

The Geological Society of London

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 28 November 2018

PRESENT: Nick Rogers (*Chair*), Andrew Bloodworth, John Booth (*Vice President*), Lesley Dunlop, Graham Goffey (*Treasurer*), Jim Griffiths, Naomi Jordan, Chris King, Bryne Ngwenya, Colin North (*Secretary, Publications*), Sheila Peacock, Nik Reynolds (*Vice President*), Katherine Royse (*Secretary, Professional Matters*), Keith Seymour (*Vice President, Regional Groups*), Jessica Smith, Rob Strachan, John Talbot (*Vice President, Chartership*) and Alex Whittaker (*Secretary, Science*)

APOLOGIES: Tom Backhouse, Jason Canning, Sarah Gordon (*Secretary, External and Foreign Affairs*) and Helen Smyth

In attendance: Richard Hughes (Executive Secretary), Neal Marriott (Director of Publishing), Alex McPherson (Director of Finance & Operations), Alicia Newton (Director of Science & Communications) and Stephanie Jones (Administrative Secretary)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Sheila Peacock is a member of the Council of the Royal Astronomical Society and may be conflicted on matters relating to the Burlington House lease and publishing.

Rob Strachan is Science Editor for Geological Society of America Bulletin and on an occasional basis may be required to sit on their Publications Committee.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies NOTED from Tom Backhouse, Jason Canning, Sarah Gordon and Helen Smyth

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER AND 19 SEPTEMBER 2018

The minutes were APPROVED. A version of the 18 September minutes will be published on the website, with an explanatory if items have been removed or reduced. The 19 September minutes are confidential to Council.

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4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 *Future Science report*: Alicia Newton said this has been outstanding for some time and there is a lack of interest in pursuing the full document. An executive summary will be produced.

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4.2 *Early Career Geoscience Network*: Kate Royse reported that Tom Backhouse is representing the Professional Committee on the ECGN. Duncan Murdock is chairing. Amy Ball from the Education team is the staff liaison.

4.3 *Review of Degree Accreditation Scheme* – Alicia Newton said a survey has gone out to major geoscience employers to ask for information about skills gaps in recent recruits. University Geoscience UK are also circulating. Council members were invited to inform Alicia Newton of any contacts who may have recently employed geoscience graduates. Colin North said it is important that accreditation allows for innovation in the teaching of geoscience. The importance of fieldwork was emphasised.

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5. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

5.1 *Report of Officers' Meeting*

The Officers met this morning where the discussion was mainly about staffing matters. There were extensive discussions about the new Pay & Reward scheme which is later the agenda and which Officers approved with no modifications, and IT/CRM areas which will need attention in the near to medium term.

5.2 *Report of the Elections Committee*

Six members of Council are due to retire in June 2019: -

Jason Canning
Naomi Jordan
Rob Larter
Colin North
Sheila Peacock
Keith Seymour

One nomination is to hand and others are expected but there are only just sufficient to cover the vacancies. Nick Rogers asked Council to encourage nominations amongst their contacts.

Council

It is hoped that two nominations will come forward for President-designate.

5.3 AWARDS 2019 (CM/61/19)

Council AGREED the Awards for 2019 and the list is appended. Council were reminded that this information is confidential until the award winners have been notified and have accepted.

Nick Rogers said the Awards Committee received very few nominations for the Funds, an area where the Society should be encouraging early career Earth scientists.

Nick Rogers asked Council members to consider early career geoscientists who they can put forward for the President's Awards. He will also write to Earth science departments for nominations.

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Graham Goffey suggested that the Funds are removed from the Awards and become part of the research grants cycle. Chris King asked about an underlying strategy for the awards, i.e. what are these medals for.

Alex Whittaker, with Alicia Newton, is reviewing the Society's awards and funds.

6. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

6.1 *Executive Secretary (CM/62/18)*

Richard Hughes briefed Council on the Burlington House lease [confidential to Council].

