



## HEADS OF UNIVERSITY CENTRES OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

(HUCBMS)

2016

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 6 September, 2016 at Plymouth University

1. **Introduction.** The President-elect, Professor Kevan Gartland, chaired the meeting and expressed apologies on behalf of the President, Professor Yvonne Barnett, who, due to a family bereavement, was unable to attend. He thanked Plymouth University and, in particular, Dr Craig Donaldson and his colleagues for hosting and organising HUCBMS 2016.
2. It was noted that the minutes of the 2015 AGM had been approved by the Executive Committee and published on the HUCBMS webpages.
3. **President's Report.** The following items were highlighted:
  - a. The Executive Committee had met 3 times during the year – November, January and May. All meetings took place at IBMS, London.
  - b. The publication of the QAA Benchmarking Statements for Biomedical Sciences and Biosciences was noted. The exercise had been very successful in developing cooperation between the two subject areas, and in the case of biomedical sciences had allowed pharmacology,

human nutrition and physiology to be included within the overall 'biomedical sciences' umbrella of disciplines.

- c. The Executive Committee had submitted responses to *inter alia*:
- BIS Parliamentary Committee '*Review of Quality Assurance and TEF*'
  - Government Green and White Papers: '*Fulfilling Our Potential*', and '*Success as a Knowledge Economy*'
  - Nurse Review of Research Councils
  - Stern '*Review of Research Excellence Framework*'
  - NSS Consultation.

Thanks were expressed for the contributions of Executive Committee members in preparing the above submissions.

4. It was noted that the Executive had produced a position statement prior to the EU referendum expressing support for the UK's continued membership of the EU. It was noted that the implementation of Brexit will be a major issue for the Executive over the coming year(s).
5. The Executive had also expressed concern at the continued underfunding of HE in Northern Ireland and funding allocations in Scotland.
6. Professor Gartland reported on a positive meeting of HUCBMS officers with the President of the IBMS, Ian Sturgess[Sturdgess?], and the CEO, Jill Rodney. Discussions had ranged over various matters of common concern in higher education and regulation. It was agreed that there would be merit in developing a joint workshop involving HUCBMS, HUBS, IBMS and RSB on the theme 'the teaching of physical sciences and mathematics in bioscience programmes'.
7. The Hon Executive Secretary, Professor Gerry McKenna reported that the HUCBMS Travel Fellowship scheme had been suspended for 2016 due to lack of uptake. The Executive Committee felt that the value of the bursary was insufficient to attract significant interest. Professor Barnett has agreed to pursue sponsorship opportunities.
8. **Reports from HUCBMS representatives on other bodies:**
  - HUBS. Professor Janey Henderson reported on the activities of the Heads of University Centres of Biosciences including *inter alia* spring

and winter conferences, Bioscience Teacher of the Year and the proposed launch of an online biosciences learning and teaching journal.

- Royal Society of Biology Education Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC). Professor Jacqueline McCormack reported on meetings of the EPAC including issues relating to TEF and its implementation.
- Stormont STEM All-Party Group (APG). Professor McKenna reported on meetings of the APG including concerns about underfunding of HE in Northern Ireland.
- Council for Healthcare Science in Education (CHSE). Dr Donaldson updated the AGM on issues relating to CHSE including student recruitment, availability of placements and the proposed introduction of apprenticeships.
- Foundation for Science and Technology (FST). Professor McKenna reported on meetings of the FST including those relating to the Nurse review of the research councils and Brexit.

**9.** Professor McCormack informed the meeting that the HUCBMS' External Examiners Database was being updated and encouraged members to participate and persuade their colleagues to also do so.

**10. IBMS.** Ms Christine Murphy, Chair of the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee and Professor Val Randall, HUCBMS representative on the Committee, updated the meeting on current IBMS education issues including recent accreditations and revised procedures. Professor Randall also informed the AGM of changes to the editorial policy of the British Journal of Biomedical Science.

**11. Treasurer's Report.** The Hon Treasurer, Dr Ian Locke, presented a financial update to members. The overall financial position remains healthy with no increase in membership fee being necessary for 2016-17.

**12. Elections to Executive Committee.** The Hon Executive Secretary, Professor McKenna, reported that he had received 2 valid nominations (for Dr Craig Donaldson and Mr Merfyn Williams) by the stated closing date for election to the Executive Committee. Both were deemed elected for 3 years (2015-16 to 2018-19, inclusive). It was noted that the

local conference organiser for HUCBMS 2017 would be co-opted for the 2016-2017 academic year.

It was noted that the current President, Professor Barnett, was stepping down with effect from the end of the AGM. The Executive Committee had agreed unanimously that Professor Gartland should serve as President for 3 years.

Professor McKenna paid tribute to the leadership of Professor Barnett on a wide variety of fronts during her term as President. He expressed, on behalf of the membership and Executive Committee, best wishes to Professor Gartland for a successful term as President

**13. HUCBMS 2017.** A warm invitation was extended to all HUCBMS members and their colleagues to attend the HUCBMS 2017 conference which will take place at Anglia Ruskin University on 6-8 September, 2017.

(HUCBMS 2018 is scheduled to take place at the University of Essex?).

**14.Thanks.** Professor Gartland thanked the Executive Committee members for their work on behalf of HUCBMS and its members throughout the year.

There being no other business, the meeting was declared closed.