

Minutes of the ACEM Committee Meeting
Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham
01/02/02

Present;

Brian Eyden, Alan Curry, Jill Moss, Liz Curtis, Tim Ryder, Jim Wetton, Jill Sparke.

Apologies for absence received and accepted from Bart Wagner.

The meeting was opened by BE at 1.30pm and the two newcomers were welcomed, Tim Ryder as ACEM representative on the National Occupational Standards initiative and Jill Sparke as secretary responsible for the minutes and the membership database.

The minutes of the previous meeting were passed as correct with the addition of the names of those present, JM, AC, BW, BE.

Dublin meeting: progress report from BW via BE

The speakers for the ACEM meeting in Dublin are more or less finalised as Barry Dowsett, Stuart Cameron, Glenn Anderson and Peter Furness.

BW had said that this year the Path Soc would not be prepared to waive the registration fee for our invited speakers (although they did for the last meeting in Liverpool).

BE will follow this up and ask BW for clarification.

Action **BE**

LC asked what the general feeling had been about having the meeting in Dublin.

JM replied that it had been very positive and no one had argued against Dublin. Opinion was divided about the desirability of another meeting in addition to Dublin.

Progress on Website development and membership database JW

JW has moved the web site from a free host to his commercial space. It has a more prestigious image. He will not charge for this at the moment but a peppercorn rent may be payable in the future.

There had been a suggestion that an NHS or University server might be approached but these have problems and it was agreed to leave this for the present.

The ACEM has two web addresses;

acem.org.uk and electron-microscopy.org.uk. The second of these, being much more general, should enable people to find our web page even if they are unaware of the organisation's existence.

There has not been much change to the non-members' pages.

For the members' pages, the security is now in place . It is very safe, but members must be diligent about changing their passwords frequently and always logging off before they leave their computer.

Referring to earlier comments about keeping all members of the committee informed, JW said one way of doing this would be to have a Forum restricted to committee members, where information or proposals etc could be posted. At the moment only responses to a posting are flagged up, but it may be possible to flag up the initial postings in this forum.

JM said that in practice it is much easier and quicker for her to respond to emails than to access the web site.

It was agreed that communications with JM would be by email but that the forum would also be tried. This could also provide a useful record.

It was agreed that in general all the committee members should be kept informed even if only one or two are actively involved.

There is a forum where members can post images and text.

Discussion followed about possible restrictions or vetting of what could be posted.

JW said there should not be anything defamatory or the site would be shut by the server. It is possible to ban certain images and words or emails from certain addresses.

There should not be any way of identifying the patient from what is posted on the site.

Do we want 2 forums, one for interesting cases and one for "what is this" images?

BE was concerned about the possibility of wrong interpretations if any member could post an image stating it showed certain features, without any form of refereeing.

TR suggested that to begin with postings should be of the type "what is this? I think it might be....." We could reserve the interesting cases and good examples for a training forum and these would need to be reviewed.

JW said he needs a form of words to use as a doorway to the members' forum. LC to make a draft and circulate it.

AC said we need some help with how to post an image, digitised? jpeg? Guidance will be needed on the appropriate format for items for web pages.

The Forum already has outline information on this. For those who do not have the technology or are not confident using it, images can be sent to the webmaster, LC.

There is a News Forum where matters of general interest to all members can be posted, e.g. details of the next meeting

JW said the site is within 2-3 weeks of being ready for making it open to the members.

Action LC

He is concerned about the number of empty pages. We need to supply material for them.

Suggestions included;

TR's Resin Survey, JM's Immunogold methods.

Image database. We could invite all members to submit say 5 images with a legend and magnification. Subject to vetting these could be included in the image database which could then be searched on key words.

The copyright would remain with the person submitting the image

? Action
TR and JM

The membership database.

JS is working on this. A list of the proposed fields was circulated and accepted with the addition of a Membership Number field.

There will be different levels of security/access.

e.g. Finance details may only be accessible to the treasurer.

The web master will be able to access parts of the site related to its management.

JW as designer of the whole site has access to everything.

After some discussion it was agreed that existing members will have access to the whole site (except for finance details) after they have paid their annual fee. They will be allotted a membership number and be issued with a password. They can then access the site. They should check their own details in the database and amend any that are incorrect. This will be their responsibility.

New members pose more of a problem. TR said there must be criteria for membership or the ACEM cannot stand as a professional organisation. Applicants for membership need to be vetted. It should be relatively easy to check UK applicants from the professional registration bodies and personal contacts.

