

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 23 September 2009

PRESENT: L E Frostick (*Chair*), P Allen (*Secretary, Science*), I D Bartholomew, M Brown, E Derbyshire (*Secretary, External and Foreign Affairs*), A J Fleet (*Treasurer*), C M R Fowler, R Herrington, R A Hughes, A Law, A Lord, B Lovell (*President designate*), J Ludden, P Maliphant, G W Tuckwell, D J Vaughan and N R G Walton

APOLOGIES: M Daly, D A C Manning (*Secretary, Professional Matters*), S Marriott, J D Marshall, S Monro and J Turner (*Secretary, Publications*)

In attendance: E F P Nickless (*Executive Secretary*), N Bilham (*Head of Strategy & External Relations*), M Kyriakides (*Finance Director*) and S L Culver (*PA to Executive Secretary*)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies as above were noted.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

2. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2009

These were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Regional Groups governance

The Chairs of the Regional Groups met on 17 September and a report from the Vice President, Regional Groups was tabled in her absence at Council. It was noted that the Regional Groups had welcomed the suggestion of the President-designate attending one of their meetings; attendance from other members of Council would also be welcomed.

SM
ALL

3.2 Archiving and Obituaries

The Chair of the Information Management Committee reported that this was discussed at their last meeting and it was agreed that the points made by Bernard Leake strengthened the case for having an Archivist to review both paper and electronic modern records, as well as older material. The bid for an Archivist will be discussed as part of the Budget for 2010. The issue of obituaries will be discussed by the External Relations Committee at their meeting on 28 September.

3.3 Disciplinary Panel

R Herrington has approached Jim Coppard as a potential member of the Panel from the mining industry. He is awaiting his response.

RH

3.4 Fellowship matters – striking off (CM/53/09)

It was noted that 507 Fellows and Candidate Fellows were removed from Fellowship

	at the end of June.	
3.5	<p>Earthwatch</p> <p>At the last Council it was reported that the sponsors of <i>Earthwatch</i> magazine had withdrawn funding. This had been discussed by the Education Committee whose view was that the Society is fully occupied with its own projects and, given the current financial situation, it would be difficult to justify funding this additional activity. N Walton said he was mistaken at the last meeting and that the magazine was not <i>Earthwatch</i> but <i>Down to Earth</i> which is distributed to schools. He asked members of Council to consider whether they know anyone who might provide sponsorship.</p>	ALL
3.6	<p>Environmental Audit</p> <p>There was a negative response from the Carbon Trust, which undertakes such audits free of charge, because the Society's spend on energy is too low. Alternatives are being sought.</p>	EN
4.	PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS	
4.1	<p>Society's representation on outside bodies (CM/54/09)</p> <p>M Macklin is no longer the Society's representative on the Natural Sciences Committee of the UK National Commission for UNESCO. A replacement is being approached. E Nickless, as Executive Secretary, has been appointed to the Board of the British Geological Survey.</p>	ED
5.	<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (CM/55/09)</p> <p>There had been no reported incidents since the last meeting of Council.</p> <p>Council noted that the Health & Safety Auditors' score of 78% was classed as satisfactory - minor weakness but compliant. A member of staff has attended a counter terrorism course and more staff will attend future courses.</p>	
6.	REPORT OF THE TREASURER	
6.1	<p>Report of the Management & Finance Committee (CM/56/09)</p> <p>The substantive item of the meeting held on 16 September was the Budget for 2010.</p> <p>Following a suggestion by the the auditors to investigate the possibility of releasing money from funds, the Committee had agreed that solicitors' advice should be taken on varying the terms of the Fermor Fund which is restricted to Pre-Cambrian and ore research. Council agreed and said that it would be preferable to retain an element of the original intention of the gift.</p>	MK
6.2	<p>July Management Accounts (CM/57/09)</p> <p>The approved budgeted deficit for the year to be funded from reserves is £448k (£253k before Bicentenary depreciation). Overall performance continues to outperform budget and the year-end forecast suggests that performance will be £80 to £100k better than budget which would result in a lesser draw down on reserves. Expenditure continues to be closely monitored.</p>	
6.3	<p>Investment Panel (CM/58/09)</p> <p>The Investment Panel met on 28 July. The remit of the Society's investment managers, UBS, is to achieve investment income of £200k per annum. The amount this year is</p>	

currently predicted at £120k and next year £10k less. At the July meeting UBS were asked to dispose of the hedge fund investments and to propose new asset allocations to achieve investment income of £150k, £175k and £200k.

