

THE ROYAL SOCIETY of CHEMISTRY

MID-WALES SECTION TRUST
(Registered Charity 207890)

Minutes of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013
at the Function Room, Brynamlwg Social Club, Aberystwyth
at 1.30 p.m. on Wednesday 13th February 2013

Present: Dr Brian Davies (Chair), Dr P.Cadman, Heather Carrington, Dr Jen Horgan, Dr Dayna Mason, Dr Ian Mercer, Stephen Moore, Dr Catherine Wilkins, Prof. Lyndon Rogers, AJS (Bill) Williams, John Williams, Merfyn Jones (Hon. Sec.)

- (1) Apologies for absence** were received from Keith Smith, Leigh Jeffes, Robert Crafts, Alun Price, Tony Wickham.
- (2) Minutes of the 2012 AGM** had been circulated. BHD signed the minutes as a true record of proceedings.
- (3) Matters arising from the minutes**
PC asked whether his concern about removal of the books from the Hugh Owen library had been followed up. BHD explained that they are usually taken to an offsite storage.
- (4) Statement of Accounts for 2012.**
Dr Ian Mercer presented the financial report for the year.
- (5) The Chairman's Annual Report on the activities of the Local Section**
Dr Brian Davies summarised the local section's activities.
- (6) RSC Council and the local sections (K. Smith)**
Professor Keith Smith sent the following report:
"Keith Smith raised the matter of the difficulties faced by Local Sections such as the Mid- Wales Section (caused primarily by low numbers of members spread over a wide geographical area) at an RSC Council meeting in October. There was considerable sympathy for and willingness to assist such sections among the Council Members present and in the light of this various steps have subsequently been undertaken to try to ameliorate some of the issues. The following is a summary.

A couple of other Regions have noted similar issues through their Regional Steering Groups – notably the Southumbria Section in the North East. A potential solution they are considering is through supporting Region-wide activities, such as Roadshows, with prepared resources that can be supported by members more widely. The networks team will help sections and regions share any ideas and resources they have.

In the interim the RSC will provide mid-Wales with additional funding to cover travel costs of member(s) from neighbouring Sections to support section activities. The Section is encouraged to continue to contact the networks team for support, either through financial assistance or communications, for any activities in the Section. Section Finances should never be an issue, as the Section can always ask the networks team for further support if necessary.

Clearly, this will not remove all of the difficulties faced by the Section. However, it should at least remove the burden of financial uncertainty and provide some assistance with organisation of events.”

(7) RSC’s educational activities in Wales (D. Mason)

The aims of the Regional Coordinators are to:

- To support and promote RSC education activities

- To coordinate and enhance regional education provision by contact with schools, teachers and pupils

- To collaborate with and generate networks of key stakeholders

The role involves working with teachers – highlighting the support that's free and available through the RSC

Visiting Higher Education Institutes – to support chemistry departments and outreach activities, especially with Teacher Training participants so that all teachers know about the RSC and membership and how the local cohort might support the local section.

Working with RSC member networks, local sections and divisions, on various education projects, particularly publicising ‘Chemnet’ by using ambassadors (40 had been recruited) to visit schools. The Chemnet scheme was now available for the 14 to 18 age group.

Working with industry, other organisations and institutes to promote chemistry education and enabling progress with “The Chemistry at Work Scheme”.

Dayna hoped, after the anticipated Mixer Meeting and Recruitment Visit, to continue to assist with the Mid-Wales Local Section.

Questions about the ‘Spectroscopy in a Suitcase’, suitable for A Level pupils and using UV/Vis and IR spectroscopy, were answered with the information that Bangor and Cardiff have kits based in their chemistry departments and that one could be made available in Aberystwyth. Dayna would train people to use the kit and it is understood that Roger Morel (AU Centre for Widening Participation) would be involved.

(8) RSC’s links with Parliament and the National Assembly

Leigh Jeffes sent the following report:

Cross-Party Group on Science and Technology — The next meeting takes place, at the Assembly, on Tuesday 5th March. The speakers will be the Chief Scientific Adviser, Prof John Harries, who will provide an update on the Science for Wales Strategy) and Dr Chris Chambers, who will give a talk on a proposal for a UK Evidence Information Service. Any presentation slides will be copied to MJ.

Science and the Assembly 2013 — The ninth annual event will be held at the Pierhead Building and the Senedd, on Tuesday, 21st May, from 12.30pm to 7.30pm, and will consist of afternoon presentations, evening buffet reception and an exhibition. The theme is: *Innovation as a driver of growth in the Welsh Economy*. The speaker

programme will be finalised by the end of February. All RSC members, in Wales, will receive an invitation to register, in early March. I hope that a number of Mid-Wales members will support this event.

Spring Party Conferences — The RSC will be represented at each of the four main political party conferences: Plaid Cymru (Beaumaris, 1-2 March); Labour (Llandudno, 22-23 March); Lib Dems (Cardiff, 19-20 April); and Conservatives (Swansea, 26-27 April).

RSC Links Scheme — We are relatively well-catered for in Mid-Wales. However, there are one or two gaps, including Montgomeryshire, which I would like to fill. We also have a number of regional AMs, who are not assigned. If any member would like to volunteer, please could they let me know?

Legislative Programme — Forthcoming legislation includes an Energy Bill and a Sustainability Bill

Science for Wales Strategy — Merfyn will be in receipt of the recent Ministerial Statement on the progress of the Science Strategy, and the Welsh Government's response to the calls for evidence on the Innovation Strategy for Wales.

Added by MJ to this report :

The Welsh Government has published its response to the Call of Evidence on the Innovation Strategy for Wales:

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/det/policy/121029innovstrategyresponseen.pdf>

The Welsh Government has released a five-page Written Statement on the Progress on *Science for Wales*:

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/cabinetstatements/2013/130103scienceforwalesen.pdf>

Parliamentary Links Day is Tuesday June 25th 2013.

(9) Brief Open Forum

See (12) Any other business

(10) Election of Officers and Ordinary Members of the Committee

the following were elected:

as Officers

Chair — Brian Davies
Vice-Chair — Tony Wickham
Hon. Secretary — Alun Price
Hon. Treasurer — Ian Mercer
Schools Liaison Officer — AJS Williams

as Ordinary Members

Phil Cadman
Robert Crafts
Stephen Moore
Ifat Parveen
Tabitha Roberts
Lyndon Rogers
Catherine Wilkins

(11) Election of Honorary Auditor for 2013

Lyndon Rogers was elected.

(12) Any other Business

Phil Cadman read out a letter he intended to send to the President of the RSC complaining about the high cost of retired membership of the RSC compared with that of the Institute of Physics. He was very dissatisfied.

Merfyn Jones informed the committee that although he had moved to Cardiff he would continue his responsibilities as RSC Benevolent Fund Volunteer Visitor covering Mid-Wales and had informed Professor Bill George (Benevolent Fund. Co-ordinator, Wales)

AJS (Bill) Williams wished to thanked the officers for coping with the large amount of correspondence, particularly the Chairman Dr Brian Davies and the Secretary Merfyn Jones and the previous secretaries, Dr Alun Price and Dr Jen Horgan.

BHD informed members that immediately following the AGM, a brief meeting of the local section committee would convene for the annual co-options to the Committee.

The meeting finished at 3.05 pm.

Merfyn Jones (Hon. Sec.)
4, Cowslip Close
Pontprennau, Cardiff CF23 8NH
e-mail zrc@aber.ac.uk Tel. 02920 735575