

The Geological Society

**PROFESSIONAL STANDING COMMITTEE**

Meeting at Burlington House, at 1.00pm on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2009

**MINUTES**

Present: D Manning (Chair), V Banks, G Tuckwell, M Culshaw, A Carbray, B Gaskarth, P Maliphant, P Thorn, J Lewis, A Douglas.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received from R Allington, T Berry, A Law, J Palmer, M Rivett and J Venus.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2008 were agreed as a true and accurate account.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
3.1	Item 3.1 - Process in Hong Kong DM to contact HKRG to update on progress with the new CGeol interview process.	DM
3.2	Item 5.4 - Chartership Audit Panel Two remaining members of the CAP have still to be appointed.	DM/RA
3.3	Item 5.5 - Audit Process Audit Process has still to be finalised.	DM/GT
3.4	Item 5.7 - Validated Scrutineers There are currently just over 100 validated Scrutineers. AD issued further packs of applications to the committee for assessment.  PM reported that Halcro are having to limit the numbers of staff it will allow to apply to serve as Scrutineers as, under the new Chartership system, they will be required to be released from their day jobs for longer (in order to carry out interviews/undergo training etc). VB reported that BGS have made a similar decision.	
3.5	Item 8.1 - Flagstaff Declaration To be circulated.	AD
<b>4</b>	<b>Chairman's Business</b> Acknowledging Scrutineer service under the old system As there were approximately 500 Scrutineers listed under the old system,	

any form of large scale acknowledgement of service was not practical or affordable. It was therefore agreed that some form of Scrutineer Service Certificate would be awarded – AD to investigate possibilities.

AD

## **5 Chartership Process**

### **5.1 Timetable**

The timetable for Chartership Interviews during 2009 (showing corresponding deadline dates) was issued to the committee.

### **5.2 Applications**

5.2.1 It was agreed that all outstanding applications under the old system should be processed as soon as possible and that any vacant interview slots at the first Interview Day on 15<sup>th</sup> April could be offered to outstanding applications under the old system if necessary.

5.2.2 The issue of fast tracking applications was discussed. It was agreed that any request would have to be examined on an individual basis by the Chartership Panel, but that only in very exceptional circumstances would arrangements for an alternative interview date be made, and that the existence of a 'fast-track' option should not be advertised.

5.2.3 The length of time it takes for an applicant to be formally elected by Council once their interview has been held was discussed. All timescales involved are currently dictated by Society Regulations and Council meeting dates, however DM will raise the issue at the next Council meeting. DM

### **5.3 Chartership Panel**

Those members of the F&V Committee who wished to continue on the Chartership Panel have now contacted AD, and additional members of the Panel have also been recruited. GT would like to hold the first formal meeting of the panel as early in February as possible. AD to progress.

AD

Full details of the remit of the Panel have still to be finalised, however its primary focus would be the day-to-day mechanics of the Chartership process, rather than broader matters that might lead to changes in policy.

### **5.4 Chartership Officer**

Interviews for the CO post were held on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> January and an appointment will be made imminently.

### **5.5 Scrutineers Day**

It was agreed that the date of the Scrutineers Event should be changed to 27<sup>th</sup> March. A review of the event would then form a major item for discussion at the Professional Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> April, where a decision can be taken as to how often similar events would need to be held in future.

Large changes to the proposed timetable for the day were agreed. It was further agreed that the President should be invited to acknowledge

Scrutineers' efforts (if she is able to attend) at a wine reception after the event. Any members of the Committee who would be willing to attend the event and help run the breakout groups should contact AD.

It was agreed that those Scrutineers who did attend from various companies should be tasked with disseminating the knowledge and information gained during the day to their work colleagues. This information could also be circulated via the Regional Groups.

#### 5.6 Guidance Documents

Bill Gaskarth reported that, as he had received no suggested amendments to the Academic draft as tabled at the November meeting, it could now be issued. PM reported that the Engineering Group had made minor amendments but that he would send the final version to AD to be issued. PM

No documents have yet been received from the Hydrogeology or Petroleum groups - AD to chase. AD

## 6 Sustaining Chartership

### 6.1 CPD

It has become apparent that quite a large number of Chartered Fellows are not keeping up to date CPD records - some for logistical reasons and some because they have now retired. The Society's CPD scheme is technically still under review, although this has been put on hold whilst the new Chartership system is being introduced. It was agreed that discussion as to what any new CPD system would need to involve should be initiated by the Committee as soon as possible, prior to a more formal review during the second half of 2009 and that it would be vital for Nic Bilham, Data Manager, to be fully involved in this review of the system.

