



British Biophysical Society – Building Better Science

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Registered Charity No. 25474

**Minutes of the 149th Committee Meeting of the British Biophysical Society
held on Monday 11th January 2010 at Imperial College, Chemistry Dept, room 234**

MINUTES

Present: Liz Hounsell (Chair); Chris Cooper, Mike Ferenczi, Guy Grant, Judith Howard, Ehmke Pohl, Gordon Roberts, John Seddon, Tony Watts

In Attendance: Althea Hartley-Forbes

1.	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Julea Butt, Rob Cooke, Jeremy Craven, Sabine Flitsch, Matthew Hicks, David Hornby, Dave Klenerman, Mark Leake, Mark Szczelkun, Mark Wallace.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the inclement weather, enough Committee members were able to make it to allow us to go ahead with the Committee meeting.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting The Minutes of the 148th meeting were approved. Amendments were made as follows: Minute 148.8: the BBS contribution to Plenary speakers attending the BBS 2010 Meeting was clarified.</p> <p>Secretary's Report Trustee liability Insurance – Tony to get information and pass to the Treasurer. Tony will get a price quotation, not necessarily a lower price as minuted.</p> <p>BBS 2010 Meeting Plans John currently waiting for the website to be ready before he writes to potential sponsors.</p>
3.	<p>Matters Arising: No new matters</p>

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4.

Proposal for a British Biophysical Association (Judith Howard)

Judith Howard (Biophysical Sciences Institute, Durham) was invited to the Committee meeting to present her ideas for a wider UK Biophysical Sciences community. Her initial question was: who/what exactly is the UK Biophysical Sciences community? The BBS is doing well but is relatively small; could it benefit from broadening out? Judith mentioned that groups within RSC and IOP and other learned societies are looking at the interfaces of their science with Biology, suggesting that it may be a good time also for BBS to explore combining with these into a new Association/Society. Judith shared her own experience of the creation of the BCA (British Crystallographic Association) in 1981/2, starting with the RSC (Chemical) and IOP (Physical) crystallographic groups, and creating 2 new free-standing groups of Biological and Industrial crystallography. The Biological group is probably the weakest of the four groups, which have grown over the last 27 years. There is an Annual Spring Meeting attracting up to 700 participants, with Autumn Sub-group meetings. There is consistent sponsorship for the Spring meeting, facilitated by an industrial liaison person who approaches industry for sponsorship. Northern Networking, based in Glasgow, organises the Spring meeting at a cost of £20,000 per year to the BCA; this cost includes an Editor for Crystallography News which goes out 4 times a year, as well as looking after the membership list and other publicity. The BCA no longer gets subventions from IOP or RSC, but charges a subscription of £15 per annum (roughly 1,200 members). Membership of BCA entitles members to reduced fees for meetings and a copy of the Newsletter.

Judith believes it can only be a win-win situation to consider a similar move for the Biophysical Sciences community. Can the BBS be expanded further? Should the UK have a different Biophysical community? Current links on the BBS Committee include Liz: Society of Biology; Gordon: President Elect of IUPAB; Mike: former Chair / current Treasurer of EBSA; Mark Leake: IOP Biological Physics Group; Matthew Hicks: RSC Biophysical Chemistry Group; Julea Butt: RSC Inorganic Chemistry Group. BBS did have links with IOP in the past via Mervyn Miles, but there was a certain lack of communication.

The BBS is keen to reach out to the wider UK community, but a current problem is a lack of admin support. Mike asked Judith whether part of the reason behind the present discussion is that BBS is not doing its job properly? Gordon agreed with Mike that the BBS Committee hasn't done as well as it should have recently. Mike stated that this discussion has been very useful in highlighting where the BBS is falling short. Gordon asked: what does BBS want to do? All agree that the BBS wants to attract people and grow. A suggestion from Judith is to bring the BBS and the RSC and IOP groups under a common umbrella, which would mean the name would need to change from BBS. It was agreed that Judith's idea has considerable merit, although Mike suggested that the BBS should be the umbrella organisation. Gordon questioned whether the IOP and RSC groups would wish to be swallowed up by the BBS, especially as we are a very small Society. Guy mentioned that some groups view the BBS as too narrow, too chemical in flavour, and that it has not evolved with the times. Tony mentioned the successful 2007 EBSA meeting: although there were 1,123 participants, the UK was relatively poorly represented. In fact, many UK members of the US Biophysical Society are not members of BBS!

