

SCIENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 06 September 2011

PRESENT: Philip Allen (*Chair*), Gary Hampson (*British Sedimentological Research Group*), John Henry (*History of Geology Group*), Richard Herrington (*Mineral Deposits Studies Group*) Andy Howard (*Science Committee member*), Peter Langdon (*Quaternary Research Association*), Alan Lord (*External Relations Committee*), Bob Pankhurst (*Publications Committee*), David Pyle (*Volcanic & Magmatic Studies Group*), Helen Scholes (*Engineering Group*), Colin Summerhayes (*Science Committee member*), John Tellam (*Science Committee member*), Sir Crispin Tickell (*Earth Systems Science - Gaia Group*) and Georgina Worrall

APOLOGIES: Quentin Crowley, Jane Francis, Andy Gale, Angharad Hills, Edmund Nickless, Eva Valsami-Jones, David Vaughan and all non present Specialist Groups.

In attendance: Steve Whalley (Geological Society Event Co-ordinator)

1. APOLOGIES
Apologies noted above.
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST
The Committee was asked to declare any conflicts of interest regarding the agenda. None were declared.
3. MINUTES OF SCIENCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 MAY 2011
These were agreed.
4. MATTERS ARISING
Most of the matters arising are addressed within these minutes.

Building links between Regional and Specialist Groups

Now that Tricia Henton has taken over as Chair of the Professional Committee, Philip Allen will contact Tricia to discuss how the Science and Professional Committees can improve liaison to the benefit of Regional Groups.

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5. MEETINGS
 - 5a. **Calendar**
The September calendar in *Geoscientist* was noted.
 - 5b. **Work programme of the Conference Office**
The Conference Office work programme was noted.

Philip Allen informed the Committee that the 2012 programme will also include another Frontiers Meeting and hopefully a joint GSL/GSA session at EGU, so the 2012 calendar is looking very full.

5c. **Update on Meetings**

5ci. **Fermor Meeting 2011 – Ore Deposits in an Evolving Earth – 7-9 September 2011**
This will be a two and a half day meeting, including nine keynote speakers from the UK, USA, Canada and Australia. Currently there are 140 delegates registered for the meeting

5cii. **William Smith Meeting 2011 – Remote sensing of volcanoes and volcanic processes – 4-5 October 2011**
The convenors have now finalised the programme, which includes 6 sessions and 6 keynotes, including the William Smith Lecturer, Professor Paul Segall (Stanford University)

Marketing of the conference is well underway.

Lyell Meeting 2011 – Islands: Palaeontology, Geology and Tectonics – 24 October 2011

This meeting is being organised by the Palaeontological Association.

A programme was included within the Committee papers and marketing is still ongoing.

Frontiers Meeting 2011 – The coupling between tectonics and surface processes – 14 November 2011

17 papers for this meeting have been accepted and it is hoped that this conference will draw in a large student and young researcher audience.

Philip Allen informed the Committee that he is keen for ideas for future Frontiers Meeting topics to come from outside of the Committee. The Science Committee originated this meeting in 2011 to get this new style of meeting format underway. In 2012 and beyond, the intention is to solicit ideas for new Frontiers Meetings, which will be evaluated as a gathered field by Science Committee.

Water Futures – 6-7 March 2012

The Committee commented that the conference incorporates three different conference themes, so it is important that these differing themes gel together. It was commented that there had been little input from Engineering Group and that the role of the Environment Network was not prominently visible.

Philip Allen agreed to write to the convenors passing on these comments.

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Rock Deformation – 30-31 May 2012

The Committee agreed that this looked a good scientific meeting.

William Smith Meeting 2012 – 4-6 September 2012

A provisional programme was included within the papers.

The Committee had concerns regarding the large number of international speakers noted within the programme. It was suggested that the convenors consider a 2-day conference, that they get confirmation of attendance of a reduced number of key speakers and that progress should be made in securing sufficient sponsorship to cover their expenses. Peter Sadler will be the 2012 William Smith Lecturer.

Philip Allen agreed to contact the convenors raising the Committee's concerns.

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Fermor Meeting 2012 - The Neoproterozoic Era - 19-21 September 2012

The Committee was pleased with the progress of this meeting.

6. CONFERENCE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION UPDATES

Appreciating Physical Landscapes - 22-23 October 2012

The Committee had concerns about the budget, which did not provide for lunch for the delegates, as this provides a good networking opportunity, and the small amounts of money set aside for marketing and speaker expenses. The Committee recommended that the convenors seek sponsorship to assist with conference expenses and overheads.

Georgina Worrall agreed to work with HOGG in putting together a more comprehensive budget.

GW

The Committee also commented that the meeting might benefit from involvement from other Specialist Groups or external associations, and that the Bluebell Line would provide a good railway based field excursion. John Henry agreed to pass this feedback on to the convenor.

JH

The first century of Isotope Geochronology - 25-27 June 2013

The Committee recommended that the convenor should be contacted to make sure that Glasgow University is not planning any similar meetings or celebrations on this topic around the same time.

GW

The Committee was pleased with the progress of the meeting.

Holocene Climate Change - 4-5 April 2013

The Committee approved this meeting proposal.

It was suggested that Colin Summerhayes, one of the convenors, approach some of the Specialist Groups, including the Hydrogeological Group and Quaternary Research Association, to see whether they would like to be involved in the conference.

