

South Wales Branch Royal Society of Biology AGM

6.15pm, Mon 6 November 2017; Room C/0.13, The Sir Martin Evans Building, Cardiff University

In attendance: Nigel Brown, Helen Brown, Rowena Jenkins (Secretary), Denis Murphy, Karen Reed, Stephen Rutherford, Henrietta Standley (Chair), John Vincent (Treasurer).

- 1) **Apologies: Committee** – Almero Barnard, Rachel Coombe, Claire Price.
Other – Barbara Woods, Lewis Jones, John O'Connor, Denis Jackson, Claire Jackson,

2) **Minutes from AGM 2016 - Agreed** by those present.

3) **Report from Chair** –

Background: The South Wales branch has been running now for 3 years and this year have held 7 meetings with a committee of 11 members. Henrietta Standley has taken over as interim chair due to Beatrix Fahnert leaving to take a new post so the committee would like to record their thanks to Beatrix for all her work for the branch over the last 3 years as chair. Other post holders on the committee are; John Vincent as treasurer, Rowena Jenkins as Secretary, Karen Reed as School and Public Engagement Officer and Almero Barnard as University Engagement Officer. The branch also has an online presence through the Society website.

Branch Focus: The focus for the branch remains the same as in previous years with a focus on the next generation of biologists (the young biologist/university engagement) and the citizen scientist/public engagement.

Events: The events run by the branch attract a diverse audience and the aim is to have at least 2 events every 6 months. This year's events included: The previous AGM on Science Communication (*Engaging Engagement: The Challenges of Communicating Science*, 80 attendees), Joint Linnean Society event on evolution (*Cheats, Liars and Fornicators: Alfred Russel Wallace and Mimicry*, 130 attendees), there were two branch members speaking at the Science and the Assembly event (Almero and Rowena), Dr Stephen Benn, Director of Parliamentary Affairs for the Royal Society of Biology thought the presence at this event was valuable, and encourages us to continue supporting these events. There has been a branch presence at the Wales Gene Park 6th form event (Karen), College Technician Event which was registered as a CPD event for the RSoB (Helen and Beatrix), Go Wild (John), Careers event (Karen, Henrietta and Stephen), Cancer and Immunology event (Karen).

Potential Future events:

Industry talks and visits

Fascination of plants

Joint Linnean Society event

Charles Darwin House, 12 Roger Street, London WC1N 2JU +44 (0)20 7685 2550 info@rsb.org.uk www.rsb.org.uk

Wales Gene Park innovation week

Other panel events

Collecting ideas for 10th birthday 2019

4) Report from Treasurer – Total branch spend this year was £855.68 giving us a £144.32 underspend (which is not carried forward). In latest budget forecast we have been advised to put events such as the careers fair and technicians event under event expenses so currently we have no committee expenditure.

5) Report from Secretary - Nothing to add to Chair's report.

6) Report from Other Officers - Nothing to add to Chair's report.

7) Branch Committee Membership - One nomination for Chair (Henrietta proposed by Karen in previous meeting and seconded by Stephen). No other changes in committee roles.

8) AOB - Report from Chair of the College of Individual Members: Nigel Brown spoke on his new role and his desire to get to the various branches to listen to talks and events and to get any feedback from members. Highlighted the changes to the Society website and its user friendly format. Advised people to join the member directory as it contains member details (if you add them) and can only be seen by other members. International biology Olympiad was a success this year with 64 countries represented. There is a new Society Journal 'Emerging topics in life sciences', a joint venture with the Biochemical Society. Also events were held across Britain for Biology week. Question on whether the Charter lecture each year should move around the country so different members can get to it more easily. The Society are half way through their 3 years strategy and have so far hit all the objectives outlined for that period. There are 18,000 members and a 5% increase in membership would lead to a no deficit budget. The Society have responded to the Teaching REF, UKRI research funding and the AMR strategy documents and have responded to Brexit through the president meeting with Jo Johnson the Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, also writing to the commons to object to the gender imbalance of the 1st Science committee, since which a female member of the committee has been appointed.

The next president of the Society will be Professor Julie Goodfellow, previously VC of University of Kent and Chief executive of the BBSRC.

Any feedback from committee or members can be directed to Nigel.

Student Committee Members: Denis raised the point that the committee currently does not have any student members as the previous ones have moved on. Committee members should encourage students and postgrads to join the committee as it will have benefits for both them and the committee. Individual members of the Society's full member organisations can receive 50% off the member shop of the RSOB for the 1st two years.

9) Close AGM 6.45pm