

Minutes of the SSIEM Council Meeting

Held on 6th December 2002 at 11 a.m. at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital

Council Members Present:

Guy Besley	Jean-Marie Saudubray
Mick Henderson (secretary)	Graham Shortland (treasurer)
Cornelis Jakobs	John Walter (chairman)

In Attendance:

Malcolm Heron

2002. 23. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ubaldo Caruso, Philip Lee and Kurt Ulrich

2002. 24. Minutes of previous meeting held on 14th June 2002, London

The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were endorsed as such by John Walter.

2002. 25. Matters arising from previous meeting

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

2002. 26. Annual Meeting 2002 Dublin

Philip Mayne submitted a final report which was discussed. Copies had been circulated in advance to Council members. Philip had posed a number of questions for Council to consider. These appeared in italics in the report. Taking these in order of appearance;

- Dietitians meeting. Council expressed the desire to support the continuation of these successful meetings. It was decided that they should take place on the Tuesday morning in parallel with the ERNDIM QA meetings, as happened in Dublin. The meetings will now be deemed to officially start on Tuesday and the above activities be included in the main programme of events. Delegates for the dietitian's meeting will be expected to register for the main conference, if only for the day. Speakers will be paid expenses from the symposium budget. The organisers will be expected to collaborate with the local organisers in order to avoid unnecessary repetition and to set the level of financial support. John will write to Anita MacDonald, the principal organiser in the past.
- Abstract submission. The deadline for submissions should not be set as a Monday since many are sent at the last minute and consequently from home addresses then often duplicated from a work address afterwards. It was felt that a Wednesday would be ideal. Cornelis will liaise with Neil Hamilton to minimise problems for the Amsterdam meeting.
- Sponsors. Philip highlighted a number of problems related to varying expectations from sponsors. Council decided that a set of guidelines will be drawn up and agreed. These can then be used by local organising committees in the future as a reference point.
- The failure of the football match to attract any interest spells the end of this event as a regular feature of the annual meetings.

- The nature of the traditional Tuesday evening reception was discussed. Council felt that it was perfectly acceptable to provide refreshments and only light snacks, provided that delegates were clearly warned in the programme that this is not intended to be the evening meal.
- Breakout meetings organised in addition to the main programme are not the responsibility of the local organising committee. It is appropriate that facilities be made available on request to legitimate organisations and groups of colleagues, but these must meet all additional expenses themselves and avoid clashing with the scientific programme.
- The question of funding the abstract books was raised. Guy explained that the Society orders a print run of approx 2,000 of these. 1100 are distributed in advance to all members, the costs of these are met by the membership subscription. The remaining copies are available to distribute at the symposium in the delegate bags. The cost of these normally comes out of the meeting budget.

Additional points;

- There were bogus applications to the meeting from two would-be asylum seekers. They had sought confirmation of registration prior to the payment of any fees. No more was heard from them when clarification of their details was sought.
- The bullet point 3 on page 6 needs amending to read that the reciprocal arrangement is with the chairman of the SIMD, not the chair of the international society.
- The Dublin meeting made a surplus, approx €40,000, due to the large number of delegates that it attracted.
- Malcolm reported that 20 delegates registered as members, and thus paid the reduced rate. They have subsequently been shown to be absent from the database of members. Council ruled that they should be contacted and given the choice of joining the Society or paying the difference of the reduced and full registration fee.

The report was felt to be a very useful document for the organisers of future meetings. Council expressed its gratitude to Philip for its production and paid tribute to the local organising team for a very successful conference. Furthermore Philip will be invited to the next Council meeting to elucidate and elaborate some of the points made and help in drawing up the guidelines for sponsors.

2002. 27. Future meetings

(a) International meeting 2003

- The abstract book will be published by Kluwer in the usual way. Discussions have taken place between the Editors and the local organising committee. Copies will be sent to all SSIEM members in advance and reviews from the meeting submitted to the Journal.
- The secretary (MH) will write to the local organising committee requesting appropriate rooms for the meeting of SSIEM Council and Corresponding members, Tuesday lunchtime and AGM Thursday lunchtime. In addition we will require space for the SSIEM desk manned by Malcolm Heron.
- There is growing unease at the prospect of no SSIEM meeting every third year. Some Council members have been critically questioned about this. However it is clearly acknowledged that the SSIEM undertook to support the International meeting. If and shorter SSIEM meeting was to be organised there must be no clash. There would clearly be a problem for organising the SSIEM AGM if the international meeting was to be held in July. The accounts could not be prepared in time but by law, since we are a legally constituted company, there has to be a legitimate AGM.

Council decided to seek the views of the whole membership by way of a postal ballot. Questions would be posed based on minute 2002.16.d of the Council Minutes.

(b) The Netherlands 2004

Cornelis Jakobs reported that progress was being made with outlining a possible scientific programme with the overall theme of metabolic encephalopathies.