CS

The Committee also suggested Steve Jones, University College London and Mike Edmonds, who would be good speakers for the conference.

7. NEW CONFERENCE PROPOSALS

Deep-Water Continental Margins

The Committee approved the conference proposal submitted, noting that the proposal was very topical and important as hydrocarbon exploration activities were strongly focussed on deepwater plays.

The Tonga-Kermadec Arc an archetypical oceanic subduction system

The Committee had concerns regarding this proposal, centred on the fact that the convenors and key players identified were all in Australia, New Zealand and USA. There was concern about levels of attendance, costs of delegates, and difficulties in obtaining adequate levels of sponsorship. It was suggested that the Chair should write

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to the convenors raising these points, and also asking whether there were European research groups who would be interested in participation.

The Committee also discussed whether the convenors might consider a more generic conference theme on this topic, including a session on the Tonga-Kermadec Arc.

Lyell Meeting 2012 - Big Palaeo

The Committee accepted this conference proposal.

Life and the Planet

The Committee agreed that they needed more information on the scientific content of this meeting, to ensure it is different from the Life and the Planet meeting held at the Society in May 2011.

The Committee felt that the conference needs to capture the current science involved in Palaeoclimate.

The Committee would encourage the convenors to consider deferring this meeting to 2013.

Philip Allen agreed to write to the convenors with the Committee's feedback.

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Breaking Cycles

The Committee enthusiastically approved this proposal, and recommended that the convenors consider involving the Environment Network in the organisation of this meeting.

Philip Allen agreed to write to the convenors with the Committee's feedback. He will suggest that the title be very slightly changed to 'Broken Cycles' together with a subtitle.

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8. JOINT COMMITTEE FOR PALAEOLOGY

Alan Lord reported to the Committee, that the organisations involved in the Joint Committee of Palaeontology (Palaeontographical Society, Palaeontological Society and Micropalaeontological Society) met to discuss the future of the Lyell Meeting.

The organisations agreed that the Joint Committee for Palaeontology (JCP) needs to be resuscitated and that the organisations involved in the JCP have agreed to meet at every Lyell Meeting to discuss the following year's meeting.

The Joint Committee for Palaeontology agreed that the palaeontological organisations would submit Lyell Meeting proposals for the Joint Committee for Palaeontology to approve.

The Geological Society/Science Committee's involvement in future Lyell Meetings would be to approve the scientific content of the conference proposal put forward by the JCP.

It is hoped that by the JCP regularly meeting, this will formalise the proposal procedure.

9. SHELL 2012 LONDON LECTURE SERIES

Submitted within the papers was a proposed set of lectures.

The Committee approved the following lecture programme:

Date	Name	Title of Talk
(1)	Professor James Jackson (Cambridge)	Earthquakes and Tsunamis (Japan, Christchurch)
(2)	Professor Steve Sparks (Bristol University)	Volcanoes and Man: processes and risk
(3)	Dr Jacqueline Skipper (Geotechnical Consulting Group) admin@gcg.co.uk	Ground engineering, major London projects
(4)	Ted Nield (GSL)	Incoming: Learning to love meteorites
(5)	Professor Paul Younger (Newcastle University) p.l.younger@ncl.ac.uk	Sustainability of groundwater
(6)	Professor Jane Plant (Imperial College)	Geochemical hazards to human health
(7)	Professor James Syvitski (Colorado)	Sinking deltas – life at the edge/cities in peril
(8)	Dr Bryan Lovell President GSL	The challenge of carbon

Note added to minutes: As of 13 September 2011, Ted Nield has not confirmed his participation, but it is intended that he talk on his latest book, which is “Incoming” and deals with the threat to Man of meteorite impact. John Underhill, Stuart Haszeldine and Simon Conway Morris have been removed from the 2012 programme and will be kept as possibilities for 2013. Philip Allen has written to them. Bryan Lovell will talk in February by preference. Exact titles of talks will be agreed by negotiation with the speakers.

10. ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

The Environment Network was officially launched in July’s edition of *Geoscientist*. The Network is involved in the organisation of the Water Futures meeting, and will use this conference as a launch event. They are also currently working on setting up a blog, where people will be able to post comments and ideas.

The Network is also considering submitting a bid to the Science Committee to run the Frontiers Meeting in 2012.

11. PUBLICATION REPORT

A publication report was included in the papers of the publication proposals accepted since the last Science Committee meeting.

There is a draft publication proposal with the Fermor Meeting 2011 convenor for approval.

Meeting 2011.

Bob Pankhurst reminded those present at the meeting that the Society's Special Publications are now included in the ISI database for citations, so convenors should feel more encouraged to consider putting together a Special Publication.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Philip Allen informed the Committee that Jan Zalasiewicz has written to the Society asking whether it would write a letter to NERC (International Opportunities Fund) supporting his bid for funding for work in building an international network for research on the Anthropocene.

Philip Allen informed the Committee that any response from the Society would be carefully worded to ensure that the Society was not seen to be leaning on any particular side regarding the science currently being undertaken in this area. The letter would state that the Society sponsored a successful meeting on the Anthropocene in May 2011 that Jan was involved in.

Sir Crispin Tickell suggested that the Society should consider putting on a conference on the topic of the melting ice in Greenland and Antarctica. Colin Summerhayes commented that aspects of this will be addressed in the Holocene Climate Change conference and that there is reference to this issue in the Society's Climate Change Statement.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING