

British Liquid Crystal Society
Committee Meeting, April 18 2011, Nottingham

Minutes

Present: Mark Wilson (Vice Chair), Martin Bates (Sec), Tim Wilkinson (Communications), Georg Mehl, Rob Richardson, Susanne Klein, Carl Brown, Peter Raynes.

1. Apologies: Duncan Bruce (Chair), Avtar Matharu (Treasurer), Sharon Jewell.
2. Minutes of 29/3/2010 signed off.
3. Annual conference in Hull, 2010: GM reported a profit of £1521. 84 people in attendance.
4. Annual conference in Nottingham, 2011. CB reported approximately 70 people. An expected loss of approximately £1000 is likely this year.
5. Winter Workshop. Mike Hird (via MAB) reported that the workshop had 41 delegates attended the workshop. The workshop was the first year (of 3) of the current EPSRC funding. Next year's workshop will be held 9-11 January 2012.
6. Finance. Treasurer's statement attached.
7. Election to committee / retirements. MW becomes chair, DWB becomes vice-chair. Avtar Matharu, Georg Mehl, Owen Lozman, Sharon Jewell and Ingo Dierking all have completed their terms on committee and were thanked. Ingo Dierking was the only nomination for treasurer. Owen Lozman was the only nomination as an ordinary (industrial) member. Both will be duly elected.
8. Future of the meeting. We discussed why the numbers at the BLCS conference have been dropping year on year. MW reported that he had asked around about the perception of the meeting. Responses were that (1) we do not have high profile speakers, such as Nobel prize winners, that other conferences are able to attract, (2) we are now a smaller field due to dwindling numbers studying liquid crystals, (3) the meeting is in the last week of holidays, (4) clash with other meetings and (5) the programme is not published far enough in advance. We discussed whether the meeting should be more widely accessible for others, but the general consensus was that it is a community event rather than a conference, and that the atmosphere should be kept as is and it should not echo an international meeting. We discussed the possibility of inviting people from France and Germany. The lack of advertising outside of the Society needs to be addressed, and the programme should be complete (apart from a few slots) and advertised around January.
9. Bursaries. A motion that a deadline for applications for bursaries should be used, passed by committee in March 2010, has been questioned by a member of the Society. We discussed options of keeping the deadline, scrapping it or having two deadlines per year, in January and June. The latter appeared to have backing by most of the members of the committee.