Progress against the 2018 Business Plan was noted. A number of objectives remain on amber and reflect the high turnover of staff which led to delays and also highlighted areas where there are capacity issues. Objectives not delivered in 2018 will be carried forward into the 2019 Business Plan. Richard Hughes said he is pleased with progress and will bring an end year report to the February Council meeting.

Richard Hughes will visit the Hong Kong Regional Group in late January and Malaysia for discussions with the Malaysian Geological Society about the potential for Fellowship and Chartership growth.

6.2 *Director of Finance & Operations (CM/63/18)*

Alex McPherson presented the August management accounts together with a full year forecast. “Core” deficit is forecast to be £89k for the full year versus a budgeted deficit of £12k. This compared to a forecast deficit of £116k in the previous report. It includes £270k depreciation.

Collection of 2019 renewals is progressing reasonably well.

The frequency of email phishing and attempted malware distribution appears to have diminished. This remains an area of continued vigilance and IT infrastructure security and cloud migration continue to be high priority items. The increased security has resulted in an increased number of emails going into ‘junk’ and this is being reviewed.

The CRM system is ‘live’ and will roll out to the Fellowship following a short debugging phase. CRM continues to pose certain challenges around data migration and early life bugs, but the route map is stable and effective operations are agreed. There are lessons to learn and the way forward for the system will be carefully thought through and fully discussed by the Finance & Planning committee (FPC) in due course.

Health and Safety: a conference attendee at Burlington House injured her ankle and first aid was provided for bruising. There were no incidents at the Publishing House. Council was presented with a report on Health & Safety, pursuant to business plan item 72.

Jessica Smith asked about monitoring of the Regional and Specialist Groups under GDPR requirements. Alicia Newton said the Constituted Specialist Groups have been asked to address any communications to the group through the office so that opt-outs can be tracked through CRM.

6.3 *2019 Cost of Living Salary Adjustment (CM/64/18)*

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) has historically been used as the guide for determining a Cost of Living adjustment (COLA). CPI has been tracked and since August has reduced to 2.2%. During the 2019 budget compilation and 2018 outturn preparation process, it became evident that revenue and expenditure is out of balance and overall in deficit. The FPC recommend that: -

- COLA is set at 1% for the period January – June 2019
- A further COLA increment is applied for the period July – December 2019 that is contingent upon cost and revenue performance being within an acceptable tolerance and the forecast 2019 outturn indicating a surplus sufficient to cover the cost of such an increment
- That the overall annual COLA increment does not exceed 2.6%, being the budgeted firm and contingent components in the proposed annual budget, and the decision regarding the final level of COLA and the timing of any award is delegated to the FPC

Alex McPherson clarified that the ‘acceptable tolerance’ will be dependent upon mid-year figures and will be decided in consultation with the FPC.

Council APPROVED the proposal.

6.4 *Director of Science & Communications (CM/65/18)*

Alicia Newton said a panel, led by Alex Whittaker, will review the current grant and bursary offerings from historic funds. The family of Hazel Prichard has endowed a student bursary that provides a grant of up to £3k within certain criteria that will be co-

administered with the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland. The Zeiss scholarship received over 70 applications. Discussions continue with Rick Sibson who wishes to endow a fellowship in the name of E M Anderson.

The conference pro forma document has been redesigned. The Society is still looking for proposals for the 2019 Year of Carbon and Alicia Newton said suggestions from Council would be welcome.

Lesley Dunlop was welcomed as the Society's new Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Champion.

The Annual General Meeting of the Higher Education Network is in January and will be held jointly with DiG-UK. A representative from the Society will attend.

The Education team advertised Earth Science Week resource packs to teachers using social media and sent out around 150 packs. This successful venture, which allowed the Society to reach teachers who are not part of our school affiliates, will be repeated next year.

A record 1812 people visited the Society for Open House on 22 September. As well as the usual tours, the Library organised a very popular 'monster hunt' featuring fossils located around the building.

Following on from a Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) event on Geology and the safe disposal of radioactive waste hosted at the Society in 2014, a further event was held on 26 October aimed at show-casing the communications material that RWM have developed for the wider public. It was very well attended and colleagues in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and RWM were pleased with the turnout and level of discussion.

