

15th June 2010 AGM Minutes

Lord Jenkin of Roding (PJ) in the chair

1. MINUTES of the last Annual General Meeting (21st April 2009)

These are available online if people wish to read them www.scienceinparliament.org

Apologies for Absence: there was a long list of apologies which were not read out for reasons of time.

PJ explained to the meeting that Administrative Secretary Annabel Lloyd was very poorly at the moment and her position was being temporarily filled by Gemma Reay. On behalf of the Committee PJ wished AL well.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS,

PJ announced that the General Election had claimed, either through retirement or defeat many of the elected officers of the Group. Doug Naysmith and Ian Taylor had retired and Evan Harris had been defeated in Oxford. The Treasurer Robert Goodwill had been returned but as he had been promoted to the Government Whips Office he would no longer be able to continue in post.

PJ thanked all the retiring officers.

Retiring Members

Chair – Ian Taylor MP

Deputy Chair – Dr Evan Harris MP

Treasurer/ Secretary – Robert Goodwill MP

PJ noted that none of the executive positions were contested

Chair – Andrew Miller MP (Nominated PJ and seconded by Peter Jost)

Vice Chair – Tom Blenkinsop MP (Nominated by PJ and seconded by Andrew Miller)

Treasurer – This position will have to remain vacant until Phil Willis enters the Lords

Secretary – Stephen Mosley MP (Nominated PJ and seconded by Andrew Miller)

PJ welcomed all the executive officers to the Group.

The constitution allows for 9 Vice Presidents. PJ proposed that in the interest of keeping things simple whilst Annabel is away the Vice Presidents remain largely the same. With Dr Brian Iddon retiring as he had been a member the longest and adding Paul Ridout as a former advisory panel member.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Dr David Dent

Professor Peter Saunders

Robert Freer

Mr Ian Taylor

Prof. Julia King

Mr Robert Key

Professor Alan Malcolm

Dr Doug Naysmith

Paul Ridout

This was proposed by PJ, seconded by Peter Jost and approved by the meeting

LIFE MEMBERS – it was agreed at a council meeting on 19th January 2010 that the following retiring MPs should be appointed as life-members to the committee. All are former officers or chairs of the P&SC.

Dr Ian Gibson
Dr Douglas Naysmith
Dr Brian Iddon
Ian Taylor
Sir Michael Spicer
Dr Desmond Turner
Mr Robert Key

Resolution to approve the above as Life Members was proposed by PJ, seconded by Andrew Miller and approved by the meeting

ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS FOR 2010

As Paul Ridout has served three years on the Advisory Panel. It was proposed that Stephen Benn is nominated to the Advisory Panel and that Paul Ridout should be nominated to the position of Vice President

This means that the Advisory Panel will be Robert Kirby Harris, now Vice Chair of the Panel and Phillip Greenish (RAEng)

Resolution to Approve Stephen Benn to the Advisory Panel was approved by the Committee

COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR 2010 – it was agreed at the last council meeting that further representation from the engineering side of things. Two names suggested by Philip Greenish

1. David Brown – chief executive of the Institution of Chemical Engineers and also chair of the professional panel of engineering institutions. In the latter capacity, he chairs, and represents, all 36 engineering institutions
2. Paul Jackson – chief executive of Engineering UK (was the ETB until recently) which has a role in promoting engineering, particularly to young people

Resolution to Approve the additional council members for 2010 was proposed by PJ and seconded by Robert Freer and approved by the Committee

3. ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Members will already have received their annual report, if further copies required then please speak to the secretariat. PJ thanked Peter Simpson (PS) for his hard work in getting the Annual Report out.

The Annual Report contains the summary of the AGM and meetings held over the course of the year, plus details of the membership .

Resolution to Approve the Adoption of the Annual Report was proposed by John Dudeney and seconded by Lord Soulsby

4. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2009 ESTIMATES FOR INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR 2010

As the retiring Treasurer was unable to attend the Scientific Secretary reported on the finances.

The Accounts show an overspend of £1440 in 2009 and estimates for 2010 prepared in February 2010 indicate an anticipated increased overspend of £3237 for the year. This was estimated prior to arrangements that have been in operation since 1 May 2010 to employ additional part time temporary staff Miss Gemma Reay and a volunteer John Slater, Comino Foundation, but without pay, to replace the Admin Sec who is currently on Sick Leave on full pay. The net additional spend arising will amount to about £480 monthly. It was therefore

recommended by Council that Dr Dent be invited to reconvene the subcommittee that rectified previous problems related to overspend.

PJ thanked PS for the report and agreed the overspend was a worrying trend, he supported the formation of a Dent sub-committee which was seconded by Richard Bresick and approved by the Committee

5. REPORT FROM THE COUNCIL

Membership

PJ noted that at the General Election the committee lost rather a lot of its Commons membership through retirement and defeat so the secretariat are currently undertaking a programme to encourage new members to join. The President had written to all new MPs encouraging them to join. There has been some interest amongst new members. In addition to this the President reported that he had also been encouraging non parliamentary committee members to approach their MPs and suggest they join the P&SC.

Current membership is detailed in the annual report but the numbers have fallen again this year although only slightly. 126 Science & Technical Organisation (down 2), 32 Industrial (down 3) members, 44 Universities and 4 Associate members (stayed the same) we are currently processing two applications for membership and there is a third in the pipeline

PJ noted that one of the aims of the Dent sub-committee would be to encourage

Programme

The next meeting will be held on 13th July and the subject for discussion will be "Science and Engineering in Politics"

Speakers for the meeting planned for after the summer recess have yet to be determined but the meetings will take place on:

- 19th October - subject tba
- 16th November - subject tba
- 7th December - subject tba

The Annual Lunch is booked for 27th October. It will take place in the Cholmondeley Room, House of Lords.

It is proposed that a site visit be made to Culham Science Centre (a research centre in Oxfordshire with a strong focus upon cutting-edge science and technology. JET the Joint European Torus fusion reactor is located there). There will be no costs to members to visit the site, the only costs will be travel. PJ asked those interested in attending to raise their hands – around a dozen expressed an interest.

Science in Parliament

PJ expressed his thanks to Brian Iddon for his leadership and direction of the Editorial Board and the updating of the style and content of the journal to meet the ever increasing need for high quality articles related to the work of the Committee. His departure was a great loss to the Committee and he will be very difficult to replace. However moves are now afoot to reconstruct the Editorial Board in order to continue emulating the high standards that he established. The website also continues to grow in importance and relevance as the proportion of material freely available to all comers increases.

The circulation of the Whit edition will be received and delivered to Parliament tomorrow 16th June.

The summer edition is in progress and the theme will be risk

PJ thanked all the new officer and other for attending, in turn AM thanked PJ for his hard-work in keeping the committee going following the election.