John asked how best do we bring in other groups? Judith suggests setting up a Council. John stated his concerns about setting up an additional organisational layer, in addition to BBS – EBSA - IUPAB.

Mike asked Judith what she would do if she were on the BBS Committee? She suggested inviting mathematicians and engineers onto the Committee. Mike commented that the Committee currently has a wide range of members; however some don't always attend meetings, and are not as committed as they could be. He also commented that we have failed to reach out into areas such as Nanobiology; Judith informed us that there is a lot of Nanobiology funding available.

Judith left the meeting at this point.

Liz commented that we will now be running biennial BBS meetings. Mike stated that running our own BBS meetings is the only way to raise our profile. Gordon pointed out that the RSC and the Biochem Soc have abandoned the idea of general meetings. Liz replied that things are somewhat different for the BBS, but Gordon reiterated the view that it may be difficult to sustain biennial meetings that are general. Mike proposed that these could be interspersed with more focussed meetings.

Guy suggested that Liz should get in contact with the new Chair of the IOP Biological Physics group to discuss how the BBS should best interact with them.

Gordon commented that it would in principle be possible to change from the BBS to a new Association as the Adhering body to IUPAB. Liz and John commented that there had been discussions at Genoa as to whether EBSA should become the adhering IUPAB body on behalf of all the European national societies, and pay a single subscription, instead of each individual society paying its own subscription. This would bring things in line with the situation in the US.

Gordon stated that the BBS needs to connect more closely with the RSC Chemical Biology Forum, with the Biochemical Society, and the Society of Biology, as structural biology has been a recent focus. Gordon suggested that BBS should speak with the Biochemical Society, the IOP group and the Physiological Society with regard to coordinating meetings. Chris wondered whether we could ask the Biochemical Society to manage our meetings, and whether we could organise a joint annual meeting with them? Tony commented that we should bring on board the Systems Biology, Biomaterials and Bionanotechnology communities. Chris remarked that the US Biophysical Society has encompassed a wide range of topics. Increasing our membership has only happened due to our own meetings, so BBS needs to branch out in new areas, for example, Quantum Dots. Mike emphasised that the only way to be successful is to reach out into new areas. We should try to increase participation via the BBS website.

Mike suggested that the Chair and Secretary liaise with other organisations (IOP, etc) with a view to building strategic links and to holding joint, focussed meetings. All participants would become BBS members and the BBS subscription could be

	<p>set up by direct debit.</p> <p>We need to prepare a response to Judith's proposal, in consultation with Tony, Gordon and Mike.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Liz/John</p>
5.	<p>Chairman's Report (Liz Hounsell) Tony wondered whether Judith would be willing to join the BBS Committee to help steer them through this challenging period.</p> <p>Honorary Members: invitation letters sent to Fran Ashcroft, Chris Dobson, Janet Thornton and Venki Ramakrishnan: all have accepted (two by email); to be ratified at the July AGM.</p> <p>BBS Young Investigator's Award: Liz to collate results in early February and pass papers over to sub-set of BBS Committee to select the 2010 Award winner.</p> <p>BBS Newsletter: Emails have been received from members asking about the BBS Newsletter. Liz contacted Matthew Hicks who confirmed that it should be complete this week.</p> <p>BBS Webpage: This is still problematic. Geoff Ford at Sheffield is not responding to requests to upload / modify items so we should move BBS webpage elsewhere. Tony offered to ask his secretary to look after it. We will need to get all the HTML files (including the invisible ones) from Geoff. Mike asked how quickly can we get access to the BBS website so we can maintain it and keep it updated. He also asked where the server is based. Tony will check whether Oxford can host the website. Geoff Ford to be asked for the Username / Password. Tony to work out how much time his secretary will spend on this work, and a bill will be prepared.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Liz/Tony</p> <p>Royal Society 10th December meeting: Liz apologised for not attending, she will follow it up.</p> <p>John and Liz will attend the Society for Biology launch event on 25th March 2010.</p> <p>John, Guy, and Liz have still not been made signatories for the BBS accounts. Liz and Guy had a successful meeting with Jeremy; he's keen to take over as Treasurer from Dave. The meeting lasted 3 hours; however have not heard from Jeremy since. Guy made further comment about Dave keeping a favourable paper trail of current affairs. Dave was paying at regular intervals; however he was paying arrears. Liz has made a summary of the discussions, and has defined the tasks of the Treasurer.</p>
6.	<p>BBS Young Investigator's Award</p>