6.5 *Code of Conduct for meetings (CM/66/18)*

Various kindred societies have put in place codes of conduct for their meetings and events. The Society is not aware of any reported cases of harassment at any of their events but it is timely to put in place a similar code. The draft Code was reviewed by the External Relations, Science and Professional committees, and circulated to the Chairs/Presidents of the Special Interest and Regional Groups.

Council APPROVED the Code, which will be placed on the website and publicised at events.

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6.6 *Safeguarding (CM/67/18)*

The Charity Commission considers safeguarding to be a top priority for all institutions, regardless of the regularity of contact with vulnerable people. It is also an essential duty for Trustees to 'take reasonable steps to safeguard beneficiaries and to protect them from abuse'.

Council asked for various changes to the draft and, subject to these, APPROVED the Safeguarding Policy, which will be placed on the website.

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6.7 *Honorary Fellow (CM/68/18)*

The External Relations Committee commended the nomination of Eric Onyango Odada for Honorary Fellowship. Council AGREED to ask this nominee if he would accept the honour before advertising it in *Geoscientist* followed by formal election at an OGM.

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6.8 *Report of the Director of Publishing (CM/69/18)*

Neal Marriott said the 2018 subscription renewals process is complete with a 6% increase on revenues.

The Journal of the Geological Society Online Archive 1845 – 2007 was launched for sale to libraries with over 17k articles. It is available as a complete Archive or in three parts.

Eighteen books have been published to date in 2018 with the final volume currently in press bringing the yearly total to 19 books. In addition, 20 titles are in production of which five are already scheduled for publication in the first four months of 2019.

The Society now publishes full text XML for all Online First book and journal content – a welcome enhancement for readers and authors alike.

6.9 *GSW Open Access (CM/70/18)* –CONFIDENTIAL TO COUNCIL - COMMERCIAL SENSITIVE

7. 2019 BUSINESS PLAN (CM/71/18)

Council approved a three-year business plan in November 2017. Richard Hughes said it has been used to good effect throughout the year to prioritise and focus staff effort, actively monitor and report progress, and in the setting of personal performance objectives that can be related to strategic objectives. The plan for 2019 has been drawn up in consultation with the standing committees.

Council APPROVED the Business Plan for 2019.

8. 2019 BUDGET (CM/72/18)

Alex McPherson said the proposed budget had been considered in detail by the FPC at its meeting on 20 November when it was recommended for approval. The budget was compiled in close collaboration with budget holders. The key themes were looking at costs, increasing income and improving internal processes.

A net budget of (£62,259) net expenditure over income is proposed, after deduction of certain non-cash items, including depreciation. Pre-depreciation, the core-operating budget is in surplus by £379,141. The budget has been prepared to facilitate achievement of most business plan objectives, with a number identified as suitable to be treated as contingent items and subject to funding capability whilst remaining under the budget cap. Unlike in previous years, no unrealised exchange or investment gain or loss has been included. It also includes a contingent list of additional expenditure of £80,156 that will go forward in whole or in part should the funding become available during the year. The capital budget is £392k which is broadly in line with last year and includes around £40k for matters pertaining to the lease of Burlington House. Spend on capital items will be subject to a cost benefit analysis and will be subject to sanction by the FPC.

Graham Goffey said the budget presented to Council today was an operating budget that needs work and will come back to the next meeting before presentation to Fellows.

Council APPROVED the 2019 Budget.

Richard Hughes thanked Alex McPherson and this was seconded by Council.

