

Society for Social Medicine

MINUTES OF THE 52ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL MEDICINE, HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON ON WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 17.20 HRS

32 people attended the meeting and it was chaired by Diana Kuh.

13. Minutes of the 51st AGM held in Leeds

The minutes were agreed as correct.

14. Any matters arising in the minutes not specified below

Last year the Pemberton lecture was introduced and members stated that they were happy for this to continue alongside the Cochrane lecture. A short piece explaining the significance of this lecture and current details about John Pemberton should be put on the website.

15. Honorary Secretary's Report

The report is attached. This included details of the current membership, the submission of abstracts for this year's meeting, other meetings that have taken place during the year, how to access the society's archives with the Wellcome Trust, and changes to the committee.

16. Honorary Treasurer's Report

The Society's finances were read, checked and reported as healthy. This is despite the small loss of £56 in 2007, which was mainly due to the higher cost of the ASM in Cork (joint with the IEA), funding student places with higher travel costs, purchase of the Iformix abstract submission website and increased admin costs. Members were reminded that the conferences aim to break even, not make a profit.

17. Report on EUPHA

The upcoming conference in Lisbon (November) received a record number of abstracts. It is being held alongside the ASPHER conference. EUPHA are proposing some changes to the constitution. The main change that affects the Society is that the Governing Council is being replaced, in part, by a Governing Board. Each country will only have 1 seat on the Governing Board (as opposed to 1 per member organization on the Governing Council), which means that SSM and the Faculty of Public Health need to decide between them who will be the representative. AL suggested to the Faculty that the SSM and the Faculty should rotate the official representative on the Governing Board every 3 years, with all papers etc going to a nominated "deputizing" delegate from the other organization. The Faculty have still to respond to this suggestion.

18. Report on IEA European Federation of Epidemiological Societies

- RW reported that the upcoming meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil will be the biggest ever. The next European meeting will be in Warsaw, Poland in 2009. It was suggested that a piece be included in the newsletter advertising the dates of the World Congress of Epidemiology in Edinburgh (2011) and other IEA meetings.

- We are in to the second year of the CORESE project (registration as a NGO). The third report has been released and will be included in the newsletter. There has been no feedback/enquiries on this from members. By January 2009 we may be in a position to recommend withdrawal from the trial.
- At the end of 2008 Robert West will step down as past-chair and has suggested that an alternative IEA rep is sought. This will be advertised in the newsletter.

19. Election of Chair-Elect, two Ordinary Members of the Committee and Honorary Members of the Society

Martin McKee was agreed as Chair-elect. Neil Raymond and David Batty were elected on to the committee. No honorary members were elected this year. There is a well recognised generation gap in terms of the retirement of prominent society members, and as four honorary members were elected last year, it was decided not to elect any this year.

Leaving the committee this year are Kate Dunn and Stephanie Taylor. Robert West leaves his role as past-chair but remains on the committee as IEA rep until a replacement is elected. Many thanks go to these three for their hard work over the past few years.

20. Future scientific meetings

The venues for future ASMs are as follows:

- ASM 2009 - Newcastle (9-11th Sept).
- ASM 2010 - Belfast (6-8th Sept)
- ASM 2011 - Warwick (14-16th Sept)

21. Any other business

- HSRN – The society has been asked to affiliate with the Health Services Research Network (HSRN). This will be of mutual benefit and will not cost the society. It will give the society a stronger voice on consultations, etc. The exact links are yet to be decided, but may involve cross-membership of the two committees.
- The committee has decided to conduct a survey of the membership to solicit views on the current state of the society, for example, the barriers to attending the ASM, the declining attendances of heads/senior staff, affiliations with other groups. This will be carried out online over the next few months and all members will be asked to take part.
- A structured discussion concerning affiliations with other groups and the ways the society spends its money should be included on the agenda for next year.