

MINUTES

of a meeting of the Executive Board held at the
SCONUL Office, 102 Euston Street, London NW1 2HA
at 10.30 on Tuesday 4 April 2006

- Present* Suzanne Enright, Toby Bainton, Anne Bell, Jane Core, John Hall, Elizabeth Heaps, Alun Jenkins, Agnes Neligan, Sue Roberts and John Tuck
- In attendance* Gail Downe (Assistant Secretary), Anne Poulson (Task and Finish Group on HR Issues: from 11.10-11.40)
- Apologies* Vanessa Crane

1 Executive Board

Noted

- 1.1 The resignation on 7 March of Christine Bailey
- 1.2 That there would be an election for Vice-Chair at the Annual General Meeting to replace Anne Bell who would progress to the office of Chair following the completion of Suzanne Enright's two-year term of office at the close of AGM [Doc. 06/51](#)
- 1.3 That elections were due to be held at the AGM for members of the Executive Board to fill five vacancies arising through resignation or retirement on completion of term of office
- 1.3.1 That a further vacancy might possibly arise if a current elected member of the Executive Board, whose term extends beyond the AGM, were to be elected as Vice-Chair
- 1.4 That as part of the Board's communications with SCONUL Representatives, telephone calls prior to the AGM should be made by all Board members to Representatives (divided regionally), in order to establish any concerns they might have that should be discussed at the AGM, and emphasising the higher profile for SCONUL evinced by the funds allocated by the HEA, Leadership Foundation, JISC and RIN in support of SCONUL's aims (chart in [Doc. 06/52](#), section 3.5, 'progress to date'). A briefing paper will be issued to assist with this.

2 Strategic communications and planning (05/170:1)

- 2.1 *Noted* a paper from the Secretary listing strategic issues being addressed by SCONUL, with notes on progress [Doc. 06/04 Rev.1](#)

2.1.1 *Noted in particular* that the united lobbying campaign (all library organisations plus Universities UK and Association of University Teachers) on the Terrorism Bill (UK) had been totally successful. Once an opposition amendment in our favour had been carried in the House of Lords on 17 January, the Government itself amended the Bill to suit the concerns of the library and academic community (Third Reading, Lords, 1 February), and no changes to those provisions were made when the Bill returned to the Commons on 15 February

2.2 *Considered* an update on the Board's action plan from the Chair Docs. [06/52](#) & [06/53](#)

Agreed

2.2.1 That SCONUL should take action in the light of JISC's recent funding in support of e-learning (funding via Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning also being relevant); and that Anne Bell and Jane Core would draft a document to be used in an approach from the Board to the Higher Education Academy suggesting that the Academy investigate the links between the delivery of e-learning and learning spaces and services established in/by libraries: the outcome sought from the HEA would be a simple, pragmatic study of local e-learning projects and the importance of integrating library services and spaces with e-learning initiatives

2.2.2 That because of the growing importance of learning spaces in libraries – and of the repurposing of library space for supporting research – a meeting should be arranged between the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Board and the Chair and Secretary of the Working Group on Space Planning, with a view to strengthening the Group's membership and integrating its agenda with the Board's proposed actions

2.2.3 That the Secretary would circulate to the Board the final version of the Vice-Chair's 'SCONUL Strategy Paper' so that it could be formally approved and then promulgated

2.3 *Considered* a report from the Task and Finish Group on Human Resources Issues, supplemented by an oral report from Anne Poulson, a member of the group [present for this item, 11.10-11.40], including proposals for a survey and a publication [Doc. 06/44](#)

Agreed

2.3.1 That the group should proceed with the planned Best Practice document, but that the proposed questionnaire was probably too labour-intensive in relation to the gains to be made (considering that many HR issues need discussion locally with institutional HR departments rather than library colleagues, and that SCONUL colleagues' informal advice can be sought via SCONUL's Secretary and/or the e-mail list, confidentially if required). The draft document would be cross referenced with the proposed questionnaire and with outcomes of Top Concerns 2005 to ensure all issues addressed before being signed off.

