

British Society for Research into Learning Mathematics

Minutes of AGM

University of Birmingham, 11th November 2006

1. **Apologies for absence:** Hilary Povey
2. **The minutes** of the AGM held on 19th November 2005 were accepted as an accurate record
3. **Matters arising from the minutes:** matters arising were dealt with in the agenda for this meeting
4. **Treasurer's report:**

Hilary Povey sent apologies and in her absence Jeremy Hodgen present the treasurer's written report. Some aspects highlighted were the move to have an international invited speaker at the January research day which involves some expenditure. The move to publishing research in Mathematics Education (RME) as a journal has a £1,700 cost implication. Also up to £1,000 has been put aside for administration support for Executive members if required.

Sue Pope asked about whether making profit from conferences was appropriate when some members do not get financial support from their institution. Jeremy Hodgen said that in future this may not continue due to full costing of rooms, etc, which makes a significant difference to the cost of a day conference. Kenneth Ruthven said that this will continue to be monitored.

Thanks were given to Hilary Povey.

5. **Membership Secretary's report:**

Birgit Pepin presented a written report. recruitment was good. We now have the highest number of new members as well as the highest total membership since 2000.

Tim Rowland said that there have been three life members for a long time. He asked whether anyone else was being considered by the executive. Birgit Pepin replied that we were not considering anyone else at present.

Alan Bell asked who the three life members were. Birgit Pepin said that she would check exactly who the three life members were and could be contacted by email if anyone wanted to know.

Thanks were given to Birgit who will complete her term of office at the end of 2006 and hand over to Sue Elliot.

6. **Publications Secretary's report:**

Dietmar Küchemann presented his written report. The future of Research in Mathematics Education (RME) and Informal Proceedings (IPs) is discussed later in the agenda.

During 2006 we have published one RME and three IPs. RME8 should be completed at the end of the year.

Alan Bell said that he would want a paper version of IPs. Kenneth Ruthven said that this will be discussed later in the agenda.

Thanks were given to Dietmar Küchemann who will be continuing within his role as Publications Secretary.

7. **Chair's business:**

Kenneth Ruthven gave an oral report. Our activity has included being members of JMC and we are in regular contact with ACME. Both these are useful forums to maintain profile of research in mathematics education in the wider community. It is useful to remind people that many good ideas which appear later in national documents and strategies have their origin within research carried out by BSRLM members, and so what a valuable role mathematics education plays. In the current climate it is important that our contribution is seen.

BSRLM is involved in a joint project with AMET, MA and ATM which is particularly concerned to support new entrants to ITE posts. Thanks particularly to Dave Miller and Sue Pope for their work on this project and in achieving further support from the TDA.

Regarding capacity building within the community of researchers in mathematics education, we have had contact with other bodies. However, their interest tended to be in funding more frontline classroom activity. We have started talking to ESRC in relation to its own initiatives to renew the social science research community. This has not yet led anywhere but we might consider making links with the science education community to strengthen our voice.

The other main issue over the year has been the development of RME which will be dealt with in the next agenda item.

8. RME:

Draft agreement has been made with Taylor and Francis, the essentials of which were presented in a short written paper.

Alan Bell said that he felt this was an excellent achievement. He asked whether it will mean an increase in subscriptions. Kenneth Ruthven said that the Executive has no proposal to increase subscriptions but the next two agenda items are related to this.

Paul Wilson also said that this was an excellent achievement. He asked whether it would be available on-line. Kenneth Ruthven answered that if a university or institution signs up to the appropriate Taylor and Francis package then it would be but not otherwise to BSRLM members.

Leo Rogers asked about how publications in RME will be viewed within the RAE process. Kenneth Ruthven replied that the existing RME is already a valuable place to publish due to the quality of the feedback received, etc., and we feel this will continue. We hope the new RME journal will become better known internationally and this will have an effect on the way RME is valued. Officially with RAE it is the quality of the paper which is judged rather than the publication from which it came.

Steve Lerman welcomed the creation of a new journal and asked whether the intention was for RME to consist of articles developed from BSRLM research days. Kenneth Ruthven replied that as well as book reviews there will be a research papers section, containing full papers which might, but need not, have developed from work previously presented at BSRLM events. However, there will also be a current research reports section consisting on single page abstracts linked to the corresponding entries in the Informal Proceedings of BSRLM research days.

Steve Lerman also asked whether the Executive has sorted out a programme for appointment of editors, editorial board, etc. Kenneth Ruthven reported that a detailed plan was in place. He also announced the appointment of Tim Rowland and Elena Nardi as editors. There will be a meeting in January concerning the progress of further appointments. We will be sending out invitations for applications for further posts in due course.

A vote was taken on whether to accept the proposal to establish a journal with Taylor and Francis and this was agreed unanimously.

9. Announcements for day conferences to become electronic unless requested otherwise as from 2007:

The reasons for this were presented including ease of communication and also the saving of money which was felt significant in the light of future costs for RME.

Leo Rogers asked whether a paper copy, if requested, would be free. Kenneth Ruthven replied that it would be free, on the understanding that members would only request a paper copy where they had demonstrably good reason for doing so.

A vote was taken, there was one abstention with everyone else in favour.

10. Informal Proceedings to go only electronic from 2008:

In the first two years of the new journal members will be subsidising RME approximately £5,500, which is 70% of the society's current income from membership. BSRLM does have reserves and we feel this is sustainable over this early period. There will be one page abstracts from Informal Proceedings (IPs) in RME with links to IPs on-line.

When we consulted members a substantial majority felt we could move to only electronic. We recognise a significant minority did feel opposed. However, approximately £2,500 would be saved by this move and this is about 35% of current income from subscriptions. We would print out a paper copy for those who requested one, again on the understanding that members would only request a paper copy where they had demonstrably good reason for doing so.

Tansy Hardy highlighted the need for care to be taken in order to have easy electronic navigation around the IPs. Dave Hewitt mentioned that there does already exist a powerful search facility within the website. Otherwise navigation is currently through year and issue of each IP.

Paul Wilson asked whether we should re-consider current length restrictions if we go electronic. Kenneth Ruthven said we would initially stick to the current restrictions but this can be considered again in the future.

Alan Bell asked whether it could be possible to pick up a copy of papers on the day. Kenneth Ruthven commented that, due to an earlier request from Alan Bell, we are now providing email contact details of each presenter, with their permission, initially in the programme for the day conference, and later in the paper included in the IP. Tim Rowland said that some people like to write their paper after the session in order to draw upon discussions. Sue Pope said that this can mean that people's contributions to a session can end up also contributing to what is written in the IP.

Dave Hewitt said that the move to only electronic involves a change in the constitution as currently paragraph 10 says that "The **proceedings** of these meetings will be sent to all members of the Society". A new version of this paragraph was presented: "The **proceedings** of these meetings will be made available by the Society on its website". The procedure regarding a change in the constitution is that we announce details of the intended change at this AGM and then this will be put to the vote at the following AGM. Thus no vote will be taken today.

Kenneth Ruthven gave thanks to Dave Hewitt for his time as secretary as he is finishing at the end of 2006.

11. AOB:

Maria Goulding passed on a message that there have been seven volunteers for contributing to reviewing for the BERA SIG and this was sufficient. She was grateful to all those who have volunteered.

Dave Hewitt, November 2006.