In the interim it was felt the current system needs to be made easier to understand, especially with regards to definitions of the various categories, and also that the password/logon arrangements should be simplified if possible. DM called for volunteers from the Committee to help look at current CPD definitions and see if they could easily be simplified. PT, JL and VB agreed to look at the wording and forward any recommendations on to DM/AD. PT/JL/VB

It was agreed that Scrutineers must recognise that the only acceptable way for a Chartership candidate to be able to 'demonstrate commitment' to CPD was by undertaking and recording it. DM agreed to raise the issue in Geoscientist and via the e-newsletter. DM

### 6.2 Reinstatement of Lapsed CGeols

A small number of CGeols let their fellowship of the Society lapse (for a variety of reasons), however sometimes a very small number of these lapsed fellows continue to use the titles CGeol and FGS whilst they are not entitled to. It was agreed that the Society must ensure it has a robust system in place to deal with such cases and DM will address this issue

initially via an article in Geoscientist. It was further agreed that CGeols could possibly, in future, be specifically contacted by the Chartership Officer prior to being struck off for non-payment of fees to further point out the professional consequences of discontinuing their Fellowship.

## **7 Council Matters**

- 7.1 It was agreed at the last meeting of Council that the President will now sign all CGeol certificates.
- 7.2 Council are keen to support the Environment Group as much as possible, but decided that at present they wish to have one more attempt to revive the group in its old format. If this failed they would then look to adopt the Environment and Coordinating Committee approach as discussed at the last Professional Committee meeting.
- 7.3 Nic Bilham (Data Manager) has agreed to monitor the YGG facebook page to ensure that it presents an acceptable view of the Society.

## **8 Professional Development**

- 8.1 SiLC  
Nothing to report
- 8.2 YGG  
A brief report from Jo Venus was tabled. PM reported that a South Wales YGG should be up and running by February.
- 8.3 H&S Inspectorate Improvement Notices  
JL will be attending the next meeting in March and will report back to the Committee.
- 8.4 Careers Day  
The Professional Committee has been asked to play more of a proactive role in the 2009 event (by suggesting speakers/exhibitors etc). The Committee felt that the balance of exhibitors at the 2008 event had been broadly correct but that the radioactive waste industry should be invited to attend as an exhibitor for 2009. It was felt that there may possibly be too many talks in the afternoon, and that these were often not as well attended as the earlier sessions (mainly because they coincide with the opening of the beer reception). It was therefore suggested that, if possible, the afternoon session be reduced by one speaker, and a 5 minutes change over session between each talk should be included in the programme. Alternatively the finish time of the speakers could possibly be extended, with the afternoon academic and teaching talks switched to 1.30pm and 1.45pm respectively (ie during the lunch break, which students could attend if they were interested). A second entrance/exit to the lecture theatre needs to be opened up and the possibility of having more than one lecture theatre in use at the same time was raised – AD to pass all comments/suggestions to Georgina Worrall.

AD

## **9 Accreditation Panel**

The Panel is now actively promoting overseas accreditation. Dhahran will be submitting an application shortly, and it is hoped that Abu Dhabi and Oman will submit at some point in 2009.

BG has contacted the British Council with a view to approaching Universities in China and India, although some form of application fee structure for non-middle eastern countries (who would find it much harder to find the current £3k application) fee may well need to be considered.

The take up of MSc accreditation been somewhat disappointing to date, but as NERC are currently producing a new form which is very similar to our accreditation application form, universities may in future be more easily encouraged to apply for both at the same time.

## **10 RGCC**

Solent RG have now made a formal approach to the Society and would initially look to cover the SO and PO post code areas, with a possible move to cover B8 at some point in the future.

MC has yet to finalise the RG governance review, but hopes to do so shortly.

## **11 F&V Committee**

The F&V committee has been officially wound up, with most of its members now serving on the new Chartership Panel.

## **12 Any Other Business**

### **12.1 Portsmouth University Bursary**

The Committee were informed that the possibility of the Society sponsoring a student bursary at Portsmouth University was currently being considered. However concern was raised that this might set a precedent and that would have to be followed for all universities.

### **12.2 Chartership and Forensic Geoscience**

GT tabled a brief paper and will update at the next meeting.

### **12.3 GEES/OER Funding**

BG tabled a paper for circulation to the Committee for comment.

### **12.4 Domain names**

It was reported that the domain names cgeol.com and cgeol.co.uk are currently being used by an individual but that the Society would possibly have the right to claim that this be stopped - GT to contact Nic Bilham to discuss further. GT

**13 Date of next meeting**

The next meetings will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 4<sup>th</sup> June and 17<sup>th</sup> September.