

CARDIFF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY
Minutes of AGM held in LCLT, Main Building
Wednesday 30th March 2022 at 7 pm

1. Minutes of 2021 AGM

Minutes agreed from the 2021 AGM.

2. Committee reports:

a. Chairman's Update

MW welcomed members and expressed great pleasure to see those that had gathered for the first in-person AGM in two years, and was grateful for Zoom to allow the CSS to continue functioning with a series of lectures and attracting new members from outside of Cardiff that would not normally be able to attend.

Secretary Corey Smith (CS) was thanked for successfully organising the Society's activities during the unusual times.

MW also thanked President Sir Richard Catlow for his enormous contributions to the CSS.

b. Secretary's Report

CS thanked members for attending the AGM and noted it was lovely to finally meet members in-person for the first time since taking over as Secretary in 2020.

CS acknowledged the outstanding lectures that were delivered as part of the 2021/22 programme and that Committee were pleased with the live turnout of members for the first Zoom lecture in October 2021. However, virtual viewings have declined throughout the programme and as lectures resumed in-person in March the low attendance for the speakers was also disappointing.

Thanks were made to the Royal Society of Biology and the Institute of Physics for collaborating with CSS once again, and the outgoing Sponsorship Officer was acknowledged for their work over the last few years.

CS noted the members trip to Bristol had still not been in a position to rearrange (more details later) and that a special schools-based lecture had also not been possible to arrange – the outgoing Schools Liaison Officer was thanked for their support of the Society.

CS concluded that the 2022/23 programme was almost complete which a host of eminent speakers and will begin on the Wednesday 5th October 2022.

c. President's report

Sir Richard Catlow (RC) was unable to attend and offered his apologies as CS read out his address to the audience.

RC acknowledged the challenge of the last two years and was pleased with how the Society has still been able to offer a series of excellent and stimulating talks to the membership due to online technology. RC expressed his pleasure in being able to deliver the first hybrid lecture for his Presidential Lecture on 9th March.

RC noted the importance of science in response to the COVID19 pandemic, therefore it is essential that scientific knowledge and achievement is communicated to the wider public through organisations like the Society.

RC concluded by thanking MW, CS and the rest of the committee for their work and members for their continuing support.

d. Treasurer's report

Before reporting on the accounts DC thanked:

- Tony Williams (TW) Membership Secretary, for collecting subscriptions and maintaining our membership database, and
- Cedric Mumford, Auditor, for checking our accounts in double quick time.

CSS membership numbers fell yet again from 174 to 142 paying members, a trend that is of concern. However, as the subscription was previously increased to £15 per annum our income was greater than in 2020-2021.

Total Income at £2,135 was an increase of 20% on the previous year.

Not surprisingly Expenditure at £608 was a considerably lower than in normal years, resulting in a surplus of £1,527.

Two items of expenditure appeared for the first time:

- Current account bank charges at £5 per month plus £0.40 per cheque, and
- Venue costs at £55 per lecture.

CSS reserves are strong at £6,659 and Society will have to see the effect of additional costs and inviting speakers from afar, incurring travel and accommodation expenses.

e. Membership Secretary's report

TW provided update on membership numbers: 158 in total – this is comprised of 137 paying adult members, 17 junior members and 4 Honorary members. TW noted that the membership numbers stated differ to those in the accounts as the Treasurer's number is based on the financial year.

TW will research the membership database over the summer as we explore ways to increase membership.

3. Election of Officers

MW thanked outgoing officers Dr Liam Thomas (Schools Liaison Officer and Minutes Secretary) and Chris Smalley (Sponsorship Officer) for their time and support with the Society.

MW noted that this AGM would be the last for Past President Prof. Kenneth Harris and acknowledged KH for his hard work and support with the Society and setting a precedent for future Presidents.

With the exception of those mentioned above, all other existing officers were re-elected.

MW proposed three new officers for election – Prof. Geraint Williams for Minutes Secretary, Dr David Webb for Sponsorship Officer, and John Ivins for Schools Liaison Officer. All proposals for new officers were seconded and agreed by the AGM membership.

MW commented that Sir Richard Catlow (RC) will begin his 3rd year as President in the autumn. A new Presidential candidate will join us in 2023 in order to replace RC the following year. It will be important to choose a suitable candidate from within Cardiff University and members will be notified once a name is agreed.

4. Membership fees

Agreed that membership fees will remain at £15 for 2022/23.

5. Alternative venues

Main Building now closes at 6pm meaning that additional fees have been incurred to cover staffing costs for Security to keep the building open (this arrangement was made for 9th, 23rd and 30th March). MW noted that members have also indicated that they are unhappy to now pay for parking as Main Building car park is no longer available.

The Committee are exploring other venues within Cardiff University for the new programme in the autumn. More accessible lecture theatres, no security charges and parking will be priorities considered. Members will be updated of any venue changes in advance.

6. AGM 2021 survey results discussion

MW acknowledged comments in the survey sent around from the previous AGM. The Society will take these on board in order to make improvements for future lectures:

- Lecturers need to make their introductions clear and ensure the content is appropriate for a lay audience. KW noted that speakers are informed of the audience in the

invitation, however Secretary can send out a reminder closer to the time of their lecture.

- Re-introduction of a public lecture will not be explored for at least another year.
- Topics for lectures, particularly focussing on vaccines, are being looked into.
- MW thanked Judith Foy (JF) for her hard work in organising the Bristol trip, that was postponed due to the pandemic, and it will be reorganised as soon as possible (ideally towards the autumn).
- Continuation of virtual lectures have been voiced by many members, however MW noted that the Society is at risk of dying if we continue in an online form and in-person events need to form the basis of its activity once again. Committee will still look at recording lectures to create an archive of talks, but **there will not be live streaming on the evening of any talk**. MW suggested mandating the wearing of face coverings if attendance in the lecture theatre is large in the autumn – KH noted that University guidance still urges staff and students to wear face coverings.

7. AOB

MW finished the AGM by stressing that the Society does not exist without the members – increased membership numbers is the future of the Society. Noted that other societies (e.g., History of Medicine Society of Wales) have up to 300 members, therefore all current CSS members need to encourage and actively recruit new members. Les Dingley mentioned that junior members may have a preference for virtual lectures, therefore we will need Schools Liaison Officer to encourage teachers to bring along groups of students.

JF noted that trips will be a good way to boost numbers as members may want to bring friends along, which will in turn generate more interest in the Society. JF also noted that we need to emphasise the social component of the CSS. MW suggested hosting some cheese and wine socials prior to in-person lectures.

8. Date of Next AGM

The next AGM will be held between two lectures at the end of the programme. Provisional date suggested is Wednesday 22nd March 2023.