

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 25 November 2015

PRESENT: David Manning (*Chair*), Natalyn Ala (*Secretary, Professional Matters*), Rick Brassington, Malcolm Brown (*President designate*), Liv Carroll, Nigel Cassidy, Angela Coe, Jim Coppard, Jane Dottridge, Chris Eccles (*Vice President, Chartership*), Marie Edmonds (*Secretary, Science*), Graham Goffey (*Treasurer*), Tricia Henton, David Hopkins, David Jones (*Vice President, Regional Groups*), Jennifer McKinley, David Norbury, Colin North (*Secretary, Publications*), Christine Peirce, Katherine Royse, Lucy Slater and Michael Young (*Secretary, External and Foreign Affairs*)

APOLOGIES: Keith Seymour

In attendance: Sarah Fray (Executive Secretary), Nic Bilham (Director of Policy & Communications), Neal Marriott (Director of Publishing, Library & Information Services) Jonathan Silk (Director of Finance & Operations) and Stephanie Jones (PA to Executive Secretary)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies from Keith Seymour were NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

The minutes were APPROVED.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 *Burlington House Lease*

Council NOTED the verbal report given by Sarah Fray.

5. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

5.1 *Minutes of the Finance & Planning Committee (CM/84/15)*

Council NOTED that the main points of discussion at the meeting on 11 November were: review of the September management accounts; Accounting Policy change; 2016 Budget; and update on the Burlington House Lease arbitration.

5.2 *2016 Budget (CM/85/15)*

The budget for 2016 was considered in detail by the Finance & Planning Committee on 11 November. It is presented in a similar format to that of 2015 with the current year end forecast acting as a baseline for the 2016 budget. In summary it provides for 'business as usual' in the face of some challenges to income streams, in particular oil and gas industry contraction which has affected income in 2015 especially relating to conferences and events. The budget includes a small number of new activities and initiatives and a small net surplus of £149.1k as contingency against unforeseen expenditure that

might arise during the course of the year.

Council thanked Jonathan Silk for the very clear presentation and APPROVED the budget for 2016.

5.3 *Accounting Policy Changes (CM/86/15)*

The proposed changes relate to:- heritage assets; headings used for classification of charitable income and expenditure; reallocation of Fellowship and Corporate Affiliate fee income; and a new overhead recharging model. They have been agreed with the auditor, BDO, and were considered by the Finance & Planning Committee at their meeting on 11 November.

Council APPROVED the proposed changes to accounting policy.

5.4 *September Management Accounts (CM/87/15)*

It is expected that there will be a year end surplus of £85k which aligns with the forecast made as part of the 2016 Budget exercise. The contraction in the oil and gas industry has led to a decrease in the income expected from conferences and events and this is reflected in the year end forecast.

5.5 *Serious Incident Report (CM/88/15)*

Council NOTED that there were no serious incidents to report since the last meeting.

6. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE (CM/89/15)

Council NOTED the reports from the directors.

Sarah Fray gave a verbal update to her report on her principal activities since she took her appointment on 1 October. These included items already on the agenda and:- a review of IT security; identification of business critical IT systems; risk register; election of two Staff Representatives; and security of the staff and building in the event of an act of terrorism. She highlighted in particular:-

Website issues

There has been significant disruption as a result of problems encountered following the update of the website in September. The Society's Web Team has assisted the outsource contractor by creating workarounds but the underlying issue and problems have not been resolved. This matter is being treated with the highest priority and mitigation plans have been developed to limit the impact on the Finance Team during the renewals process.

Attendance at the Geological Society of America's conference in Baltimore

Direct one-to-one meetings were held with the Executive Directors of a number of North American societies. All were interested in discussing the extension of opportunities to collaborate and undertake joint activities. It was apparent that the Society is held in the highest regard by the US geological community and has a very strong brand based both on the science and history of the organisation.

Attendance at the Council meeting of the European Federation of Geologists

This was in Brussels over the weekend of 21 and 22 November. Chris Eccles and Nic Bilham also attended. There are a number of issues arising and Sarah Fray and Nic Bilham will take these forward with the External Relations

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Committee and the Professional Committee. It was noted that the Secretary General and key Board vacancies arise in 2016.

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7. TEN YEAR STRATEGY (CM/90/15)

Council NOTED the proposed timetable for the development of the new ten-year strategy (2017 – 2027). It is intended to hold an additional two-day residential in April 2016 focused on key strategy themes and Nic Bilham will consult on dates. The development of the strategy will include consultation with the Regional and Specialist Groups.

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At the September residential there was considerable support for the idea of exploring opportunities for fundraising, for example attracting high-value philanthropic donations, more funding through legacies, donations from the Fellowship and broadening the base for our corporate support. Exploring these options in earnest and developing an implementation plan would be a significant job. It is recognised that some specialist expertise would be required, but Sarah Fray asked for a Council champion to volunteer to work with others to formulate some initial thinking on options. Jim Coppard said he is willing to give some assistance. *(post meeting note – Mike Young has offered to take up the role of Council champion for which grateful thanks.)*

Council

8. FELLOWSHIP DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP REPORT AND PROPOSAL (CM/91/15)

8.1 Council NOTED the report reviewing activities planned for the outlined objectives within the Fellowship Development Strategy. One of these objectives was the growth of Fellowship numbers where there is an increase in total membership of 8.8% over the last two years. The number of Chartered Fellows has increased by 6.4% over the same period.