(c) France 2005

There was a site visit to Paris in November by Cornelis and John. This resulted in 'The Maison de la Chemi' being chosen as the preferred conference venue. Although a little more expensive than its rivals it has excellent facilities all together under one roof. A PCO (professional conference organiser), BCA, has already provided a detailed assessment of potential costs. This is being scrutinised by Jean-Marie with help from the Treasurer, Graham. There are issues that need clarifying at the outset such as the responsibility for sponsors, which should lie firmly with the local organising committee and not the PCO. This venue will be booked for between the 6th and 9th September if it is still free at that time.

(d) International Meeting, Japan 2006

No further news about the meeting at this stage.

(e) Hamburg 2007

Kurt has requested that a site visit be conducted early next year to help decide on the conference venue. John and Mick will undertake this in the Spring.

(f) Lisbon 2008

Council considered the documents that were sent by Isobel Tavares. They constituted descriptive brochures about the city and the main conference centre, which certainly appears to have all necessary facilities. There was also a letter explaining the support that Isobel would receive in organising the conference and details of the local PCO. Council was satisfied that Lisbon will be a good venue and that the ingredients of a successful conference are all there. The one point that was made was that Council would like to encourage a collaboration between Lisbon and the other two main centres, Porto and Coimbra, in planning this conference.

John and Cornelis will make a site visit in early 2004.

2002. 28. Training Programme

Since neither Philip nor James were able to be present it was decided to defer discussion about training until the next Council meeting to which James will be invited.

2002. 29. Treasurer's report

- Graham Shortland presented a summary report.
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- It was agreed that the honorarium paid to the Journal Editor will be increased to £500 this year.

- There was discussion about the description, the budget, of the £19,825 residual from the Cambridge meeting as 'Funds held on behalf of the ICIEM'. There was an agreement prior to the Cambridge meeting that the SSIEM would under write the risk and thus either stand any loss or assume any profit. The funds cannot now be transferred to the ICIEM because this is not a constituted body with legal status. The largest part of the funds are, in fact, being used as seed money for the Brisbane meeting and as scholarships to encourage attendance. It was proposed that this description of the budget line be changed to 'surplus from the Cambridge meeting'.
- There will, by law, need to be a risk assessment of the Societies finances put before The Charity Commissioners. Graham and Malcolm have begun to draw up such a document. The principal risk is the cost of the annual meeting, likely to be about £250K for Amsterdam and £350K for Paris. Graham explained that there is now a need to insure the annual conferences against the potential full costs if there was an unforeseen catastrophe resulting in total cancellation. The cost of the policies, estimated at 1-2% of the budget, should be incorporated into the meeting budget. It was re-iterated that the Society already has public liability insurance.

Other risks were:

1. Loss of the support of Malcolm, this is covered by the duplication of Malcolm's work by a company of auditors in Sheffield at a cost of £1500 per annum
2. Fraud by Council members, this is low risk given that two signatures are necessary for any financial transaction

2002. 30. Publications report

Guy Besley informed council that:

- The flow of manuscripts remains steady, but the number of acceptable papers is still rather low. This has resulted in some delays in having sufficient pages for issues to go to press. Issue 6 of the Journal should be out next week, but issues 7 and 8 may be delayed until early next year. Issue 7 is currently being assembled and will contain a review article on management of IEMs and abstracts from the PKU meeting held in Elsinore this year and organised by Fleming Guttler.
- The review issue for the Dublin meeting should be a full issue and 20 speakers have been approached for review manuscripts. Two authors have declined. Of the remaining 18, 9 are currently in and prepared for publication; 7 are on their way according to the authors. This is better than usual, at this stage!
- For the International meeting next year arrangements are being made for the Neil Hamilton and Kim Bartlett to set up a web-based submission page. A publication for SSIEM members will be available from Kluwer, as in the past, but that the local organisers will arrange for a local publisher to use the electronically generated files. I very much hope that Bridget Wilken will help us to gather in review articles from this meeting. We have discussed this.
- Guy also raised the issue of the future of the Journal. He felt that there was a need to consider a staffed editorial office. This could have other administrative functions for the Society. It was decided to delay this decision for the present but to consider moving the production of the Journal from Kluwer to a more progressive publishing house such as the BMA Group.

2002. 31. Web site report

No report submitted.

2002. 32. Secretary's report

Mick Henderson had nothing additional to report.

2002. 33. Any other business

- Cornelis reported that since the retirement of Prof Frans Trijbels, Dr Tom deKoning, Utrecht, had been elected Chair of the Dutch Society and will be the corresponding member for the Netherlands.

Date and time of next Council meetings

Friday 7th February; The Old Board room. National Hospital for Neurology,
Queen Square, London (map available on request from the secretary)

Friday 13th June 2003

Friday 5th December 2003

Dr MJ Henderson

Honorary Secretary, SSIEM

December 6th 2002