

Protein and Peptide Science Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry

Minutes of a Committee meeting held at 1 pm on Tuesday 2 June 2009, Burlington House, London

Present

Brian Austen (Chair), Kevin Howland (Secretary), Parvez Haris (Treasurer), Maria Bednarek, Weng Chan, Roger Epton, Robin Leatherbarrow, John Offer, Steven Ratcliffe, Lindsay Sawyer, Ram Sharma, Paul Sheppard, Chris Southan, Alethea Tabor,

1. Apologies

Farrah Bhatti, Corinne Kay, John Wade, Peter White

Maria Bednarek was welcomed to her first meeting.

2. Minutes of the last Committee meeting (11 December 2008)

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without amendment.

3. Matters arising not on the agenda

Bookmark copies of the banner were again discussed. Due to costs associated with mailing them it was decided to print 5,000 double sided, with sponsor logos on the back, which will then be distributed at relevant meetings.

Action PS

Peptides and Proteins Award. The frequency of the award was again discussed with the meeting deciding that, if the RSC continue to advertise the award and receive nominations, the award should be annual with a cheque for £500 and a medal or plaque. It was felt unnecessary to place restrictions such as career stage or location of the work in the nomination guidelines.

Action BA

4. Chairman's Business

The group received a request for travel sponsorship from a PhD student at the University of Nottingham. As this is something we don't currently offer as a group the request was declined. It was decided though, that in future we would, if funds allow, subject to certain criteria. It was felt 2 awards of £200 per year would be the maximum possible. Discussion of possible criteria included: the student must be a RSC member, the meeting must be relevant to protein and peptide science and that the student must be presenting their work. BA offered to draft some rules.

Action BA

It was noted that since Brent Irvine had stepped down as Group Secretary and resigned from the committee that the RSC's PPSG website was no longer being updated. The Chair proposed that Roger Epton be co-opted onto the committee to act as Web Officer, this proposal was seconded by Chris Southan and passed by the meeting. RE's role will be to continue managing the group's web portal www.ppsg.org.uk and to liaise with the web site staff at RSC to ensure the group's RSC website is up to date.

Action RE

5. Finances

PH reported that the group had a balance of around £2700. The increase in the balance is due to £1000 from MedImmune for the PPS Award sponsorship and £400 speaker sponsorship for Glasgow meeting (see below). There are some outstanding commitments in relation to PPSG committee meetings with monies owed for the last and the current meetings.

6. Report from Chemistry Biology Interface Forum

WC reported on the annual meeting that took place on 27 May at Burlington House. The meeting was essentially a series of presentations, firstly from within the RSC with Brian Austen (PPSG), Paul Dalby (Biotechnology Group) and John McCarthy (former CBiF chair); followed by a series of presentations from research funding bodies, EPSRC, BBSRC and The Wellcome Trust. Funding at the Chemical Biology interface is obtained via Committees C & D at the BBSRC, the Physical Sciences Panel at the EPSRC and through Project and Programme Grants at the Wellcome Trust.

WC also reported that the CBiF has ca. £58,000 available for sponsorship of meetings (regional workshops), sponsorship of students and inter disciplinary training. The winners of the Rita and John Corbforth Award (formerly the CBiF Team Award) were also announced (see CBiF Pages for details).

WC has now completed his two year service on the committee and another interest group will now be represented on CBiF: PPSG will have representation in the future. The group will still have input into CBiF as minutes are circulated to interest group chairs and the group can propose items for the CBiF Agenda.

7. Biochemical Society

PH reported on the Molecular Structure and Function Theme Panel meeting in May. Of interest to the RSC: the Biochemical Society are no longer running their large annual meeting and are happy to consider proposals for focused meetings including overseas meetings. Gordon Roberts is retiring as Chair of the theme panel and will be replaced by Michael Williamson.

8. Past Meetings

No past meetings to report.

9. Forthcoming Meetings

a) 4th Mini-Symposium on the 'Chemistry & Biology of Peptides', 9 July 2009, Oxford

The meeting will consist of four sessions. There are currently 85 delegates registered and registrations will be capped at 120 with 100 expected to attend.

b) Peptides as Contrast Imaging Agents for MRI and PET , IUPAC Congress, 3-7 August 2009, Glasgow
Keynote speakers are Stephen Mather, Barts, UK, sponsored by MedImmune and Robert Muller, University of Mons-Hainaut, Belgium as keynote speakers. Some poster abstracts have been elevated to talks.

c) 8th Australian Peptide Conference, 11-16 October 2009, Queensland

10. Suggestions for Future Meetings

a) Peptide Arrays

Stephen Hoare has written to BA suggesting a one day meeting on synthetic peptide arrays with George Bailey, Glasgow, as a co-organiser. His suggestion was to hold the meeting in Glasgow. It was agreed BA would write back saying we supporting the idea but suggesting London as a more practical location and also suggesting Mike Schutkowski and Rob Meloen as additional/alternative speakers.

Action BA

b) Synthetic Aspects of Glycopeptides

BA suggested a one day joint meeting with the Carbohydrate Group looking at the synthetic side of glycopeptides.

Action BA

c) Therapeutic Antibodies

A meeting on the structural aspects was suggested.

d) Academic Drug Discovery & Systems Biology

CS to select a definite theme and prepare a programme.

Action CS

12. Any Other Business

None

13. Election of New Chair

BA announced he was resigning as chair of the committee, but indicated he would be happy to continue serving on the committee. The meeting thanked Brian for his forbearance and work as Chair. Roger Epton proposed Brian Austen be co-opted as Programme Development Co-ordinator, this proposal was seconded by Ram Sharma and passed by the committee.

There were two nominations for Chair of the PPSG: Weng Chan was proposed by Brian Austen and seconded by Lyndsay Sawyer and Robin Leatherbarrow was proposed by Roger Epton and seconded by Steven Ratcliffe. In a show of hands, Robin Leatherbarrow was elected to serve as the next chair of the PPSG.

14. Date of Next Meeting

A Tuesday or Thursday in early September, if possible, at Burlington House, London was suggested.

Action KH