

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

DEPARTMENTS OF BIOLOGY AND CHEMISTRY

Biology – Chemistry Planning Group Minutes of Meeting held on 10th October 2011

Present: Debbie Smith (DFS-Chair), Richard Taylor (RJKT), Christoph Baumann (CB), Jennifer Potts (JP), Colin Kleanthous (CK), Tony Wilkinson (AJW), John Pillmoor (JBP), James Moir (JM), Keith Wilson (KSW), Gavin Thomas (GHT)

In attendance: Belinda Wade (BJW); Dave Smith for discussion of admissions and projects

Apologies: Rod Hubbard (REHu), Ian Fairlamb (IJSF)

Action

DFS welcomed Dave Smith, the new Chair of BoS for Chemistry, and Gavin Thomas who is shadowing JM prior to taking his place on this group as Chair of the BCH Executive Committee in April 2012. DFS also announced that CK would be leaving next April to take up a position in Oxford.

11/17 Minutes of the last meeting: 20th July 2011
The minutes were agreed.

11/18 Matters arising:

i) From minute 11/13(iii) BBSRC DTP

CK said that the advertising for DTP studentships needed to be in place soon and Leo Caves is talking to the other institutions involved about how to co-ordinate recruitment to these studentships. AJW will contact Leo to ensure strong Chemistry-Biology links in this area. Greater interdisciplinarity will mean new ways of both working and training.

AJW

ii) From minute 11/14(ii) BCH Executive Committee and BoS - ToRs

Enc 2a-b comprised the terms of reference for the Biochemistry Executive and Board of Studies provided by JM. RJKT said he would take these to Chemistry's Board for information and then they should be uploaded onto the web. All staff actively involved in biochemistry teaching are included in BCH BoS meetings so that, although it is an independent committee from the Department BoS, decisions do receive a lot of scrutiny.

iii) From minute 11/15 Finances of NMR Centre

RJKT said that interim measures had been implemented and high level cover for the EO in the NMR Centre was in place until the end of February. Chemistry will review the charging model in the near future but it would be better able to do this once the outcome of Simon Duckett's grant application to the Wellcome Trust was known. A review of NMR provision was needed in 2012. JP said that an application for a Wellcome Trust equipment grant for a cryoprobe was in preparation. A decision would be known next May.

11/19 Biochemistry admissions/teaching update

Enc 3 set out the agreed guidelines for handling Biochemistry (BCH) admissions this year based on a target of 45 Home/EU students. There are 74 new BCH undergraduates this year, while applications for 2012 are currently running at 1:1 with Biology. Chemistry's new labs will not be up and running until 2013. Increased recruitment will lead to a great demand for projects and both departments are reviewing the provision of these. DFS stated that even with CK, the Professor of Biochemistry, leaving, Biology is still wholly committed to the appointment of another Chair and to the BCH degree.

11/20

Anniversary Chairs/Readers

These 50th anniversary positions provide a great opportunity but the closing date for applications is October 24th. DFS asked about the possibilities of a joint appointment with Chemistry. It will be up to individual departments to decide who to progress but if there are applications in the Chemical Biology area then both departments will need to discuss these. Decisions on Anniversary appointment nominations need to be back with the University by December.

DFS informed BCPG that the recently submitted WT ISSF grant application had been funded in full, £500K over 3 years to be matched by the University. Thanks were given to Paul Kaye for taking the lead on this. It is a multi-department proposal to research into chronic disease.

11/21

Any Other Business

(i) *REF* – CK said that Neil Bruce would be taking over as Biology Research Committee Chair as of January 2012 and that Chris Thomas would be leading on REF. Both departments are on course for the mock exercise, although for some of Chemistry's impact case studies involving industrial partners, there could be an issue over the publication of details.

(ii) *TF Review* – JBP informed BCPG that the recent review of the TF by a panel of external and internal people had been very positive and a detailed report would be forthcoming in the next 8 weeks. There had been suggestions for improvements, for example in communication, feedback and better integration with strategic priorities between departments, and plans on how to move forward will be drawn up. JBP will report on progress at the next BCPG meeting.

JBP

(iii) *Equipment and matched funding* – It was noted that the change in funding rules by grant bodies is a large potential problem for departments and the University, which the new Academic Co-ordinator is already tackling. CK said that the amount of equipment affected over the past few years would equate to £100K per annum for Biology. This will be one of the issues raised at Biology's LTP meeting on October 14th.

Next Meeting: Friday December 2nd at 10:00 in Chemistry A107

Debbie Smith
Belinda Wade
18th October 2011