis.

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6. Report from the Education, Training & Policy Committee

6.1 Robert Freedman reported that the third meeting of ETP had been well attended.

He noted that no invitation had been received to nominate panel members to HEFCE. The potential reasons were being investigated. David Coates indicated that HUBS had also been missed.

Robert Freedman noted that the Society had been actively responding to announcements on CSR and continuing to work on identifying science policy objectives. A joint letter from Mark

Downs had been published by the THE rebuking a previous letter suggesting no link between STEM graduate numbers and economic prosperity. Keith Gull cautioned against seeking support for STEM at the cost of the humanities. Council agreed.

Council agreed that the CSR discussion should be around research and the skills premium of graduate development rather than arguing maintenance of funding for science *per se*. It was anticipated that ETP would look at this further.

The practical biology website had received good support. The Committee had been strongly supportive of maintaining this function but had asked for a paper on where the funding would come from.

Cliff Collis had given a presentation on the value of registers. ETP had asked staff to ensure better cost recovery.

Individual members of the Committee were asked to lead on specific areas of policy.

6.2 The UK Biology Competitions special interest group was developing well. Planning for the future, it was expected that the UK would host the international Olympiad in 2017 or 2018. This would require £1m plus. Council asked this to be flagged to potential funders regularly from this point onwards. Mark Downs reminded Council that they may wish to consider designating a fund for this in the accounts in future years.

6.3 David Coates reported that HUBS was holding a meeting on 10 November at Charles Darwin House which David Willetts had agreed to speak at.

7. Accreditation

Liz Lakin spoke to her paper. BBSRC funding had been instrumental in appointing a dedicated Higher Education Policy Officer. Tremendous work had been done on a strategic and policy level. The first draft of the accreditation framework had now been completed and a sub-group within the Accreditation Working Group were to oversee the academic side. The Working Group was due to meet next week (15 September). The team were taking forward a Stakeholder Meeting on 13 October, the aim of which was to introduce the proposed framework, appraise them of the process itself, solicit interest for the pilot and gain feedback. Two surveys had been developed, with over 1,000 student responses via Facebook.

8. Branches – Future Options

Ken Allen reported good progress. The work for the paper had almost been completed on domestic branches with overseas issues yet to be addressed. He proposed consulting with branch reps and the MMC Committee during October

9. MMC Report

Mark Downs noted that there was a proposal to try to dedicate more staff effort to work in Scotland. He was progressing this.

In the absence of Sue Thorn, Mark Downs gave a report. The first meeting of the MMC Committee had been in July. Items from the Council Awayday had been picked up by MMC. One initial conclusion was that the Society did not yet have the capacity to run major conferences and instead should aim for smaller, more focussed events. The first would be a half day seminar on Education Policy, to explain how the examination system works for A'Levels and GCSEs with a charge of £50 for members and £100 for non-members. Mark Downs had met with the Society of Endocrinology to discuss the possibility of using their infrastructure for a larger event.

Membership was currently slightly up over the same period last year having grown by 79 net. It remained a key area of attention.

Mark Downs reported that (away day action) special offers for membership were being pursued. One initial option was to offer a one year 50% discount for members of our MOs.

William Marshall reminded Council that a priority for the MMC Committee was the age profile of the Society's members.

Council suggested a number of sectors to approach for membership including seed organisations, pet foods and biofuels

Sue Nelson had formally taken over the Biologist as Editor and the next edition would be published around the end of September.

10. AOB

Mark Downs requested suggestions for the Times list of the one hundred greatest (living) British scientists.

The date for Fellows the Dinner was set as 25 January 2011. Invited guests would be free of charge but others will need to pay. Nancy Rothwell agreed to do a short pre-dinner speech.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 6 December 12:30 for lunch, 13:00 start, in London.

Dates for 2011 meetings:-

24 February

16 June in Manchester

6 September

8 December

Redacted Council Meeting Minutes
13:00 Monday 6 December 2010
Council Room, 9 Red Lion Court, London EC4A 3EF

1. Minutes

The Chair welcomed members of Council, new Council Member Professor Rosie Hails and observers to the meeting. The Chair also informed Council that this was Kate Baillie's last meeting as an observer.

Present: Prof Dame Nancy Rothwell (Chair)
Prof David Coates (Honorary Secretary) – by phone
Dr William Marshall (Treasurer)
Dr Pat Goodwin
Ms Liz Lakin
Mr Ken Allen
Prof John Coggins
Prof Pete Downes
Prof Julia Buckingham
Prof Rosie Hails

Observers: Dr Mark Downs (Chief Executive)
Kate Baillie
Prof Robert Freedman
Sue Thorn
Jen Crosk (Minutes)

Apologies: Prof Keith Gull
Dr Aileen Allsop
Mr Tim Brigstocke
Prof Martin Humphries

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes were then signed as a true record of the previous meeting. The Redacted Minutes were approved.

3. Chief Executive's Report

Mark Downs (MD) noted the proposals just announced to change the scientific make-up of the Advisory Council on the misuse of Drugs. Council agreed that the Society should take a strong line on this arguing for a system closer to the existing one.