6.4 Serious Incident Reporting (CM/59/09)

The auditors have drawn attention to the requirements of charity law and that the trustees as a matter of routine should take reasonable steps to assess and mitigate any risks to their charity's activities or beneficiaries, and to confirm that any serious incidents have been reported as part of the annual return. These incidents include significant loss of funds, significant sums of money or other property donated from an unknown or unverified source, unlawful activity by a member of staff or trustee including links to proscribed (banned) or terrorist organisations.

Council noted that there have been no serious incidents to report since the last meeting.

6.5 Section 82 Resolution (CM/60/09)

Section 82 of the Charities Act deals with the manner in which charity trustees may, subject to the trusts of the charity, confer on any of their body (not being less than two in number) a general authority, or an authority limited in such manner as the trustees think fit, to execute in the names and on behalf of the trustees assurances or other deeds or instruments for giving effect to transactions to which the trustees are a party.

This resolution is required not only to sign the Society's agreement with the Society's investment managers, currently UBS Wealth Management, but also to manage the day-to-day cash flow requirements. For example it may be necessary to give an instruction in terms of foreign exchange dealings, placing of money on short term deposit and similar related matters and to respond to the investment managers in respect of decisions regarding the Society's portfolio of equities, bonds and so on.

Council RESOLVED that the necessary instructions or signatures pursuant to section 82 of the Charities Act may be given by any two of the following designated persons:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Executive Secretary

The written authority will be obtained from two of these persons before the instruction to proceed is given to the bank or investment managers.

7. ELECTIONS

7.1 Fellowship (CM/61/09)

Council agreed to recommend to the Fellowship that those candidates listed in CM/61/09 should be elected as Fellows at the OGM on 23 September 2009.

7.2 Chartered Geologists (CM/62/09)

The applications from Fellows to become Chartered Geologists listed in CM/62/09 had been approved by the Chartership Panel and were agreed by Council.

7.3 Candidate Fellowship (CM/63/09)

Council agreed to admit those applicants listed in CM/63/09 as Candidate Fellows.

7.4 Chartered Scientist (CM/64/09)

Council agreed to elect the candidate named in CM/64/09 as a Chartered Scientist.

7.5 European Geologists (CM/65/09)

Council noted the names listed who were elected European Geologists at the European Federation of Geologists' meeting on 25 July 2009.

8. CHARTERED GEOLOGIST ACCREDITATION APPEALS - IN CONFIDENCE (CM/66/09)

Separate confidential minute.

9. BUSINESS PLAN 2008-2010 (CM/67/09)

The latest version, reflecting developments since it was last reviewed in June, was noted. Key changes were:-

- The Lyell Centre Review has been completed. Item R-11 has therefore been removed (this was the last of the reviews outstanding from January 2008, so the Reviews section has been removed). Item S-1 (Lyell Centre Development) has been updated to reflect this. The outputs of the review - a "vision statement" for the Lyell Centre, and a review of the current status of existing and planned projects were noted. While the content and function of the Lyell Centre have grown organically since completion of the initial build, it is not expected that major new projects will proceed until sponsorship can be raised, and this is unlikely to happen before 2011.
- Items A-27 (Review of GSL geophysics coverage and service provision) and A-28 (Geoscience Skills Forum) have been added, following discussions earlier in the year.

I Bartholomew, Vice President, said the Development & Funding Committee is meeting towards the end of the year and will review a list of those S items for which the Society will attempt to raise funding. It was agreed that a paper will be taken to November Council so that the items can be prioritised. This paper must be supported by clear, one page summaries describing each item, what the funding will do for the supporter and what the funds will do for the Society. These summaries are to be prepared by S item owners in conjunction with I Bartholomew and N Bilham.