8.2 *Revision to Regulations R/FP/1*

The current process for electing Fellows is set out in this Regulation. Names of proposed Fellows are published in *Geoscientist* and Fellows are given 21 days to respond. The cut-off date for new applications is therefore dictated by the copy deadline for *Geoscientist* which means that if the deadline is missed applicants can wait up to six months to be fully elected as Fellows. The Society's bye-laws are silent on the timescales for electing Fellows. It is proposed to revise the Regulation to omit the need to advertise names in *Geoscientist* and instead list the names of the proposed Fellows on the website. The benefit is a significant reduction in the timescale between application and election to Fellowship.

Council APPROVED the amendment to Regulation R/FP/1.

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8.3 *Formation of a Contaminated Land Specialist Group*

The Fellowship Development Working Group identified the Contaminated Land sector as a key target industry and recommends the formation of a Specialist Group dedicated to professionals in this sector.

Council NOTED that the Land Contaminated meeting in Cardiff in March 2016 (organised by the Southern Wales Regional Group) will be used to test the contaminated land community's view on establishing a new Specialist Group and on its proposed forward plans. Feedback will be reported to the May meeting of the Science Committee which will decide whether to recommend

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the establishment of the group at the June Council Meeting.

9. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

9.1 *Report of the Elections Committee*

Seven members of Council are due to retire in June. Ten candidates have indicated a willingness to stand.

9.2 *Report of meeting of Officers*

The Chair said the main business of the meeting was staff-related and there were no matters to report to Council.

9.3 *Amendments to Fellowship Regulations (CM/92/15)*

Regulations R/FP/6: Investigation of complaints and disciplinary procedures

The Professional Committee was asked by Council in June 2015 to review these Regulations. The proposed amendments were discussed by the Professional Committee at their September and November meetings.

Council APPROVED the amendments to Regulations R/FP/6.

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Regulations R/FP/7: Codes of Conduct

The Professional Committee was asked by Council to review the Codes of Conduct in light of the consensus statement from the American Geoscience Institute. These were discussed at the September Professional Committee meeting and it was agreed that a review should ensure the readability of the text from a non-technical viewpoint. In addition the review should also ensure that the regulations conform to the new updated Chartered Scientist standards published by the Science Council.

Council APPROVED the amendments to Regulations R/FP/7.

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Regulations R/FP/11: Criteria and procedure for validation as a Chartered Scientist

The Science Council has approved a rewritten version of the competencies they require for the award of Chartered Scientist and the Regulations require amendment to comply.

Council APPROVED the amendments to Regulations R/FP/11.

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Amendment to Regulations R/G/14: Award of Society Medals and Funds

The Regulations state that "Fellows may make nominations for the Society's Medals and Funds ...". and require that nominations are proposed and seconded. There is no statement about whether both must be Fellows. At their meeting on 6 November the Awards Committee, chaired by the President, agreed that the most important criterion is to keep the standard of nominations at the highest level for which the proposer and the seconder need to have sufficient knowledge of the candidate and their work.

Council APPROVED the amendment to Regulations R/G/14 in line with the recommendation of the Awards Committee that the proposer must be a Fellow but it is not necessary for the seconder to be a Fellow.

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10. AWARDS FOR 2016 (CM/94/15)

The list of Award winners for 2016 is appended. Council agreed to award all

four of the funds. *Council were reminded that this information is confidential until the award winners have been notified and accepted.*

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11. AMENDMENT TO OPEN ACCESS DISCOUNT POLICY (CM/95/15)

The original intention of the Policy was for the Society to adjust prices (up or down) annually in order to avoid the perception of “double-dipping”, whereby publishers receive subscription income whilst simultaneously charging authors for open access services. When applied, however, the policy has had a number of unexpected and undesirable consequences, not least of which is that both the Society and its subscribing libraries find it more difficult to budget. The Finance & Planning Committee approved an amendment to the Society’s Open Access Policy at their September meeting. It is proposed that the following sections:

8. Subscriptions may be charged for GSL titles for as long as they continue to feature articles for which no APC has been paid. For each journal/series a base-line subscription will be calculated annually, mid-year, for the following calendar year. This price will reflect the price of the journal assuming no Gold Open Access content.
9. Each year an Open Access Discount will be provided to trade subscribers reflecting the level of APCs received. The level of this Discount will fluctuate by year, but as the volume of Gold Open Access content grows, the level of discount will increase and the subscription price will decrease in real terms. The Open Access Discount will be explicitly stated on all price lists and subscription invoices.

be replaced with:

8. GSL is committed to responsible subscription pricing. Should the volume of open access content in any title rise to significant levels, the Society will recognise and accommodate the associated APC income when setting its annual prices.

