

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at 13:30 on 9 June 2021 via Zoom

Present: Nick Koor (Chair), Sian Davies-Vollum (Executive Secretary), Mark Anderson, Andy Aplin, Peter Burgess, Graham McLeod, Amanda Owen, Rebecca Williams, Kevin Taylor

Apologies:

In attendance: Karen Hanghøj (British Geological Survey), Jennifer Jamieson Ball (British Geological Survey) George Jameson (Geological Society)

	<i>Actions</i>
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	
There were no declarations of interest.	
2. APOLOGIES	
Apologies as set out above were noted.	
3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING	
The minutes were approved.	
4. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE MEETING	
Actions were discussed at various points throughout the meeting.	
5. BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION	
<p>The Executive hosted Dr Karen Hanghøj and Jennifer Jamieson Ball of the British Geological Survey to discuss public engagement and outreach activities and issues in 2021. The presentation provided an overview of why BGS have increased their activities in these areas in recent times. The main reason being the continued fall in the numbers of students taking geology. There is an acceptance that we all need to work together to reverse the trend.</p> <p>Nick summarised University Geoscience UK's strategic aims that he hopes will help with their shared aim of reversing this trend. Nick highlighted that they wish to collaborate with others where possible, engage with government, supporting teachers and be a unified voice for the community. UGUK are focused on areas where it is felt they can be most impactful, especially in areas such as geoscience education policy and school links. Education and industry links are being embedded through the development of degree apprenticeships. Nick added that the focus of their annual meeting centres on diversity and inclusion. In addition, they hope to lobby government and highlight the importance geoscience is to the UK's economy.</p>	

Karen agreed with the importance to strengthen links with government and that is why BGS have introduced a policy director to carry this forward. Jennifer pointed out that BGS cannot explicitly lobby government but they can achieve similar aims through their public engagement work. The move to net zero was used as an example of how they are currently doing this. They are committed to highlight the importance of critical metals.

All agreed that focusing on school children was extremely important as they are the future. Amanda pointed out all of the geoscience material embedded throughout the curriculum that currently goes unnoticed. It was agreed that those unfamiliar to this need to be reached in order for them to understand how important geology is to a functioning society.

The idea that numbers will bounce back is misguided. University departments and schools are very much still in a crisis. It was agreed that BGS and GSL need to do more in this space.

Members wondered if the community could replicate the HEFCE funded project to help physics a number of years ago. It would help inform society that studying geology can lead to fulfilling careers that contribute to the green economy.

6. MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE

Nick drew attention to a number of potential changes to the membership given some tenures coming to an end. Andy will be stepping down this year. As will Kevin. This requires a new treasurer being identified. Mark is happy to become the next Treasurer. Kevin is under the impression that this change has been confirmed. Rebecca noted that due to her maternity leave one year should be added to her role. Pete informed members that Peter Rowley will be replacing him when his term officially ends. Pete intends on organising a handover meeting which he hopes focuses on the website etc.

PB

It was suggested that in order to offset the potential of institutional memory loss it would be a good idea to have the previous Chair stay on the committee for at least one additional year. Mark thinks this is sensible. He added that he has a number of office boxes containing documents dating back to the 70's. He will send these to Nick.

MA

Graham informed members that he is unsure if he can take on the role of Executive Secretary due to a colleague going on long term sick leave. He is not in a position to able to guarantee the time commitment at present.

Later in the meeting Graham notified members that he will now be able to take on the role of Executive Secretary starting in August.

Sian added that she will share all of the necessary documentation with Graham via google drive.

SDV

Amanda informed members that due to work commitments she will not have the capacity to carry out the undergraduate remit this year but is keen to take it on next year. Pete volunteered to stand in for the year. He will get in touch with Sarah to find out if any activities were being planned. Rebecca pointed out that Sarah was

PB

working on Teaching support group including programme directors and shared COVID resources.

Nick stated that he intends on drafting text for a request for expressions of interest to join the executive within the next 2 weeks. He will send this to Sian to share with the wider community.

NK

Graham pointed out that he has received website training and can upload files to the website should members need to.

7. REPORT FROM JOINT HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE (JHEC)

Sian began by pointing out that she will put Amanda and Rose in touch with each other to discuss education matters.

SDV

The Geoscience Education Outreach Network is having a soft launch this week and Sian will share the link to members. Sian added that the Society intend on having UGUK and ESTA representatives as moderators on the network.

SDV

Other items discussed at the JHEC meeting included the upcoming Year of Space courtyard exhibition, the recently released 'Geoscience and the hydrogen economy' briefing note and a survey has been released focusing on the impact of Covid-19 on Earth science research. The link to the survey will be included in the email accompanying the minutes.

GJ

There are plans to hold a follow up meeting to drive forward the actions identified at the future of geoscience summit. It will be focused on identifying people to lead on certain actions etc. It was agreed that the strategy document should accompany any advertising of it. A date needs to be agreed and a Jam board was circulated in order for all those participating to work on collaboratively. This link will be included in the minutes.

