

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*
Department of Biology

BIOLOGY OUTREACH COMMITTEE: 18 December 2008

Present: John Pillmoor (Chair and Strategy Board Link)
 Caroline Calvert (CNAP)
 Adrian Harrison (Departmental Outreach Organiser)
 Thorunn Helgason (Academic Representative)
 Chris Kelly (Technical Representative)

Apologies for absence:
 Jasper Green (Postgraduate Representative)
 Ottoline Leyser (Research Committee and Academic staff representative)
 Richard Swinnerton (Undergraduate Representative)
 Chikako Barlow (Secretary)

		Action
08/27	Welcomes JBP welcomed Chris Kelly to the meeting. Chris is standing in for Nicola Charlton during her maternity leave.	
08/28	Minutes of the Last Meeting (13 June 2008) These were accepted as a true record and will now be posted on the web	CB
08/29	Matters Arising a) 08/16a: Work Placement Requests ABH has reviewed the Trident scheme which provides a centralised system for work experience placements. Following registration, they find students to fill the opportunities we identify to them. However, it was concluded that there was probably insufficient willingness/capacity to take more students above those who apply directly to us. With the reduced staffing in Teaching, there was no possibility of offering work placements in this area at present. It was therefore decided to not register with Trident at the moment but this will be kept under review if a number of groups come forward who are prepared to regularly take work placements. b) 08/16e: Biology Matters JBP reported that a new editorial team was now in place following promotion of this opportunity through Hilary Jones' post-doc web site. There had been a lot of interest in the call which bodes well for the longer term ability to keep the editorial team going. The new team are close to completing the next issue and the provision of funding for the print run of around	

	<p>£500 was agreed. Unfortunately the previous editor has not left the email list of schools previously circulated, CMC to see if she can contact him.</p> <p>c) 08/20: Database of Activities ABH and CK have created a full list of activities and this had been useful in providing a script in responding to enquiries. They will now consider producing a summary, possibly by key stage that would be suitable for posting on the web.</p>	<p>CMC</p> <p>ABH/CK</p>
08/30	<p>Previous Events Update</p> <p>A wide range of activities had been undertaken with the following particularly noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Key Stage 2 Microscopy event run through the Excellence Hubs had been particularly successful. – ABH had given a presentation at the Bioscience Colloquium at the National Science Learning Centre which had got good feedback. 	
08/31	<p>Events Log</p> <p>a) Staff Census Results JBP reported that the inclusion of a questionnaire about outreach activities in the annual staff census had been very successful. Details of outreach activities undertaken were provided by 45% of all academic staff. The data from the census was felt to be much more accurate than from the previous <i>ad hoc</i> calls to update the log and will be repeated in the future.</p> <p>b) Current Log and Future Update Mechanisms It was felt that the current log available on the web was not actually up to date as the 2007/8 summary circulated with the agenda was missing many events. ABH will check with CB.</p> <p>With the success of the annual census for academic staff, mechanisms to obtain more reliable data on inputs from other groups were discussed. The PhD's were felt to be fairly well covered through the need to obtain approval from ABH for Green Card points, although a mechanism to easily summarise numbers involved are required. It was suggested we discuss with Julie Lord possible mechanisms of capturing outreach activity of the undergraduates. For post-docs and technical staff it was suggested that a tick-box might be included in the Performance Review. This will be explored further in the light of the BBSRC Excellence with Impact, discussed later.</p>	<p>ABH</p> <p>ABH/ JBP</p>
08/32	<p>Next Major Events</p> <p>The next two major events noted were Science Week and the Science Trail.</p>	

	<p>Science Week comprises of Discover and Explore (9-11 March) and the Discovery Days (12-14 March).</p> <p>The topic of Discover and Explore is the “Sun” and involves half hour workshops for 30 x 11-13-year olds. Unfortunately only Lab 3 is available which somewhat restricts our options – a round robin of 4 stations might work best in this lab. There is also a problem of transfer times. At present there is no obvious session that we could use but a further call will be put out, especially to the plant and environmental areas.</p> <p>The topic for the Discovery Days, again to be held at the Railway Museum, is currently unknown. The opportunity for the post-docs to use this as their show-case event will be explored with JG. ABH noted that Sarah Mitchell had directly placed a call for input in the Bulletin.</p> <p>The Science Trail has been set for the 2 April and involves 40 minute activities aimed at 11-14 year olds. We would probably offer the DNA fingerprinting as the default but other options will be explored. The lab availability needs to be checked but should be OK as this is out of term time.</p>	<p>ABH</p> <p>ABH/JG</p> <p>ABH CK</p>
08/33	<p>Excellence Hubs</p> <p>ABH reported that some 5 events have already been booked through the Excellence Hubs and the system is working very well. The main planning meeting is in October and we essentially provided a list of possible options which are then selected from to meet demand. Some funding is available for consumables.</p>	
08/34	<p>Science and Society</p> <p>This was now operating as a general discussion forum with the main task being the organisation of Science Week and the Science Trail. However, general discussion of the University’s approach to outreach was also discussed. A further meeting is planned in January.</p>	
08/35	<p>Budget</p> <p>ABH reported a net expenditure of £2,387 against a budget of £3,075 for 2007/8. However, there is still some uncertainty whether one credit made to the account was correct or not.</p> <p>A new budget of £3,152 has been allocated by the Department for 2008/9 and very little expenditure has so far been incurred.</p> <p>The reserve accounts remain intact at around £10k.</p>	

08/36	<p>BBSRC Excellence with Impact 2011</p> <p>JBP reported on the expression of interest the Department had submitted to the above competition. Outreach activities were an important part of the bid which aims to create a cultural change to achieve higher engagement with impact activities. Over the next two years, the BBSRC will be evaluating both the changes we have made to develop a culture of recognising the importance of impact along with the actual impact achieved. The Outreach Committee was seen as one of our key vehicles to facilitate impact activities. As well as continuing with the good work we already do, the competition provides an opportunity to develop our outreach agenda.</p> <p>The potential to widen the TEBIS equipment for loan to schools was discussed in some detail. ABH had already floated the possibility of a major, national initiative with the National Schools Learning Centre but they had felt that this was too challenging. It was therefore agreed to work at a local level initially. CMC noted that she had approached Yorkshire Forward previously, while they had been interested, long term sustainability had been an issue. Getting the Local Education Authority involved and having something incorporated into their budget would probably be the only way of achieving long term sustainability. As a first step it was agreed to contact the schools who had used the TEBIS kit to ask whether they had any other specific equipment and protocol needs that we might be able to build on.</p> <p>Means of widening our approach beyond schools were also discussed. Possible, ideas were to extend the science trail beyond school children and consider activities for mother and toddler groups. CMC noted that Nicola Smith might have some more time next year to be able to explore mechanisms to contact the more difficult to approach groups.</p>	<p>ABH/CK</p> <p>CMC</p>
08/37	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>ABH noted that a number of UCAS applications this year had attended one of our outreach events, in particular the NAGTY summer school. This new information was now included in the UCAS application form. At present ABH did not have any time to be able to quantify the numbers citing previous outreach activities in the Department but will look into whether this information can be easily extracted.</p>	<p>ABH</p>
08/38	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>To be arranged for mid-Spring term</p>	<p>CB</p>