IB
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10. BUDGET 2010 (CM/68/09)

Council noted that the current version of the budget had been reviewed by the Budget and Programme Committee on 8 September and that the Management and Finance Committee were confident in the budget preparation process undertaken. The Management and Finance Committee recommended to Council that:

- The increase in the staff salary bill for 2010 should be restored to 2%, including performance related pay and bonuses. (The staff had reduced this figure from 2% to 1% in preparing v2.2 of the budget. Budget and Programme Committee asked Management and Finance Committee to consider whether this reduction was necessary. Management and Finance Committee felt that the saving this would achieve was not worthwhile given the case for rewarding staff who had performed well, especially in light of the strong showing against the 2009 budget. The effect of restoring the salary increase to 2% is to add £14k to the budgeted deficit.)
- The following new activities should be included in the budget:
 - An additional two days a week of Education Officer staff time;
 - Legal fees to vary the terms of endowment of the Fermor Fund (but

- not other smaller funds);
 - Delian database development at the Publishing House;
 - 'Publish ahead of print' implementation;
 - Map scanning trial.
- The following additional savings should be made, in the absence of convincing new arguments to the contrary:
 - Reduction in the cost of production of *Geoscientist* – possible £8k;
 - Defer decoration of the Library staff office to 2011.
- A fundamental review of library acquisitions should be carried out in the first half of 2010, to inform subsequent years' budgets, but the budget for 2010 should be left unaltered. J Ludden said that the British Geological Survey is undertaking a similar exercise and it might be beneficial for the two organisations to share information. R Hughes said that Library acquisitions and map scanning were discussed at the last meeting of the Information Management Committee. It is recognised that the Library is a very important resource and the Committee is considering its long term protection.

Council was supportive of the bid to continue the grant to Rockwatch (at £5k per annum), but agreed with the Management & Finance Committee and the Budget & Programme Committee that further information should first be sought on how this money would be spent, and what the effect would be of discontinuing the grant. Council was also keen that the support of the Society should be marked clearly on Rockwatch material. A report will be sought from Rockwatch and brought to Council for consideration at its November meeting.

NB

R Hughes, as Chair of the Information Management Committee, said that the appointment of an Archivist (full or part-time) is, in the view of that Committee, crucial. Reluctantly, Council concluded that the appointment of an Archivist cannot be regarded as a sufficiently high priority to include at the moment in the Budget for 2010 although, if funds allow, it will be considered later in the year. It will also be seriously considered for the 2011 Budget.

NB

11. SALARY REVIEW 2010 (CM/68/09)

The Remuneration Panel will meet on 4 November to consider the salary review for 2010 which will be effective from 1 January and Council was asked to recommend an upper limit. Council agreed with the recommendation of the Management & Finance Committee that the upper limit for the salary settlement should be 2% including performance related pay and bonuses.

12. PRESENTATION BY SCIENCE COMMITTEE CHAIR ON SUBJECTS FOR FUTURE SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

The Science Committee Chair, P Allen, said that in the past the Science Committee mostly acted responsively to proposals for scientific meetings which followed the normal format of between one and three days on a relatively narrowly defined topic. Under the chairmanship of the previous Science Committee Chair the Committee had started to become more proactive in initiating proposals for meetings with a broader range.

The Science Committee is now beginning to operate in an environment characterized by:

- Better coordination of activities across a number of key committees (Science, Publications, Professional, External Relations), aided by cross-representation from these committees.
- A wider range of meetings including (i) the more conventional scientific lecture/discussion meetings, (ii) 1-day information days targeted at a diverse range of policy makers, parliamentarians, regulatory authorities, local

government, scientific agencies and universities on topics of particular societal interest such as radioactive waste disposal and carbon capture and storage, (iii) externally funded lecture series aimed at a broad cross-section of the public without formal geoscientific training (Shell London Lecture Series) or at an early stage in their training (Shell University Lecture Series).

- A broadening of the geoscience agenda with an emphasis on multidisciplinary, alignment with strategic trends, and catering for geoscience interests across the full range of the fellowship, specifically including environmental geoscience.

