

Minutes of the Steering Committee of the British Liquid Crystal Society

23rd August 2012

Mainz

Members Present: Ingo Dierking (Vice-chair; ID), Stephen Cowling (Secretary; SC), Flynn Castles (Communications; FC), Verena Gortz (VG), Vasily Oganessian (VO), Nigel Mottram (NM), and Robert Richardson (RR).

These minutes represent the discussions that took place during the informal meeting as matters arose during the International Liquid Crystal Conference in Mainz.

ID raised the issue of BLCS not officially being affiliated with the ILCS and discussions were centred around this issue. It was decided that it would be appropriate for the society to be affiliated to the ILCS but this would need a careful review of the constitution to ensure it was acceptable to do so. Concerns were raised about any financial issues with affiliation. (Action: Board)

Corrie Imrie is standing down after serving his term on the ILCS committee and VG was nominated for appointment to the ILCS board. Members present agreed that this appointment could proceed but strategies for future appointments would need discussing at later board meetings. (Action: VG to contact officers of the board about this post)

SC expressed views that the current constitution required reviewing since the published one is a little dated and some of the recent changes are not in the document. Most agreed that the current version is ok but agreed that recent changes required a review. (Action: Senior Officers to review recent amendments)

Concerns about membership lists and fees were raised by SC + ID and these were discussed. Although FC highlighted that the website has a statement indicating that £10 from the registration fee for the BLCS conference was supposed to cover

the society membership for 1 year for the society member it was not evident that this money was collected by the society (particularly if the conference was to run at a loss or broke even). The suggestion was made that this portion of the fee was transferred to BLCS accounts before conference costs were calculated. SC + ID suggested that the membership fee should be clearly highlighted that it was retained in the conference fee while options should be sent to members who have not attended the conference to pay their fees separately, eg, by standing order or some such method. Some issues were raised that we need to show members what they are getting for their money or risk them refusing to pay the fees.

Regarding the membership list – FC has a list based on BLCS attendees (and others) which were passed on from Tim Wilkinson. (Action: FC to circulate the list to the officers of the board).

The role of women in the society was discussed and the board agreed to review prizes, nominations and voting to ensure that fair practice was pursued.

The “BLCS distinguished visiting lecturer” was discussed with regards to 2 names that have been proposed – Sandeep Kumar and Peter Collings. The board members present agreed that these were good nominations and that it would be important to ensure that BLCS got positive exposure for the funding and that a cap of £500 should be applied for covering costs. All board members are to be approached for their view on these awards prior to decisions on how to announce their awarding.

ID reported on the potential for a series of Anglo-German Collaboration Meetings, which are akin to Anglo-Japanese or Anglo-India which have been run previously. The German Liquid Crystal Society are quite keen on this idea and all board members agreed that it would be a good idea provided that it did not interfere with the identity of the BLCS. Discussions are still required as it could not be decided how best this would be achieved based on it being either a stand-alone meeting or extra 2 days after/before BLCS. RR, VG + NM expressed

concerns about visitors wanting talks at each meeting should it take place around BLCS or German LCS or risk low attendance.

FC was complimented on the high standard of the last newsletter and it was felt that provided there was sufficient contribution the standard should be upheld. A number of awards winner write-ups and bursary reports would give a good start. VG mentioned the Facebook site and there were mixed views about its efficacy and suitability for the society. In addition it was asked how we could improve the website with regards to making the site more attractive to visitors with, for example, links to journals in a similar manner to the ILCS website.

Stephen Cowling

Secretary