

Minutes of RAGnet AGM held at Holiday Inn Hotel, Seaton Burn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

24 May 2001

Chair: Jacqui Forsyth

Present: Doreen Corlett, Lynda Thompson, Frances Tyson, Kerry Wilding, Andrew Kirchner, Steff Hazlehurst, Mike Ibbitson, Stuart Mealing, Clive Randall, Sue Mitchell, Jackie Andrews, Rosemary Hatch, Kirsty Dillingham, Nikki Muckle, Herbert Spring, Yvonne Salter-Wright, Georgina Fletcher, Andrew Fisher, Maria McKay, Diana Sibbick, Peter Townsend, Michelle Duxbury, Matthias Heger, Jacqui Holmes, Catrina Forde, Jan Lewis, Kerry Riches, Jane Gwizdala, Kathleen Callender, Greta Pearman, Diane Davis, Sarah Flux, Eileen Clucas, Joan Bradshaw, Philip Burbidge, Ian McCormick, Stuart Meakin, Sarah Manning-Press, Debbie Foy-Everett, Robert Sykes, Kate Hall, Alistair McCulloch, Maria Vasquez-Aguilar, John Culshaw, Chris Needham, Rose Freeman, Nigel Shaw, Janet Westell, Deirdre Kelliher, Arif Syed, Simon Kerridge, Kate Nimmo, Phil Clare, Jacqui Forsyth, Nigel Bilsbrough

1. Apologies for Absence

The following apologies had been received: Andrea Bailey, Pauline Muya, Sheilagh Ogden and Jen Shearer.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous AGM held at Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, Scotland on 4 May 2000 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the proceedings and were signed as such by the Chair. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. Annual Report 2000-2001 by Jacqui Forsyth

A written Annual Report was presented to the meeting brief highlights of which are given below:

- Several training events had been held including a new two day European Research Funding for Beginners course run in conjunction with UKRO and HEURO
- Membership remains stable at around 350
- 93 different HE Institutions are represented and 20 other organisations
- Corporate membership had been introduced for commercial organisations
- Associated Organisations were now known as Partners
- An extended mailing list was being developed to include learned societies, research funders and HE bodies
- Two part-time administrative assistants have been recruited
- One issue of *RAG Times* has been produced and the Tenth Anniversary Issue is almost completed
- The web site has been further enhanced and extended
- Finally thanks to all the committee and members for their help and support throughout the year.

4. Financial Report for 2000/2001 by Kate Nimmo

A written Finance Report was incorporated in the Annual Report showing the position as at the 31 March 2001. Key points to note were:

- The association continued to maintain healthy reserves
- The large deficit shown against the Spring Workshop 2000 was because income from the event had mostly been received outside the current financial year
- Events were priced to cover costs

- The costs of the two part-time Executive Assistants were intended to be met from recurrent membership fees
- The Bursary Scheme had not been widely utilised but would be publicised again
- Given the large balances held the scale of bank charges levied had been queried at the last Annual General Meeting. Alternative arrangements had been investigated but because of the large volume of small value transactions going through the account this still appeared to represent the best deal.

5. Elections to the RAGnet Committee

The Constitution provides for four officers of the Association; Chair, Deputy chair, Secretary and Treasurer, 11 other Committee members and up to five co-opted members. During the year three members had resigned; Charlotte Wellington (Chair), Peter Rosenberg and Sue Ellwood. This left twelve members: Jacqui Forsyth (Acting Chair), Phil Clare (Acting Deputy Chair), Kate Nimmo (Treasurer), Nigel Bilsbrough (Secretary), Andrea Bailey, Steff Hazlehurst, Pauline Muya, Peter Townsend, Simon Kerridge, Maureen Skinner, Jen Shearer and Kerry Wilding. In addition, Matt Heger had been co-opted to the Committee during the year.

In accordance with the terms of the Constitution the meeting was asked to formally elect Jacqui Forsyth to the post of Chair, and Phil Clare to the post of Deputy Chair. Carried unanimously.

The following members were unanimously elected to the committee:

- Rosemary Hatch, University of Plymouth
- Matt Heger, University of North London
- Sue Mitchell, University of Newcastle

The following member was co-opted onto the committee during the AGM:

- Greta Pearman, University of Sheffield.

6. Future Plans

Several future events were already planned:

- An introduction to European Funding Workshop will be run again
- The Introduction to Research Administration Workshop will be held for the fourth time at Loughborough in September
- An expert seminar on Issues Surrounding the Administration of Research Students is planned
- As is an expert seminar on IPR issues.

It was suggested from the floor that we might wish to consider conducting workshops for the benefit of our academic colleagues.

Members present were encouraged to suggest future topics for training events.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair reported that concern had been expressed by a member about the representativeness of a **RAGnet** response to a consultation on the merits of a staff cost calculator included in the Je-S Framework. The meeting noted that this had been compounded by the very tight time constraints placed on responses at a time when many members were committed to RAE activity.

The meeting felt it was important that **RAGnet** did contribute to such debates on behalf of its members, even where response rates were low, and agreed that the executive committee should respond to consultations after as wide a debate as possible amongst the membership. The meeting suggested responses could make it clear that the views expressed would not necessarily be held by every individual **RAGnet** member. The meeting noted that individual members were at liberty to respond on their own, or their institution's, behalf as they felt appropriate.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.40 pm.

Nigel Bilsbrough
Minutes Secretary
21 June 2001