- 2.3.2 That a workshop on current HR issues should be a standing item for consideration by each conference-planning team
- 2.3.3 That on completion of their best practice document and the website resource on HR issues:
 - 2.3.3.1 The group should be stood down, with the Board's thanks for their work
 - 2.3.3.2 One member of the Executive Board in future to have the task of keeping a watching brief on developments in this area of activity
- 2.4 *Considered* a report from the Task and Finish Group on Advocacy and Lobbying [Doc. 06/57](#) (tabled)

Agreed

- 2.4.1 That the group had produced excellent results in the form of graphical and systematised representations of SCONUL's ideal set of lobbying targets
- 2.4.2 That three of the group's recommendations be approved:
 - 2.4.2.1 That the Board with the support of its groups should define and regularly review its advocacy and lobbying priorities, against the ideal set now identified
 - 2.4.2.2 That capacity for this purpose, which would probably need to be enhanced, should possibly be increased through professional assistance
 - 2.4.2.3 That the charts and tables be made available on the website.
- 2.4.3 That the remaining recommendation – for the Communications and Marketing group to take responsibility for developing an overarching communications strategy perhaps with an external consultant – should await the outcome of discussions about this broader issue at the strategic planning meeting, 15-16 August 2006 in the light of (a) the review of the Secretariat and (b) the proposed review of the Working Group on Communications and Marketing after its completion of the web projects
- 2.4.4 That the group now be stood down with the Board's thanks for their work
- 2.5 *Considered* a report from the Task and Finish Group on Fundraising and Sponsorship [Doc. 06/54](#)

Noted

- 2.5.1 That the key deliverables of the group had been the corporate membership and sponsorship brochures and a list of target companies

- 2.5.2 That income from sponsorship and from conferences had been significantly advanced
- 2.5.3 That there is significant additional sponsorship and corporate membership income potential in 2006 but harnessing this requires proactive mainstreaming and sustained effort within the Secretariat
- 2.5.4 That the recruitment of corporate members to date and sustainability of this activity was still a concern, implying a question of resource that fits with the conclusion of the Advocacy and Lobbying group

Agreed

- 2.5.5 That the group now be stood down with the Board's thanks for their work
- 2.5.6 To move this activity across to the Secretariat as a main-stream activity not an add-on

2.6 Strategic projects

- 2.6.1 *Considered* an oral report on the website redevelopment project from the Chair
 - 2.6.1.1 *Noted* that a contract had been agreed with 529 - a web design company - and that designs were beyond the initial trial stage and on target for the deadline of delivery prior to the 2006 AGM
- 2.6.2 *Considered* an oral report from the Secretary on the SCONUL/UCISA bid to JISC for a toolkit to develop improved access to electronic resources in higher education libraries
 - 2.6.2.1 *Noted* that a bid was at an advanced stage of preparation (Sara Marsh of Swansea and Caroline House of UCISA working on it with the Secretary)

2.7 Review process

- 2.7.1 *Considered* a further report from Mary Auckland on the review of the Secretariat [Doc. 06/58](#) (tabled)
 - 2.7.1.1 *Agreed* that the final report, which would be on the agenda for information only at the Board's next meeting due to lack of time for full consideration, would be discussed at the strategic planning meeting on 15-16 August

2.8 Finances

- 2.8.1 *Considered* a revised version of the Financial Review section of the Executive Board's formal annual report for 2005 [Doc. 06/48](#)

2.8.1.1 *Agreed* the revised version, subject to division into paragraphs of section 5 and the omission of the second half of the first sentence (...but...by a few members), and subject to a change to the third sentence of section 8: (...a revised set of groups was established in their place in order to contribute to the delivery of SCONUL's agenda)

2.8.2 *Noted* an update on the 2006 budget from the Treasurer [Doc. 06/56](#)

2.8.2.1 *Agreed* at this point, the budget as drafted

2.8.3 *Considered* a report on SCONUL's reserves policy from the Treasurer, arising from the officers' teleconference on 13 March, and intended as a basis for discussion by the Executive Board, with a view to providing the outlines of a paper for the Annual General Meeting [Doc. 06/55](#)

Noted

2.8.3.1 Particular recent concerns over (a) the 'loss' of annual surpluses into the Reserve, which is an anomaly of the present auditing process and (b) the way in which the level of the Reserve can inhibit expenditure during a year, even when there may be reasonably assured income to cover the costs

2.8.3.2 Precedents and examples from the Secretary and Treasurer on the way other organisations manage their Reserves and annual expenditures