Checking that overseas applicants are bona fide electron microscopists will take longer, but the EM manufacturers and suppliers may be able to help.

The applicant should meanwhile be given "guest" membership. This will not allow access to the whole site, in particular not to the address list.

This is to safeguard the ACEM members against trouble-makers.

A membership application form should be downloadable from the public part of the web site, but for the present, potential new members should apply by post to the secretary, JS, who will verify their details.

Commercial /corporate members

These would not have access to the address list, nor would they pay an annual fee as such.

Jeol had been approached last year and were prepared to make a one off donation but not a regular commitment. LC to contact Pete Lander to check the offer is still there.

Philips may also have made a similar offer. Check this with BW.

Action LC

Action ?
AC

JW would like us to clear up an inconsistency which is on the website because it was in the information he was given. In one place the ACEM is open to electron microscopists working in the veterinary/animal field, but in another place it is restricted to clinically relevant work.

JM/TR

BE drew the discussion on the website to a conclusion in the light of subsequent items on the agenda and the need for some members to leave early. He emphasised that the Website, although very important, shouldn't replace face-to-face meetings, and invited a summary of what we are to do for the web site. JM will draft this with TR

Training Program

JM said that when she attended ACS meetings she was frequently asked about the ACEM's training program and she had to admit that there wasn't one, nor were there any trainees.

JM felt that Val James, recently retired would be a good person to develop this.

JM will write to VJ to say the committee unanimously agreed to invite her to become a member of the committee as Training Program Development Officer. JM will send VJ copies of the relevant documents and ask for ideas for elements of a training program as required by the National Occupational Standards in Healthcare Science

Action JM

Treasurer's report/invited speakers' expenses.

AC said the balance was about £60, but that the situation will improve when the surplus £966 from the Sheffield meeting is transferred to the ACEM. The necessary signatures have all been obtained and AC handed out copies of his letter to Haley Tingle, Accounts Dept., Northern General Hospital.

AC also handed out copies of the Direct Debit form for members to use for paying their annual fee of £10 to ACEM. The form would be downloadable from the website.

JW suggested we could also have payment online with credit/debit card. This has the advantage that everything is handled by the bank, the treasurer just gets a statement and it would be the simplest method of payment for people outside the sterling area. The ACEM would not hold any card details.

There would only be an initial setting up cost, approx. £125. This is the sort of thing Jeol might finance.

JW will send AC the information about internet banking.

TR proposed that subject to agreement by the treasurer and chairman the ACEM should proceed to offer online payment of fees.

Meanwhile, payment can be made by cheque or direct debit. DD forms will be sent out with the newsletter, see below.

Action JW
Action BE
and AC

There was discussion of the pros and cons of making all annual fees payable on the same date or individually from the date of first joining. With either system an automatic reminder could be set up. It was agreed that fees should be due annually on the date of joining.

Payments to invited speakers

After discussion it was agreed that AC will contact Barry Dowsett to get an idea of what funding he would need. BE will then suggest to BW that he makes an informal phone call to the other three speakers, possibly offering £50, but rather dependent on the reply from BD.

Action AC
/ BE/ BW

JM remembered that the Path Soc was offering up to £1000 to small groups to help with the cost of satellite meetings. Much of this might be taken by the cost of room hire and coffee etc, but any funds remaining would be very useful.

Action JM

Journal affiliation of ACEM

BW had suggested to BE that the ACEM should become affiliated to the journal, Ultrastructural Pathology.

BE did not agree and felt that ACEM was in the process of developing a functional affiliation with Path Soc (which has its own journal, Journal of Pathology) and General Diagnostic Pathology (the EM symposium issues) and it might be argued that any affiliation should be in the direction of these journals. BE also wondered how many ACEM members currently read Ultrastructural Pathology to merit affiliation. JM felt that if we affiliated to Ultrastructural Pathology, the journal's publisher would impose obligations: there was too much else to do and there were no clear immediate advantages.

It was agreed that a decision should be deferred until BW was able to put his points in person.

TR asked if ACEM is recognised by the IBMS.

There is the possibility of CPD points for membership of ACEM .

It would be nice to get some JBL questions on articles with direct relevance to electron microscopists.

Action TR

Newsletter

It was felt to be important to send all members a newsletter. This should give details of the Dublin meeting and AGM, and information about the website plus notification of the annual membership fee. When this has been paid, existing members will be sent a password to access the members' part of the website.

BE and AC will draft a newsletter and circulate it to the committee.

Members need to receive the newsletter and Direct Debit forms by early March.

Action
BE/AC