

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 29 January 2009

PRESENT: L E Frostick (*Chair*), P Allen, I D Bartholomew, A M Carbray, M G Culshaw, M Daly, E Derbyshire (*Secretary, External and Foreign Affairs*), A J Fleet (*Treasurer*), R Herrington, A Lord, D A C Manning (*Secretary, Professional Matters*), J D Marshall, M O Rivett, N W Rogers (*Secretary, Publications*), G W Tuckwell, J Turner, A B Watts (*Secretary, Science*) and R S White

APOLOGIES: C M R Fowler, R E Holdsworth, A Law, J Ludden and R A W Wood

In attendance: E F P Nickless (*Executive Secretary*), N Bilham (*Data Manager*), M Kyriakides (*Finance Director*) and S L Culver (*PA to Executive Secretary*).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies as above were noted.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

2. REPORT OF THE ELECTIONS STANDING COMMITTEE

The President announced two nominations for President-designate and advised Council that three nominations had been received but one had been disallowed under Bye-law 6.4. The charge on Council is that two candidates should be put to the Fellowship and that these should be a "matched pair". She also read out the nominations for ordinary members of Council and said that the Elections Standing Committee was not in favour of any of these candidates being endorsed and recommended that the names were put to the Fellowship on an equal basis.

Council accepted the recommendations of the Elections Standing Committee and agreed that the names of all candidates should be published in the February edition of *Geoscientist* together with a ballot paper. Voting will also be available online.

3. ELECTIONS

3.1 Chartered Geologists (*CM/01/09*)

The applications from Fellows to become Chartered Geologists listed in *CM/01/09* had been approved by the Fellowship and Validation Committee and were agreed by Council.

3.2 Candidate Fellowship (*CM/02/09*)

Council agreed to elect those applicants listed in *CM/02/09* as Candidate Fellows.

3.3 European Geologists (*CM/03/09*)

The applications to become European Geologists listed in *CM/03/09* had been

approved by the Fellowship and Validation Committee and were agreed by Council.

4. DATES OF MEETINGS 09/10

Council was asked to note the calendar of meetings covering the period until President's Day on 2 June 2010. Secretaries of Committees which had not yet fixed dates were asked to do so as soon as possible and inform the PA to the Executive Secretary of these dates. Council was also asked to advise any conflict of dates as soon as possible.

5. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

5.1 November Management Accounts (CM/05/09)

The November management accounts were noted. Council was pleased to see that overall the year end showed a projected surplus after Library acquisitions of about £80k.

6. HONORARY FELLOWSHIP POLICY (CM/06/09)

The External Relations Committee had endorsed a discussion paper at its meeting on 23 October 2008 and this paper was circulated to members of Council for their Council Residential Meeting.

Council agreed to adopt the policy but to review it in two years. The policy is as follows:-

1. In future, Honorary Fellowship should be conferred on individuals from any country in the world *including the UK*, who have rendered signal service to science, and geoscience in particular, or who have the potential to render such service from their positions in the wider world; and who by association with the Society send out a clear message about the Society's strategic aims and objectives.
2. The Fellowship Department should maintain, solely for administrative purposes and the guidance of the Presidential Committee (see below), two separate lists - of overseas and domestic HFs
3. Care should be taken to identify candidates who are truly influential, and if possible, likely to remain so. This need not preclude those who are old, but by the same token it cannot remain their preserve. The balance of emphasis should shift somewhat away from those who have been useful in the past to those who will be useful in the future.
4. HFs, especially those in distant lands, should be chosen to represent as wide a spectrum of expertise and sector as possible - including politicians, civil servants, businessmen, industrialists, media personalities and people otherwise prominent in public life. Honorary Fellowship should no longer be regarded as the exclusive preserve of distinguished academics, and certainly not of distinguished senior academics.
5. Nominating HFs should become the responsibility of a Presidential Committee with links to both ERC (with a view to externalities) and the Science Committee (with a view to scientific contribution). This body would proactively research potential candidates and bring forward names to Council

for approval, with supporting documentation.

6. The customary numerical limit, currently standing at 100 HFs, should be dropped.
7. HFs should be listed on our website on pages maintained by the Fellowship Office, located close to the Awards pages.
8. Honorary Fellows are currently accorded all the benefits of ordinary Fellowship, but apart from being given a special certificate, nothing more. In future HFs should be managed actively by the Fellowship Department, and should be communicated with (as HFs) at least annually in a Presidential letter, or a special newsletter. In this the Fellowship Department would need to draw upon assistance from External Relations.
9. Each HF will bring different potentialities to the table; so a "job description" for an HF would not be appropriate. Nevertheless, on the assumption that Honorary Fellowship shall become less of an honorific and more of a "role", the Society should set out some broadly applicable wording, such as that suggested below. HFs cannot be treated as a herd but should be targeted strategically to use their influence and talents on behalf of the Society in their respective geographic areas, project by project, case by case.
10. The Society should take a leaf from the book of the United Nations (as did the International Year of Planet Earth) and come to regard Honorary Fellowship as our equivalent of "Good Will Ambassador".

7. FORMATION OF A NEW REGIONAL GROUP

A request had been received to form a new regional group in the Portsmouth/Southampton area to be called the Solent Regional Group. At the moment this area comes under the Thames Valley Regional Group but members located on the south coast are finding it an impractical distance to travel to meetings. The Thames Valley Regional Group has endorsed the suggestion. Martin Culshaw advised that it is recognised that it may be useful for members of the Western Regional Group to be included in mailings from the Solent Regional Group and this is being discussed.

Council agreed to the formation of the new regional group.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is 22 April 2009