9. REVIEW OF PAY, REWARD & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CM/73/18)

Richard Hughes said the Society's pay and reward systems have been in place for many years without review. The current review was led by a panel comprising the

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Treasurer, Publications Secretary, Professional Secretary, HR adviser and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The following principles of the proposed new systems are agreed and supported by the panel and are recommended for approval by Officers, who have responsibility for matters relating to staff:-

- Annual staff performance will be graded with regard to the delivery of SMART objectives linked through the Business Plan to the 2017-27 Strategy;
- The five-tier A-E system will be replaced by a four-tier, descriptive ranking system;
- Performance will continue to be evaluated with respect to the delivery of personal objectives. There will be regular performance reviews;
- The SLT will moderate proposed performance rankings proposed by line managers before disclosure to individuals to ensure the fair and effective use of the grading system;
- In the past staff received a COLA increase guided by CPI and a performance related pay award (PRP) of up to 3% which was consolidated into basic salary. Staff will continue to receive a COLA increase guided by CPI but dependent upon affordability. PRP will continue to be paid but will no longer be consolidated into basic salary and will be a one-off, non-consolidated percentage of basic salary between 0% for underperformers and 6% for outstanding performers.
- The Executive bonus scheme (for SLT) will be scrapped and the Executive will join the PRP scheme applicable to all staff. Richard Hughes is the line manager for SLT and there is a countersigning role which will be fulfilled by Officers;
- The Executive Secretary will manage a small budget to award spot bonuses in recognition of exceptional work throughout the year; and
- A progression pay scheme will be introduced to provide a mechanism for staff to progress within salary ranges specific to their individual roles. A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken to establish these ranges. There are some anomalies and these are being addressed on a case by case basis.

Training and documentation have been prepared conditional on Council approval and will be rolled out to staff early in December 2018 so that they can be used in Q1 2019 to evaluate and reward performance for 2018.

The Society also offers staff additional benefits. A review of these is ongoing and staff are being consulted on their preferences. A proposal will be taken to Officers in Q1 of 2019.

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FPC considered the costs of the new scheme at their November meeting. Financial modelling predicts it will deliver cumulative savings in the range £122k - £135k between 2019 and 2025.

Council APPROVED the pay, reward and performance management system.

10. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES (CM/74/18)

Council NOTED the reports of the standing committees.

Kate Royse said a paper will come to February 2019 Council regarding the amendment of the requirements for Chartership.

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11. ELECTIONS

11.1 Fellowship (CM/75/18)

Council AGREED to recommend to the Fellowship that those candidates listed should be elected as Fellows at the Ordinary General Meeting on 28 November 2018.

- 11.2 *Chartered Geologists (CM/76/18)*
The applications from Fellows listed to become Chartered Geologists had been approved by the Chartership Panel and were AGREED by Council.
- 11.3 *Candidate and Junior Candidate Fellowship (CM/77/18)*
Council AGREED to elect as Candidate Fellows and Junior Candidate Fellows those applicants listed.
- 11.4 *European Geologists (CM/78/18)*
Council APPROVED the names listed as European Geologists.
- 11.5 *Chartered Scientist (CM/79/18)*
Council AGREED to elect as Chartered Scientists those applicants listed.
12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- There was none.
13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
- 6 February 2019



GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

2019 AWARDS

Name	Affiliation	Award
Prof Edward Stolper	Caltech	Wollaston Medal
Prof Nicholas Kusznir	University of Liverpool	Lyell Medal
Prof Marian Holness	University of Cambridge	Murchison Medal
Prof Frances Wall	Camborne School of Mines, University of Exeter	William Smith Medal
Dr Anthony Barber	Emeritus, University of London	Prestwich Medal
Dr Nigel Woodcock	University of Cambridge	Dewey Medal
Prof Richard Law	Virginia Tech	Coke Medal
Dr Bramley Murton	National Oceanography Centre	Coke Medal
Mr Colin Day	NERC National Marine Facility, National Oceanography Centre	Distinguished Service Award
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre		R H Worth Award
Prof Emily Rayfield	University of Bristol	Bigsby Medal
Dr Andrea Cozzi	Eni Upstream & Technical Services	Aberconway Medal
Dr Andrew Parsons	University of Oxford	Wollaston Fund
Dr Sam Giles	University of Birmingham	Lyell Fund
Dr Jonathan Pownall	Australian National University	Murchison Fund
Dr Brendan McCormick-Kilbride	University of Cambridge	William Smith Fund
		President's Award
		President's Award