GJ

8. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

i. Outreach to school initiatives

A meeting took place with Liz Whittington from the AGS/GSL Western Regional Group. They are actively providing outreach to schools in the region. Nick intends on developing a framework for all parties to use. This will be rolled out to other Regional Groups who may be interested in doing something similar. This was discussed at the JHEC meeting earlier. Nick has arranged to meet with Rose Want to take this further.

NK

Nick added that the Chair of the Federation of Piling Specialists' Early Careers Group has been in touch to propose collaborating on outreach to universities and schools. This could be integrated into the above piece of work.

ii. Degree apprenticeships

Nick stated that the contact list needs to be expanded beyond ground engineering. Nick has added contacts from the Geologists Directory but these are mostly smaller companies. He plans on sending out a call to the community in mid-July. He then hopes to hold a meeting and form a Trailblazer group and appoint a Chair.

Clare Middleton (DA Manager at Portsmouth), will present on the background at this meeting.

iii. *CIC presentation*

Nick presented to the Construction Industry Council in May with the Ground Forum. A working group is being set up to focus on this issue. Neil Parry will chair the group.

9. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- i. Sian highlighted an email sent by Rebecca earlier in the week. The email suggested that it would be more productive if the follow up summit meeting focused on actions rather than issues. We could identify people to lead on areas such as decolonising geoscience curriculum, designing inclusive fieldwork, creating inclusive departmental environments, inclusive pedagogy and reaching diverse audiences. The executive agreed with Rebecca's suggestions. Nick suggested that he and Rebecca should arrange a meeting to discuss this soon. Rebecca will work on fleshing out a plan and they should meet in a month or so to advance it.

**NK,
RW**

ii. *ES³ Benchmark Statement*

Sian informed members that this is undergoing a major review and that items such as equality, diversity and inclusion, employability and sustainability are made much more explicit. They are embedded throughout the new version.

The QAA held an EDI workshop for those participating in the benchmarking which was found to be very helpful.

Sian added that a questionnaire has been created and is being sent to relevant organisations asking for their views. She added that she intends on asking the wider UGUK membership their views as well.

SDV

It is hoped that by the start of the academic year a draft will be ready. A period of consultation on this will follow and they hope to have the entire process finished by the end of the year.

10. REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

Nick informed the Executive that an email reminding members that their annual payments are due has been sent. At present only 5 have paid while some are being processed. Only half of those emailed have responded. As of today the balance stands at £2355.

11. REPORT FROM OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Amanda took this opportunity to highlight the amount of work Maggie has done on the geology curriculum project. All of the information has been compiled. It is a matter of making it more presentable.

They are brainstorming about what to do and how best to highlight what geoscience is. There is a need to identify all organisations to share the resources with. In addition, Amanda pointed out that the best way to publicize it needs to be

AO

figured out. A suggestion to give talks at teaching associations would be one way to publicize it. Advertising it in the Times Higher Education

Amanda suggested that we need a uniform tagline to use. She is considering putting out a call on social media asking for submissions. Members agreed to send their ideas on to Amanda.

All

Mark provided the Executive with a brief update regarding the ongoing academic accreditation review. Two items they are currently working on are: finalizing paperwork required from departments and fleshing out the requirements around intended learning outcomes. Fieldwork remains on outstanding issue. It may not be a requirement and guidelines may be developed to help with this.

He added that Council have signed off on the general approach and it is expected that it will come into effect in the next academic year as this allows time to align with the benchmarking exercise.

Pete added that Geoweeek took place although it was a little subdued given the current climate. He intends on asking new Pete to look into the google analytics to see how active the website was during this period.

PB

The interactive poster project has not progressed but Pete intends on picking this up now. He will talk to his successor about this. Members highlighted that they have sent on lists of people to contact for the project. Pete will get in touch with some of the suggestions. He added that he will develop a script for the interviews and will circulate it via email for comment.

PB

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional items raised under this section.

13. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

The following dates have been set:

- 10/11 November 2021
- 10 March 2022
- 8 June 2021

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION LIST

Item	Title	Action	For when	By whom
6.	Membership of the executive	Organise a handover meeting		PB
6.	Membership of the executive	Send all documents to Nick		MA
6.	Membership of the executive	Send all relevant information to Graham via google drive		SDV
6.	Membership of the executive	Pete to take on undergraduate remit for one year		PB
6.	Membership of the executive	Draft text for a request for expressions of interest to join the executive & send to SDV		NK
7.	Report from JHEC	Put Amanda in touch with Rose Want		SDV
7.	Report from JHEC	Share GEON link with members		SDV
7.	Report from JHEC	Include Survey link with minutes		GJ
7.	Report from JHEC	Include Jam Board link with minutes		GJ
8.	Report from the Chair	Meet with Rose Want to discuss school outreach		NK
9.	Report form the Executive Secretary	Meet next month to discuss agenda for November thematic meeting		NK, RW
9.	Report form the Executive Secretary	Canvassing the wider UGUK membership on their views RE: Benchmarking		SDV
11.	Report from other Members of Exec	Decide on method to publicize their work		AO
11.	Report from other Members of Exec	Send suggested taglines to Amanda		All
11.	Report from other Members of Exec	Ask successor to analyse web traffic during Geoweeek		PB
11.	Report from other Members of Exec	Circulate draft text/format for interviews RE: interactive map		PB