

Institute *of* Physics

Merseyside Branch Committee Meeting

11th December 2006 at 18.30

R337 Oliver Lodge Laboratory.

Present: M Poole (Chair), S D Barrett (Vice Chair), A Newsam (Hon Secretary), J Bradshaw, L Butcher, N Clitheroe, D Cox, M Houlden, L Heyhurst, S Hughes, D Joss, A Marks, N Marks, D Starling

1. **Apologies:** S L Bennett (Hon Treasurer), M Bode, M Chartier, A Fesmer, P James, D Martin, P Rowlands.
2. **Minutes of the last meeting.** The minutes of the last meeting (AGM) were accepted as an accurate record.
3. **Action items & Matters Arising not covered elsewhere:**
 - **Newsletter Meeting:** Held. See item 11.
 - **Capital of Culture:** MP has contacted Colin Whitehouse, but no response to AN to date.
Action: AN to have a standing item in the agenda for “Outreach”
4. **Louise Butcher – Region Officer:**

The committee welcomed Louise. LB reported on her initial thoughts about the post:

 - Main role is to deal with things that the branches cannot or should not really be doing
 - Capital of Culture a priority
 - NWRDA contacts important
 - There will be regular meetings between the LB and representatives of the 3 Branches.
5. **Chairman’s Report:**
 - The new Branch Constitution has been circulated and must be formally adopted at the next AGM.
Action: AN to put Constitution in Minutes for the AGM
Action: DC to ensure that website address of the constitution is in AGM announcement in the next Newsletter
 - **Nations and Regions Board:** Next meeting likely to be 8th February. MP Cannot attend, SDB to fill in if possible.
 - **Professional Development support from the Branch:** Not the same budget line as Meetings/Programme. Need to think beyond lectures.
Action: AN to put P.D. on Agenda for the next meeting
6. **Financial Report**
 - **Report Tabled:** Accepted
 - **Signing Cheques:** IoP permits single signature up to £500, but it was **agreed** that £100 was more appropriate (Proposed: MH, Seconded: NM, Unanimous agreement)
 - **Branch Meal:** It was **agreed** that an annual meal for Branch Committee members was a good idea (Proposed: NM, Seconded: SDB, Unanimous agreement)
7. **PhySoc Report**
 - **Guest Lecture:** Very well received talk by Sue Percival of Astrophysics at LJMU. Room T2 was packed.
 - **Christmas Party on 12th December:** All invited
 - **Big trip planned for May:** Possibly DESY + University of Hamburg

- **Student Membership:** There have been problems getting hold of the appropriate application form. It was felt that the issue of student membership was currently clumsily handled by the IoP. It was agreed unanimously that the committee should pursue this issue.

Action: SH and AM to arrange membership drive and liaise with Central Admin.

8. Programme

- **Reports:**
 - **Liverpool Physics Olympics:** An excellent event (for the 15th year running). 120 student participants.
 - **Nuclear Debate:** A good event, but surprisingly little debate – all three “debaters” largely agreed! About 50 attendance.
 - **Proud:** Excellent talk. ~20 attendance.
 - **125th Anniversary Event:** A good, unusual meeting. ~45 Attendance.
 - **6th Form Lecture:** Well received. ~150 attendance. Thanks to DC for liaising with schools.
- **Status of forthcoming events:**
 - **Wright (16/01/07):** OK
 - **Taylor (6/02/07):** OK
 - **Hodgson (22/02/07):** OK
 - **Bell Burnell (8/03/07):** OK. £250+VAT (+wine) allocated for the buffet
 - **Chomaz (22/03/07):** No known problems
 - **Jones (3/05/07):** Joint LMI/IoP event. Costs of a meal afterwards to be shared.
- **Summer Visit:**
 - Visit to Spaceport on the evening of **Thursday 7th June**. It was agreed that this should be a joint IoP/Spaceport event for local “Learned Societies”.

Action: AN to arrange for invitations to be sent to local societies

9. Capital of Culture: Ongoing, but little progress

Action: LB, AN and Caitlin Watson to liaise and (ideally) meet to discuss further

10. Education

Paperclip Physics: Currently costs £30K per year and will not run again without substantial changes. Alternatives sought with wider impact and/or less resource required

- AM to meeting Paperclip Physics people to discuss their ideas for alternatives
- Suggestions from the committee include:
 - **Physics Olympics:** Large impact for little financial requirements. However, there is quite a significant organisational effort (although some of that – e.g. designing “events” – has already been done)
 - **National Physics Experiment:** Probably Internet based. Is this feasible?
- Some of the barriers to P.P. seem to be:
 - Getting a suitably committed *team* (some schools have only one or two physics students in total)
 - The level of commitment in terms of time and travel.
- It was felt that it was important that any replacement must be driven by the **Education Board**, not the **Nations and Regions**.

Paperclip Physics this year:

- 6 teams from 3 schools in Merseyside
- Heat at Daresbury on 7/02/07
- Final at Daresbury on 23/03/07
- Judges being sought.

Travelling Schools Lecture: To be held at Merchant Taylor Girls (23/02/07) and Daresbury (date to be confirmed)

Non-specialist Teachers Conference: End of June.

11. Newsletter

A draft outline was tabled by DC and discussed. Jobs have been allocated (see attached summary).

12. Any Other Business: AM raised funding issues for the Cern visit but there were no concrete proposals.

Action: AM to raise at next meeting.

13. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 13/02/07 at 18:30, Rm337, Oliver Lodge Lab., Liverpool University.