

The Earth Science Education Forum (England and Wales)

Minutes of the fourteenth meeting

Held at the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, at 2 p.m. on Tuesday 21 September 2004.

Present: Allan Rogers, Chairman (BGS Board and Parliamentary Adviser)
Chris King, Vice-Chairman (Earth Science Education Unit / Geological Society of London)
David Bailey (British Geological Survey)
Peter Davies (IOM³)
Peter Jones (UKRIGS)
Cally Oldershaw (ESEF(EW) Development Officer)
Duncan Purdie (Challenger Society)
Roger Trend (Geographical Association)
Helen Turner (Health and Safety Executive)
Malcolm Walker (Royal Meteorological Society)
Martin Whiteley (Earth Science Teachers' Association)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Warren and from representatives of the following member organisations: Association for Science Education; Committee of Heads of University Geoscience Departments; Geological Curators' Group; Geologists' Association/Rockwatch; Learning, Teaching and Skills Network; Mineral Industries Educational Trust; MIRO; National Stone Centre; Open University; Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology; Quarry Products Association; Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers; Royal Society of Chemistry.

2 Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited round-table introductions. He reported that the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Earth Sciences had asked the Forum to handle their administrative business. As a result, the Minister of State for Higher Education had agreed to open the Forum's first Annual Conference on 19 October. There would be no direct costs to the Forum, but benefits would include improved access to Ministers. There was no news yet as to whether the bid for ALSF funding in support of the Conference had been successful. It was agreed that the Forum should support the All-Party Group. It was further agreed that expenses incurred by the Chairman and Development Officer should be reimbursed and a simple day-rate payment structure be devised to cover the Development Officer's time.

3 Minutes of the thirteenth meeting, 13 July 2004

The minutes of the thirteenth meeting were accepted as a true record. DB to upload a copy to the ESEF(EW) website.

Action: D Bailey

4 Matters arising

[Numbers in square brackets are paragraph numbers from the minutes of the previous meeting.]

[4.3] *LTSN representation:* CO advised that Lorraine Craig would be the LTSN representative; Neil Thomas would continue on the mailing list to receive information about the Forum, but would be unlikely to be able to attend.

[9.4] *Current state of geology teaching in universities:* CO had done this and forwarded information to Kathy Whaler and Malcolm Walker. CO to check with Hazel Rymer whether the information had reached Kathy Whaler.

Action: C Oldershaw

[9.5] *Meteorological courses:* M Walker reported that the link on the Royal Meteorological Society website was being changed. He would inform CO when this was done.

Action: M Walker

- [5] *Annual Conference*: deferred to Agenda Item 5 below.
- [6.2] *Development Officers' expenses*: Officers of the Forum will agree a daily rate for the Development Officer. **Action: Officers**
- [8] *ESEF(EW) website*: Action completed.
- [12.1] *Promotion of Forum*: CO had contacted P Doyle. Action ongoing. CK asked whether a short article could be written explaining the work of the Forum. **Action: C Oldershaw**
- There was further discussion about raising the profile of the Forum in Wales. PJ, CK, and M Whiteley to present a paper at the next meeting. CO to invite key contacts in Wales to attend the Forum. **Action: P Jones, C King, M Whitely, C Oldershaw**
- [12.2] *DEFRA's Local Science Guidance*: Action completed.

5 AGM Conference and Constitution

- 5.1 A summary programme and list of delegates were tabled. Chairman noted that Dr Kim Howells, Minister of State for Higher Education, would give the keynote speech. DP noted that there were few delegates from university earth science departments and asked whether the venue was too small. Chairman responded that it was considered important to hold the Conference in Westminster, to include government. Further, there was no charge for use of the venue. This was the first event organised by the Forum, next year we can consider a bigger event.
- 5.2 Chairman reported that the Geological Society had agreed to publish a short report in the November issue of *Geoscientist*, with a fuller write-up in the December issue. CK offered to write a press release. **Action: C King**
- 5.3 Chairman suggested the Guardian, Times Educational Supplement and the BBC should also be contacted. He would ask the Minister of State if his remarks could be published. **Action: Chairman**
- 5.4 It was suggested that the Conference in 2005 could cover the public understanding of earth science and the wider educational picture (links to school education, environmental science etc.). Chairman advised that the date of the Conference was critical and a date early in the parliamentary year was preferred. A working title was agreed: 'Public engagement in earth science'. Members were asked to consider possible input and submit ideas in writing. It was suggested that Richard Dawkins could be invited to give a keynote address. **Action: Forum Members**

6 Finance report

- 6.1 Chairman noted that the Forum had been received financial support from Foster Yeoman (via Angela Yeoman) and Anglo American (via Owen Bavinton). He also thanked, on behalf of the Forum, Peter Davies who had arranged a subsidy from IOM³ to cover the costs of catering for the Annual Conference.

7 Development Officer's report

- 7.1 CO tabled a report. All member organisations, who had not already done so, should complete the proforma before the next meeting. Existing proformas should be reviewed. CO to send out copies of existing proformas and request new proformas where necessary. Organisations should be asked to confirm whether the information can be published. **Action: C Oldershaw**
- 7.2 CO circulated a list of members' contact details.

8 ESEF(EW) website

Metadata had been added to all the pages to improve the ranking of the site with search engines. The minutes of recent meetings had been made available for download and a notice announcing the Conference had been posted.

9 Potential collaborative projects

Nothing to report. Chairman asked members to provide any examples in writing at future meetings.

10 SESEF update

- 10.1 CK reported that SESEF and ESEU have been working together. A scheme, which will provide INSET across Scotland, was launched at the ESTA Conference in September; there are 11 facilitators.
- 10.2 SESEF had also hosted the ESTA Annual Conference.
- 10.3 SESEF would be attending the ESEF(EW) Annual Conference. The annual meeting of SESEF would be on 24 November 2004.

11 Government policy issues

Nothing to report.

12 AOB

- 12.1 Chairman asked members to suggest titles for future meetings of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Earth Sciences. CO would send members a list of all meetings held over the past four years. **Action: C Oldershaw, Forum Members**
- 12.2 Chairman asked whether individual companies, should be invited to join the Forum. There was a discussion concerning membership and it was agreed that it should continue to be inclusive, pragmatic and open.
- 12.3 RT reported that the Jurassic Coast Trust Fund had been launched on 20 September. An educational co-ordinator for the Jurassic Coast would be appointed shortly.
- 12.4 UKRIGS had obtained ALSF funding for five sites in the Derbyshire/Staffordshire area to be developed as an educational resources.
- 12.5 The NSC had received ALSF funding for several projects.
- 12.6 CCW supports two people to monitor RIGS groups across North Wales.

14 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 2 p.m. on **Tuesday 23 November 2004** at IOM³ in Carlton House Terrace.

David Bailey 14 November 2004