	Please refer to Chairman's report.
7.	<p>Secretary's Report (John Seddon)</p> <p>Previous BBS minutes should be made available on the website, as edited versions.</p> <p>Chris received help from the members present at the meeting for input to the Royal Society Global Science Report. Chris will collate the answers for the questionnaire and send a summary to the Committee. Gordon and John helped Chris with the official part of the questionnaire.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Chris</p> <p>Dave Hornby / Jeremy Craven to invoice Royal Society before 15th January for its 49% contribution to our 2010 subscription to IUPAB. They also need to declare in advance to the Royal Society any anticipated need for delegate support for the following year.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Dave/Jeremy</p> <p>Matthew Hicks has taken over running the BBS Newsletter, and Mark Szczelkun is BBS Publicity Officer.</p> <p>John asked whether the 2008 Charity commission return has been dealt with.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Liz to check with Dave</p> <p>Trustee Liability Insurance: Tony offered to obtain a quotation, to be sent to Jeremy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Tony</p> <p>John to email Dave Hornby or Neil Hunter regarding the new Biophysics Degree programme in Sheffield.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: John</p>
8.	<p>Treasurer's Report (Dave Hornby)</p> <p>Liz and John met with Dave and Jeremy in Sheffield on 9th Nov 2009.</p> <p>Dave provided the following emailed Treasurer's Report (on 11th January) which was tabled at the Committee meeting and contained the following info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The last two payments to IUPAB (2008 and 2009) have now been made. b) There are two older 'unpaid' invoices (from 2006 and 2007) that remain in dispute that are difficult for the BBS to pay since the accounts for both organisations are returned annually. Furthermore there is no correspondence suggesting failure to pay on the part of BBS. The accountant has suggested we hold firm having settled the most recent invoices in full. Dave is discussing ways forward with Patrick Cozzone at IUPAB. c) The 2009 IUPAB invoice of Euro 4500 having been paid, entitles BBS to the

	<p>Royal Society subsidy: this has been claimed but not yet received (approx 50%).</p> <p>d) Dave has established that Sheffield has now received all of its 'subsidies' from Royal Society in respect of IUPAB subscriptions.</p> <p>e) The current account stands at £8146.54 prior to receipt of last week's subscriptions.</p> <p>f) The savings account stands at £19,968.68.</p> <p>g) The accountant couldn't make the meeting last week so Dave hopes to meet shortly and submit detailed accounts as requested at the Sheffield meeting.</p> <p>2010 invoice has been paid, however 2008 and 2009 have not been paid by RS as not submitted in time.</p> <p>The BBS has total funds of £28,000 (not counting the two disputed \$6000 IUPAB subscriptions). Are BBS subscriptions being chased, i.e. have 70 new members from the Durham meeting come through? Guy sent all details to Dave, Guy to send a copy of the list to Liz.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Guy</p> <p>Concerns were expressed that the Treasurer's Report was only sent as a less than comprehensive informal email, and that it contained mistakes. Also, travel expense cheques to Committee members have not been paid. Liz was actioned to discuss this with Jeremy and Dave to ensure that the correct procedures would be in place by the May BBS Committee meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Liz</p>
9.	<p>Meetings Secretary Report (Guy Grant)</p> <p>2010 July 16th -18th, BBS 50th Anniversary Meeting, Robinson College, Cambridge.</p> <p>Biological Physics group of the IOP is holding a meeting in St Catherine's College, Oxford on 'Physics meets Biology', 1st – 3rd September. BBS to publicize the link: http://physicsworld.com/cws/event/15056</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Guy to respond/Liz to put on website</p> <p>2011 Biochemical Society Essex meeting on Protein Structure and Dynamics, 7 – 9th Sept 2011. BBS will sponsor a session (£500).</p> <p>Paul O'Shea is organising a meeting – details to be sent to Guy.</p> <p>Mark Leake is organising a meeting – details to be sent to Guy.</p>
10.	<p>2010 BBS Anniversary Meeting plans (Guy Grant)</p> <p>Guy gave an update on the plans so far. He is waiting for a response from</p>

