

The Physiological Society

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 13 July 2011, University of Oxford

Unconfirmed Minutes

1. Nomination of Chairman

On the proposal of M Spyer, C Blakemore was elected as chair of the meeting *nem con*. M Spyer asked the meeting to approve the presence of Society staff members. This was approved *nem con*.

2. Welcome from the President

M Spyer welcomed Members to the AGM and pointed to the success of The Society's meeting in Oxford; as indicated by the largest ever number of delegates. He thanked his predecessor, Clive Orchard, as well as the former Chief Executive, Mike Collis, for all their work in driving The Society forward and developing the strategic planning. M Spyer introduced the new Chief Executive, P Wright, who briefly described his career and experience.

3. Stand in memory of deceased Members

C Blakemore asked those present to stand in memory of Members who had died in the previous year.

4. Minutes of the AGM held on 1 July 2010

The minutes were approved *nem con*. as a true and accurate record.

5. Election results

The election of four new Members (Rebecca Burton, William Colledge, Michael Evans, Stewart Sage) and two new Affiliates (Keith Siew, Jamie McPhee) to Council was noted. C Blakemore thanked all those who had put themselves forward and asked that unsuccessful candidates would continue to contribute to the activities of The Society and put themselves forward for election in the future.

6. Honorary Members

The approval by Council of Richard Dyball, Robert Edwards, Roger Thomas and Roger Tsien for outstanding contributions to either The Society and/or the science of physiology was noted. C Blakemore suggested a short round of applause and this was duly observed.

7. Annual accounts and reports of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2010

M Spyer opened this item noting that the Annual Report provided a comprehensive summary of the achievements of The Society and provided a presentation about The Society's plans and challenges in the future. In particular: the evolving nature of publishing; the tough environment for teaching and research; and the need in the next few years for The Society to identify new accommodation. Because of these challenges The Society had established two Task Forces – one on Publications and the other on Property – to develop a strategy and carry out appropriate research for consideration by Council. The first phase of these reports had been presented to Council earlier in the week. A question was asked about the

accommodation needs of The Society. M Spyer noted that the Council was considering what office space was required, whether the Cambridge and London offices should be combined and whether and how these could be used to help deliver the Society's charitable objectives.

R Dimaline then gave a presentation on the state of The Society's financial position and performance, noting that all Members had been sent the summary accounts but that the full accounts were available on The Society's website. The presentation primarily looked at the recent performance of the investments and journal publications. There was an analysis of the changing publication models followed by a summary of the key financial issues The Society needed to think about going forward.

Questions were raised about journal licensing income, ethical investments and the proportion of property in the investment portfolio. After a short discussion on ethical investments C Blakemore suggested that, although the Trustees were legally responsible for the investment policy, The Society's Finance Committee might wish to consider some of the concerns of its Members.

8. Membership subscriptions for 2012

R Dimaline reported that subscription fees would remain unchanged for 2012.

9. Revision of Memorandum and Articles of Association – special resolution

The resolution to revise, in line with the new Companies Act 2006, The Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association was approved *nem con*.

10. Re-appointment of Auditors – ordinary resolution

The appointment of haysmacintyre (Chartered Accountants) as the Auditors of The Society until the next general meeting and authorisation of Council to fix their remuneration was approved *nem con*.

11. Reports from the Editors-in-Chief of *The Journal of Physiology* and *Experimental Physiology*

D Paterson, Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Physiology*, gave a presentation on the recent performance of *The Journal* and also his plans for the future. P McLoughlin, Editor-in-Chief of *Experimental Physiology*, had given his apologies but D Paterson briefly talked through *Experimental Physiology's* achievements over the last year. A question was raised about the outcome of the publications review and M Spyer assured the membership that the details would be made available.

Three points were made during discussion: First, greater consideration should be made to gender balance in the various editorial boards, to which D Paterson noted that more female Editors were being appointed, but it would take a while for the changes to work through. Second, a question was asked about whether the Editors-in-Chief should have greater budgetary control. Finally, it was noted that in addition to the special focus issues on neuroscience and potentially on biophysics, consideration should be given to regular focused editions on physiology related to ageing.

12. Matters for discussion

Two matters, by Harold Hillman and Roger Thomas, had been raised in advance for discussion. The first question related to 'the right of Members of The Physiological Society to present communications at meetings'.

D Wyllie, the Meetings Secretary, answered specific questions on this issue. He confirmed that all Abstracts are subject to review for ethical and scientific content that complied with The Society's Governing Documents (DRA6 and DRA9). Members were content that the reviewing processes were effective and it was not necessary to change them

The second question was a general question asking the Committee (sic) whether it felt 'it had failed in its object of promoting the advancement of Physiology'. A discussion followed with members of the Executive Committee, especially M Spyer and L Robson, speaking in response. While some of the concerns raised were recognised, much work had gone into extending The Society's presence especially in Education and schools over the last 12 months, and this had made a significant improvement, which should produce much in the way of progression in this area.

The issue of teaching of physiology was briefly discussed and it was felt that with the introduction of increased student fees would mean that there would be a demand for better teaching."It was agreed The Society should continue to focus on the teaching of physiology and seek to support its Members.

13. Date of next Annual General Meeting

Thursday 5 July 2012, International Convention Centre (ICC), Edinburgh.