

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 8th September 2020 • via Zoom

1. Quorum

There were 35 BSCR members present including members of the current committee, so the AGM was declared quorate.

2. Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting

These were approved as being a true record of the proceedings.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. Treasurer's Report

Current financial situation

The Treasurer indicated that whilst the financial situation of the Society had stabilised over recent years, after the drop in funds incurred by the 40th Anniversary meeting in 2014. The costs to the BSCR are largely associated with the Autumn Meeting and in general the organisers have been able to raise substantial sponsorship to cover the costs of the meeting. However, this is proving increasingly difficult, resulting in increased expenditure associated with meetings. In addition, there has been a progressive drop in paying ordinary members. Provisionally, total funds currently stand at ~£208K including the Marshall Prize legacy with a general balance of ~£68K at the end of financial year 2018/19. The committee continue to discuss approaches to ensure the future financial stability of the Society. The 2018/19 accounts were ratified by attending BSCR members.

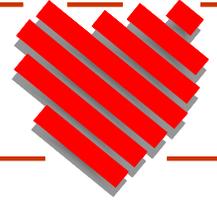
Membership

Whilst the total number of BSCR members has remained relatively constant over recent years, the proportion of those who are students, who pay a lower membership fee, has progressively increased and is now ~60%. The situation has improved somewhat this year, as the new Administrator has been diligent in chasing up members whose recurring payments had failed to go through.

5. Chair's Report

Meetings

The Chair highlighted 2 BSCR meetings which have taken place since the last AGM: (1) BSCR symposium at Pharmacology 2019: 'Detecting endothelial cell dysfunction towards the identification of novel therapeutic targets' in December 2019 at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre; Organisers: May Azzawi and Steven White; (2) BSCR Autumn Online Symposium; organisers Carolyn Carr, Dave Greensmith, Karen Porter and Daniel Stuckey. The Spring Meeting was cancelled due to Covid and the proposed programme for the Autumn Meeting, which was to be held in Bristol, has been carried over to 2021.



Sponsorship

The Chair thanked the BHF for their continued support of the joint BAS/BSCR joint Spring meeting and commercial sponsors for their support of previous Autumn meetings, highlighting that these were largely cost-neutral thanks to the hard work of the meeting organisers and committee. She reiterated continued difficulties in obtaining commercial sponsorship and that this is unlikely to be helped by the current financial climate.

Profile of the BSCR

The Chair highlighted established links with the BCS and BAS and a continued relationship with the British Pharmacological Society (BPS), which currently comprises a BSCR-organised symposia at the BPS Winter meeting (reviewed in competition with other proposals) and a BPS named lecture at the BSCR Autumn meeting. The BSCR also has links with the International Society for Heart Research, British Society for Gene and Cell Therapy and the Scottish Cardiovascular Forum.

Bernard and Joan Marshall Awards

In discussion with the Marshall family, these awards were paused for 2020, returning in 2021.

BSCR Publications

The Chair advised that abstracts from the BAS/BSCR Spring meeting will continue to be published in Heart. Since 2018, abstracts from the Autumn Meeting have been published in Cardiovascular Drugs and Therapy (CDT) with no charge to the BSCR. These are published in a special issue with review articles from the Marshall ECI finalists. Although there are no abstracts from the 2020 meeting, a Meeting Report will be submitted from the Webinar. The Chair also reminded attending members that CDT has a dedicated 'BSCR member submission' article type on their online system and members were encouraged to consider submitting suitable articles to the journal.

Opportunities for Young Investigators

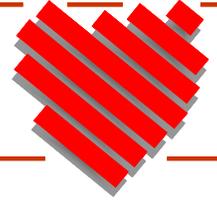
The Chair encouraged eligible BSCR members to apply for the Young Investigator Prizes at both the Spring and Autumn meeting and also the BCS Michael Davies Early Career Award. In addition, student members were reminded of the BSCR travel bursary scheme to support presentation at main BSCR meetings (whilst noting that there is a limited budget) and the Bulletin travel award scheme to support attendance at relevant (inter)national cardiovascular meetings.

Logo Competition

The Chair announced that the winner of the Logo Competition, which had been held over the summer, was KC Park from the University of Oxford, with Natalie North from the University of Leeds as runner up.

Closing remarks

The Chair encouraged colleagues to join the BSCR and to continue to support and contribute to its Spring and Autumn meetings; this included a request for proposals for future meetings and early career symposia. The Chair also highlighted the BSCR Ambassador programme whose aim is to encourage increased engagement of the BSCR membership. Finally, the Chair thanked the BSCR committee and membership for their continued support.