The Comprehensive Spending Review and Browne Review had received good media coverage and the CEO had been invited for interview on Radio 4's Material World to debate the Government's expenditure plans alongside David Willetts.

There had been an interesting Member Organisations' meeting Chaired by John Coggins where interest had been shown in Society led seminars covering issues such as Trustee training. Two new MOs had joined the Society, Wiley Blackwell and Johnson & Johnson (Lifescan), who would be sponsoring part of the Fellows Dinner in January.

Council agreed to offer limited financial support to SCORE (Science Community Representing Education) next financial year following a recommendation from the CEO.

The Animal Sciences Group had now agreed their constitution and their Chair, Prof Clive Page, had recently presented to the ETP Committee.

MD reported that the Accreditation presentations, the Awards Ceremony in Japan and the Society Launch were now all on YouTube. The Society was now doing much more tweeting and blogging following the appointment of a media person. Electronic Christmas cards were being sent out this year.

MD reported that there was a plan to launch a Plant Sciences Federation. MD hoped that they would be a Special Interest Group of the Society. MD had been invited to address a special meeting to consider establishing this Federation on 31 January 2011.

This meeting would be the last for the current rotation of MO observers. The MO reps for the next six months would be Phil Wheat from the Society for Applied Microbiology and Prof Ceri Davies from the Anatomical Society. For the second half of 2012 there would be representatives from the Linnean Society and BES.

MD confirmed the three sponsors for the Fellows Dinner. These were Johnson & Johnson, Taylor & Francis and the Charities Aid Foundation.

4. Charles Darwin House

Council confirmed that the Society would be purchasing 12.5% of Charles Darwin House, which was approximately one half floor (c1,500 sq ft), fully decorated and carpeted. Expected move date was mid February 2011.

5. Finance

Draft Accounts for 2009/10

The Honorary Treasurer reported that there was likely to be an overall surplus in the Statement of Financial Activity. It had been a cost effective first year.

6. Royal Title

The application for the Royal title had been made jointly by the Institute of Biology and Biosciences Federation in April 2009. A letter had been received from the Cabinet office on 17 November 2010 to say that the application had not received recommendation and but

that the Society could renew its application in the future. Council expressed disappointment and agreed to continue to pursue this issue.

7. Report on the Awayday and the work of Education, Training and Policy (ETP) Committee

The ETP Committee had met for a full day in November. Robert Freedman noted particular support for the weekly science policy newsletter.

There had been a lot of activity in the education policy area. The special interest groups area and processes for reporting were working well. Council discussed whether the Society should allow industry to nominate someone to attend (rather than individual appointments). Council agreed that nominations are acceptable.

ETP had agreed that the Society should support the Research Council's Concordat on science communication; explore offering Chartered Scientist status; plan an on-line, enhanced CPD process, as part of reinvigorating Chartered Biologist subject to Council approved funding; develop a full communication strategy for CPD and CBiol and champion a broad, balanced and coherent schools curriculum.

a. Accreditation Workshop Report

Liz Lakin (LL) reported on the strategy consultation day. It had been a very successful day with significant engagement. David Willetts had launched the event.

The framework and process had now been finalised. Following the launch, 20 universities had expressed interest in the pilot. LL noted that the Task Force had now completed its work and she recorded her thanks. Three start and finish groups/panels were now required to look at academic content, process and quality control. Chairs had already been identified from the Task Force and Working Groups.

8. Report from Membership, Marketing and Communications (MMC) Committee

Membership numbers were reported as stable.

Much media work had been done in October, with the CEO on Radio 4's Material World and the Science Communications Awards / photo competition receiving good coverage. The "Thinspiration" article in *The Biologist* had also done particularly well. This media work has resulted in an increased number of visitors to the website in October.

Sue Thorn (ST), Chair of MMC Committee reported that the JBE had now moved to Taylor & Francis and the backlog was under control. The backlog of JBEs had now been digitised and would be available, subject to a charge, from the New Year.

JK highlighted the need for a new strategy to attract members and WM asked for the membership demographics to be available at the next Council Meeting.

9. Review of Branches

Ken Allen (KA), Branches Coordinator, spoke to the paper on how branches operate and how we can support priorities. The paper contained a list of recommendations which were not prioritised. Support for Scotland had already been implemented through a part-time secondment to the Royal Society of Edinburgh. KA added that more consultation was required.

KA said he would be stepping down as Branches Co-Ordinator at the AGM. Tim Brigstocke (TB) had confirmed he would be happy to be the Branches Rep on Council.

10. Risk Management – approval of risk register

MD proposed a revised Risk Register outlining our exposure to risk, highlighting the value of this as a business management tool as well as delivering legal compliance for the accounts/Charity Commission. Council agreed the register.

11. Review of Council (Board) effectiveness

The President reported that the Review was normally instigated by the Chair and asked Council how often they felt this should be conducted. Council agreed an annual review carried out internally as an initial step.

12. Current regulations

DC reported that new Society Regulations should be highlighted at the AGM and that relevant Committees should provide amendments if required.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 24 February 2011.