Robinson College as to the costings, which have increased by some 30%. David Klenerman's secretary is no longer available to help with the conference organisation.

Liz asked Guy to provide a formal break-down of the costs of the 2010 BBS Conference.

Action: Guy

The website (Mark Wallace) should be ready this week.

Plenary speakers are confirmed as follows:

- a) Venki Ramakrishnan (LMB) – opening the meeting owing to his limited time.
- b) Dorothee Kern (Brandeis)
- c) Hagen Bailey (Oxford)
- d) Stefan Hell (MPI Göttingen)

For the Plenary speakers, BBS will cover Registration and accommodation, as well as a fixed contribution to their travel, as detailed in the invitation letters.

Sponsorship: Rob, Ehmke and Mike to send John lists of potential sponsors, including Genoa EBSA 2009 list (mainly Italian). John to contact potential sponsors once the website is active, and to see whether EBSA / US Biophysical Society will sponsor Stefan Hell / Dorothee Kern.

Action: John

Tony would ideally like to move the Past, Present and Future session to pm on the 17th July, just before posters. Guy will consider changing the programme, moving session C to the morning of 18th July. Tony to confirm speakers for Past, Present and Future.

Past: Tony North (40 minutes);

Present: 2009 BBS medal winner;

Future: A number of possible names were suggested and discussed.

Action: Tony

An after-dinner speaker needs to be appointed - an Honorary member? A number of possible names were suggested.

Action: Guy

Honorary members invited to dinner will be contacted through the BBS Newsletter; Liz will also send each one a personalised letter.

Action: Matthew /Liz

Each member of BBS to put details of this event in their signature on emails for publicity. Liz to email committee when details are on the BBS website.

Gordon suggests asking the Plenary speakers to write a page for 'What is Biophysics', along with their picture. We should try to take maximum advantage of

	<p>our Plenaries, highlighting their association with BBS.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Guy</p> <p>The conference presentations should be streamed. Guy believes Robinson College should be able to do this with the overflow theatre.</p> <p>Conference brochure: should be in colour and should be printed rather than photocopied.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Guy</p> <p>The conference should be publicized through the US Biophysical Society, the Australian Biophysical Society, the EBSA emailing list, RSC and IOP. Matthew is the RSC Biophysical Rep. Guy to send list to Committee once it is available. Guy informed us that the total capacity for the conference is 270 participants. Guy will be dealing with registrations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Guy/Liz</p>
11.	Newsletter (Matthew Hicks); Publicity Officer / Website
12.	Irish Sub-section (Dave Sheehan) Lecture Tour by Helen Saibil went well – a report is pending.
13.	Honorary Members (Liz Hounsell) Chris Dobson, Janet Thornton, Fran Ashcroft have been invited, received hard copy and all responded. Amendment to be made to Dave Stuart's name (not Stewart).
14.	<p>AOB BBS 2010 Organising Committee to meet in March.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Guy</p> <p>Liz has recently retired from Birkbeck College on health grounds, and wishes to stand down as Chair of BBS. John proposed that Tony Watts be invited to take over as interim Chair. This should be put to the May BBS Committee meeting, and if agreed, ratified at the July AGM.</p>
15.	Date of next meeting Thursday 6 th May 2010, Room 234, Chemistry Dept., Imperial College London.