In light of these new developments, the Science Committee has been particularly concerned to diversify the scientific content of meetings and to broaden the constituencies reached. In addition to the routine work, the Committee has recently decided to explore the following:

- multidisciplinary conference for 2011 on the subject of **rapid climate change and water**, initially conceived by the Hydrogeological Specialist Group (chair Willy Burgess, UCL), designed to provide a tangible focus for those with environmental interests.
- an annual '**Frontiers**' conference to be held in Burlington House, designed to attract a large number of the young scientists working in emerging subject areas (these scientists regularly attend AGU in San Francisco and EGU in Vienna). There would be a different topic each year.
- the targeting of recent research council grant recipients and current Royal Society, Leverhulme and research council fellowship holders in order to generate ideas for future meetings that are topical and important. The Conference Office will prepare an information sheet that shows what we can offer.
- the formation of an **Environmental Initiative (or Network)**, with the Secretary of Science Committee as a member *ex officio*, as a horizontal structure aimed at enhancing collaborative activities in environmental geoscience and Earth system science in the Society. The matter has been discussed within the Professional Committee who are supportive of this proposal. It was suggested that this could be a discrete topic on the website.

The meetings organized by Science Committee in 2009 and the planned meetings for 2010 are summarized in the table below. The table does not include the Shell London Lecture Series, the Shell University Lecture Series, or Specialist Group Meetings.

Title	Organizer	Dates
Lyell Meeting 2009: Late Palaeozoic terrestrial habitats and biotas: the effect of changing climates	Jason Hilton, University of Birmingham & Chris Cleal; National Museum Wales	21 May 2009
Evolution of the Continental Crust: The Janet Watson Meeting	John Wheeler, University of Liverpool; Kathryn Goodenough, BGS; Jon Davidson, Durham University	Field trip:- 22-27 May 2009 Conference:- 28-29 May 2009
Biogeochemistry of Marine Waters	Peter Statham, National Oceanography Centre	3 Sept. 2009
Fermor Meeting 2009 – Rodinia: Supercontinents,	Jenny Tait & Anna Reynolds, University of	Conference:- 6-9 Sept. 2009

Superplumes and Scotland	Edinburgh	Field trip:- 10-13 Sept. 09
William Smith Meeting 2009 – Environment, Pollution & Human Health	Eva Valsami-Jones, NHM; Jane Plant, Imperial College London & Vala Ragnarsdottir, University of Iceland	21-23 Sept. 09
Darwin the geologist: his legacy	Rachel Wood, University of Edinburgh	23 November 09
William Smith Meeting 2010: Landscapes into Rock	Philip Allen, Imperial College London; Hugh Sinclair, Edinburgh; Paul Bishop, Glasgow and Rob Gawthorpe, Manchester	21-23 Sept. 10
Past Carbon Isotopic Events & Future Ecologies	Jonathan Cowie, Concatenation & Anthony Cohen, Open University	2-3 November 10

During discussion the following points/suggestions were made:

- Seek participation from industry and other parties such as lawyers in multi disciplinary topics.
- Joint meetings with other societies, particularly in the area of the environment, (although the Chair Science Committee said that they are currently concentrating on the matters listed above. It was also noted that the External Relations Committee is doing a review of the Society's relationship with other societies.)
- Format meetings to encourage debate not just a talk and then questions and answers.
- Consideration to be given to the Society sponsoring a session at outside events, e.g. EGU.
- Organise events that appeal to and support practitioners.
- Develop the current meetings of the geochemistry, mineral deposits studies and metamorphic studies groups with the Mineralogical Society into a more strategic partnership.

The Chair, Science Committee will liaise with the Head of Strategy and External Relations to ensure that all the actions are included on the Business Plan.

PA
NB

ROUTINE ITEMS

Council noted the following items, which were taken as read:-

13. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES (CM/70/09)

Information Management Committee
Publications Management Committee
Science Committee

G Tuckwell, Vice President, gave a verbal update on the Professional Committee in the absence of the Chair:

- The review group on geophysics is still to be formed but it has been discussed with the Head of Strategy and External Relations and terms of reference will be drawn up.
- There have been reports of difficulties with the standing of Chartered Geologists with some organisations. Action will be taken if required.

NB

14. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT (CM/71/09)

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 The Treasurer reported that the trustees of the scheme were satisfied with the proposals from the solicitor handling the estate of the late Carol Liddle and so the Death in Service benefit had been paid to them.

15.2 B Lovell reported on the suggestion to make archive recordings of eminent earth scientists. The project is to be included on the sponsorship list (see minute 9) and, if agreed, it is anticipated that this project will be self-funding through sponsorship and that the Chair, Science Committee, will lead on it.

NB

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is 25 November 2009