

# Society for Social Medicine

## MINUTES OF THE 53<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL MEDICINE HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE ON WEDNESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009 AT 17.10 HRS

28 people attended the meeting and it was chaired by Nicholas Mays.

### 1. *Minutes of the 52<sup>nd</sup> AGM held in Southampton*

The minutes were agreed as correct

### 2. Any matters arising in the minutes not specified below

No matters were raised.

### 3. *Honorary Secretary's Report*

The report is attached. This includes details of the current membership, the submission of abstracts for this year's meeting, other meetings that have taken place during the year, details of the membership survey, and changes to the committee.

### 4. *Honorary Treasurer's Report*

The Society's finances were read, checked and reported as healthy. This is despite a £7k loss from the Southampton ASM in 2008, which was mainly due to a low number of delegates attending the conference. We are now paying EUPHA per member – reflecting our membership as an affiliated organisation – rather than the numbers of those who elect to receive EJPH via their SSM link. Throughout the year there have been several instances of minor fraud (fake direct debits being set up), but any money lost has been re-paid by the bank.

### 5. *Report on EUPHA*

At the last Governing Council meeting in Lisbon 2008, the new strategy and the new structure of EUPHA were accepted. It has come to light that there are still some issues that need further discussion, as the constitutional change needs to comply with legal requirements under Dutch law. Until the constitutional change has been made, the new Governing Board cannot yet take up its functions. Consequently the Governing Council will remain in place until then.

The Executive Council has accepted a new individual member from Moldova. Both Malta and Turkey have been invited to bid for the organisation of the 2012 conference. A new EUPHA section on urban health will be proposed for acceptance by the GC in November 2009. There is one candidate proposed for EUPHA president for the period from November 2010 to November 2012: Prof. Walter Ricciardi from Italy. In addition, Prof. Johan Mackenbach is stepping down as Editor-in-chief of the EJPH at the end of 2009. In May 2009, the editorial board proposed one candidate, Prof. Peter Allebeck. The SSM committee accepted both these nominations.

The expected debt for 2009 was 20,000 Euro. Due to the economic crisis, low exchange rate and increase in expenditure, the debt is expected to rise to 30,000 Euros this year. Members asked whether this had implications for the society (i.e. increased subscription). AL will ask about this.

## *6. Report on IEA European Federation of Epidemiological Societies*

David Batty has now taken over as IEA/EEF rep and attended the recent meeting in Warsaw. No host has been identified for the 2010 European meeting (after Finland pulled out) and therefore, there may be no European meeting for 3 years (2011 is the World Congress in Edinburgh). Concerns were raised over the lack of action by the European board. Nick Mays, as Chair of SSM, will write to Neil Pearce and Jorn Olsen of the IEA Council to express our concerns.

## *7. Update on membership survey*

Results from the survey are currently being analysed. Some ideas which are being taken forward include moving to an electronic newsletter, redesigning the website and creating a new place on the committee for an early career researcher. A summary of the survey results and the actions taken by the committee will be produced and circulated to the membership in due course. However, in the mean time members should know that we are using the information collected and more will follow on this subject.

## *8. Affiliations with other societies*

A document outlining the current affiliations with EUPHA, IEA Europe and HSRN was circulated. The new link with HSRN should be strengthened, including links to each other's website and newsletter, and having a co-opted HSRN member on the SSM committee (and vice versa). In addition, the document included suggestions for future affiliations from the survey. Many of these were very specialist and would not be suitable, but some suggestions may be useful for advertising the ASM and other meetings.

## *9. Election of Chair-Elect, two Ordinary Committee Members and Honorary Members of the Society*

Margaret Thorogood was agreed as Chair-elect. Elizabeth Breeze and Gita Mishra were elected on to the committee. John Gabbay and Allen Hutchinson were elected as honorary members. Leaving the committee this year are Cindy Cooper and Mark Gilthorpe (ordinary members) and Robert West (co-opted IEA/EEF rep). Many thanks go to these three for their hard work over the past few years.

## *10. Nominations for Honorary Secretary*

Amy Downing is stepping down as Honorary Secretary and nominations for a new secretary are being sought. Should there be more than one candidate a vote will be organised. The committee and members present at the AGM thanked Amy for her work over the past five years as secretary.

## *11. Future scientific meetings*

The venues for future ASMs are as follows:

- ASM 2010 - Belfast (6-8<sup>th</sup> Sept)
- ASM 2011 - Warwick (14-16<sup>th</sup> Sept)
- ASM 2012 – London (provisional - dates to be decided)