6. Secretary's Report

Committee meetings

Over the past year the committee had met on three occasions: 13th January 2020 (Salford), 8th June 2020 (Zoom) and 7th September 2020 (Zoom).

Committee elections

The Secretary advised that 2 committee members (Helen Arthur and Daniel Stuckey) will reach the end of their 3 year terms in December 2020 and Catherine Wilder has resigned from the committee for family reasons. Andrew Bond's membership of the committee has been extended by a year as he is organising the Autumn Meeting in Bristol next year.

Five nominations for new committee members were received for 3 places which necessitated an election. The number of voting members was 125 Susan Currie, Sophie Saxton and Jovana Serbanovic-Canic received the highest number of votes and it was therefore recommended that they be elected to the BSCR committee from 1st January 2020 for a 3-year term. This was ratified by attending members.

The Secretary reported that the Committee had discussed changing the title of the Chair of the Society to that of President, in line with other similar Societies. This was also ratified by attending members.

New BSCR President

The Secretary thanked Karen Porter for her excellent leadership of the Society for the last three years, highlighting that she had been a member of the committee since 2014 and had organised a very successful Autumn Meeting in Leeds in 2016. Sanjay Sinha will take over the role of President in January 2021.

Committee composition

The committee composition and office bearers from 1st January 2021 will be as follows:

Chair

Sanjay Sinha (President) University of Cambridge Term end: December 2023

Secretary

Carolyn Carr (Secretary) University of Oxford Term end: December 2022

Treasurer

Sarah Withers University of Salford Term end: December 2022

General committee

May Azzawi Manchester Metropolitan Term end: December 2022

Rob Bell University College London Term end: December 2022

Andrew Bond University of Bristol Term end: December 2021

Mairi Brittan University of Edinburgh Term end: December 2022

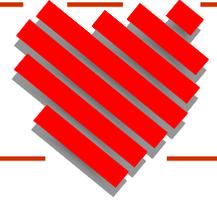
Susan Currie University of Strathclyde Term end: December 2023

David Greensmith University of Salford Term end: December 2021

Sophie Saxton University of Manchester Term end: December 2023

Jovanna Serbanovic-Canic University of Sheffield Term end: December 2023

Christina Warboys Imperial College London Term end: December 2021



The Secretary thanked the three outgoing committee members for their valued contributions to the Society.

Forthcoming BSCR meetings

- Joint BSCR/BAS/BCS Spring Meeting 2021: 'New frontiers in cardiovascular science' date and location tbc
- BSCR Autumn Meeting 2021: 'Tissue engineering and regenerative medicine in cardiovascular disease' (incorporating Early Career Symposium) 6-7 September 2021, University of Bristol, Organisers: Andrew Bond, Anita Thomas, Raimondo Ascione, Paolo Madeddu.

7. Bulletin Editors' Report (presented by the Secretary on behalf of Christina Warboys)

The Secretary reminded the members that, over recent years, the Bulletin has changed from a printed document, to an email attachment and then to a section of the website. In part these changes were because it was getting increasingly difficult to gather sufficient material. The committee therefore propose to replace the Bulletin with a section on the website for 'Meeting Reports' which could include both travel reports and reports from meetings of related societies. The Society will continue to provide bursaries for students to attend national and international meetings (UK meetings £100; European Meetings £200; International Meetings £300). In order to apply, applicants must have been a member of the BSCR for at least 1-year prior to application.

8. Webmaster's Report (presented by the Dave Greensmith who has been maintaining the website while Christina Warboys has been on maternity leave)

The BSCR website includes links to funding and careers opportunities, the Marshall awards and meetings/sponsorship. The 'Get in Touch' button provides direct contact to the BSCR officers, webmaster, social media officer and sponsorship officer. The website runs in parallel with the BSCR Twitter account, @BSCRResearch, which now has ~840 followers. Attending members were encouraged to provide relevant content and to retweet in order to maximise exposure of the Society. The webmaster specifically highlighted the possibility for members the use the BSCR website/Twitter to promote job advertisements, studentship opportunities, cardiovascular meetings, awarded grants, published papers etc. Members should send relevant content to Christina Warboys, cwarboys@rvc.ac.uk.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Date of the Next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM will be held on Tuesday 7th September 2021 at the University of Bristol.