Council APPROVED the amendment to the Open Access Policy.

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12. DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE (CM/96/15)

Tricia Henton, Diversity Champion, said:-

- Since its launch in February 2015 the diversity monitoring form has been answered by just over 1400 Fellows.
- Overall Science A-level entry numbers have decreased for the first time in five years. There has been a slight increase in the number of females taking Physics A-level but the gender gap in many subjects remains. The Science Council has recently added a new section on their website titled “Why Diversity Matters” which is intended as a space for sharing perspectives and experiences regarding diversity and inclusion in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics).
- The STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) Disability Advisory Committee aims to bring collective action and a strategic approach to strengthening the inclusion of disabled people in STEMM. They are holding a conference in March at which the Society will be represented.

13. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES (CM/97/15)

Council NOTED the main items discussed at the most recent meetings of each of the standing committees:-

External Relations Committee (13 October):-

- The role of geoscience in meeting the United Nations post-2015 sustainable development goals, and GSL cooperation with Geology for Global Development.
- Possible bids to host the 37th International Geological Congress (IGC) in 2024, and GSL's policy regarding the location of future IGCs.
- Geological Society representation on outside bodies.
- Raising the profile of geoscience to NERC and other research funders. It was agreed that the Society will consider holding a conference in 2016 with University Geoscience UK.
- Status report on geoscience matters in Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Professional Committee (16 November):-

- Review of Regulations R/FP/6 – Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
- Review of Regulations R/FP/7 – Codes of Conduct
- Fellowship Development Strategy Report for 2015
- Fellowship Development Working Group recommendations
- Changes to Regulations R/FP/11 – Criteria and Procedure for validation as a Chartered Scientist

Publications and Information Committee (18 November):-

- Membership of PIC– what do we want from it and how do we bring in expertise?
- Re-naming of the Fellows' Room
- Library journals acquisitions and cancellations
- Lyell Collection development plans for 2016 and JCore platform upgrade update
- Online First review for Special Publications

Science Committee (14 October):-

- Reports from the 'families' of Specialist Groups.
- Proposals for future meetings, including those associated with the Year of Water (2016).
- Identification of 2017 as the Year of Risk, and ideas for future themed years.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY (CM/98/15)

Council NOTED that there were no incidents at Burlington House or the Publishing House since the last report to Council in June. It was also noted that the lift at Burlington House was out of service for four days due to a broken part. This highlighted the potential for an accident or incident. There is only one staircase to the basement, a particular difficulty because the kitchen is located there. The lift out of service also prevents the use of the accessible toilet situated on the 1st floor.

15. ELECTIONS

15.1 *Fellowship (CM/99/15)*

Council AGREED to recommend to the Fellowship that those candidates listed should be elected as Fellows at the OGM on 25 November 2015.

15.2 *Chartered Geologists (CM/100/15)*

The applications from Fellows to become Chartered Geologists listed in

CM/100/15 had been approved by the Chartership Panel and were AGREED by Council. Council also AGREED to the election of Ms Ceylan Polat.

- 15.3 *Candidate and Junior Candidate Fellowship (CM/101/15)*
Council AGREED to elect as Candidate Fellows and Junior Candidate Fellows those applicants listed.
- 15.4 *European Geologists (CM/102/15)*
Council NOTED the names elected as European Geologists at the November meeting of the EFG.
- 15.5 *Chartered Scientist (CM/103/15)*
Council AGREED to elect as Chartered Scientists those applicants listed.
16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- 16.1 *Confidential items*
When confidential items are discussed by Council past practice has been to produce two sets of minutes, one with items which can be published on the website and a separate confidential annexe for Council only, i.e. not for publication. Sarah Fray suggested that one set of minutes is produced which, when approved, is redacted for publication on the website. Council AGREED with this proposal.
17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
- The next meeting is on 3 February 2016 at 2.00pm

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

2016 AWARDS

Name	Affiliation	Award
Prof Susan Brantley	Pennsylvania State University	Wollaston Medal
Prof John Underhill	Heriot-Watt University	Lyell Medal
Prof Jon Blundy	University of Bristol	Murchison Medal
Dr Michael de Freitas	Imperial College	William Smith Medal
Prof Patience Cowie	University of Bergen	Coke Medal
Prof Monica Grady	Open University	Coke Medal
Prof Liane Benning	University of Leeds & University of Potsdam	Bigsby Medal
Dr Henry Emeleus	University of Durham	Prestwich Medal
Dr Richard Howarth	University College London	Sue Tyler Friedman Medal
Dr Catherine Mével	Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris	Distinguished Service Award
Mr Edmund Nickless	Retired	Distinguished Service Award
Mr Paul Denton	British Geological Survey	R H Worth Prize
Dr Mitchall D'Arcy	Imperial College	Wollaston Fund
Dr Anja Schmidt	University of Leeds	William Smith Fund
Dr Tracy Aze	University of Leeds	Lyell Fund
Dr Craig Magee	Imperial College	Murchison Fund
TBA		President's Award(s)