Agreed

2.8.3.3 That the Treasurer will agree with the auditors a method of carrying-forward unspent sums which have been intended for specific but incomplete projects; and also to include in the annual budget and accounts sums earmarked for expected future expenditure of uncertain date

2.8.3.4 That the AGM should be informed that the Executive Board would be reviewing and probably revising the reserves policy since it is too restrictive in its current form

2.8.4 *Considered* a request from Mary Heaney on behalf of Inspire for financial assistance from SCONUL, to be used either as bridging (pending further major funding) or towards the exit strategy for the project

2.8.4.1 *Agreed* that SCONUL should bear the future costs currently foreseen for the Inspire steering committee in the region of £500

Noted

2.8.5 That the issue of further funding of SCONUL Research Extra for 2006/07 had been raised with Research Information Network

- 2.8.6 That Edinburgh College of Art and Glasgow School of Art had indicated that they were currently unable to afford SCONUL membership even with the subscription based on JISC banding

3 **Relations with other bodies** (05/101:2)

- 3.1 *Considered* a report from Jane Core and Elizabeth Heaps on the collaborative storage project [Doc. 06/49](#)
- 3.1.1 *Noted* the update brought by Jane Core and Elizabeth Heaps to the Board for information (given that their appointments to the project's task force were in a personal capacity)
- 3.1.2 *Agreed* that SCONUL should assist with further dissemination of any information helpful to the project
- 3.2 An invitation from Ronald Milne on behalf of the Digital Preservation Coalition to SCONUL to join the Coalition [Doc. 06/47](#)
- 3.2.1 *Agreed* that it was not appropriate for SCONUL to join the Coalition

Noted

- 3.3 A report of a meeting between officers of SCONUL, CURL and RIN held on 21 March [Doc. 06/46](#)
- 3.4 That the concordat between SCONUL and the Research Information Network had been finalised following e-mail consultation with the Board
- 3.5 That on 14 March Andy Shenstone of Oakleigh Consulting had met the Chair and Secretary seeking their views in relation to a formal review of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education
- 3.6 That a meeting of the Joint CILIP/SCONUL Steering Group had been arranged for 7 June
- 3.7 That the following people had been appointed to the Joint CILIP/SCONUL Health Strategy Group:

Christine Fowler (Southampton) and Kath O'Donovan (Sheffield) [SCONUL appointments hereby confirmed by the Board]
Ian Snowley (CILIP: Chair, 2006)
Eric Davies (CILIP)
Tom Roper (CILIP)
Paul Ayris (NHS/HE group)
Ben Toth (National Library for Health)
Joint secretaries - Toby Bainton (SCONUL) and Guy Daines (CILIP)

4 Meetings and conferences (05/139:3)

4.1 *Considered* a progress report on arrangements for the conference to be held in Newcastle, 21-23 June 2006, from Jane Core

4.1.1 A near-final conference programme [Doc. 06/32 Rev.1](#) (tabled)

4.1.2 That keynote speakers and social events had been finalised, with only one workshop leader still to be agreed

4.1.3 *Approved* the programme subject to final additions such as the chairs of sessions and titles of keynote speeches

4.2 *Considered* arrangements for the annual strategy meeting to be held in Cambridge, 15-16 August 2006

Agreed

4.2.1 That the meeting should open with a *tour de table* of working group chairs, their presentations limited to two major topics of interest from their group, and that the Secretary should now seek confirmation of their attendance, alert them to the above proposal, and ask for their suggestions for other items for the agenda

4.2.2 The key item for discussion will be the report on the review of the Secretariat

4.3 *Considered* a progress report on arrangements for the conference to be held at the British Library, 28 November 2006

4.3.1 *Noted* an outline programme [Doc. 06/61](#) (tabled)

4.4 *Considered* a progress report on arrangements for the conference to be held in the Midlands in 2007

Agreed

4.4.1 That the conference should take place in Birmingham on dates in June avoiding other conflicting events, especially the American Library Association conference

4.4.2 That the theme should be super-convergence of services

4.4.3 That workshops during the conference should be held on knowledge management and e-science

4.4.4 That the Vice-Chair would recruit a convenor for the steering group which in principle would consist of SCONUL Representatives in the West Midlands, most of whom had already declared their willingness, perhaps with the addition of one or two from the East Midlands

5 Appointments, official statements and reports

- 5.1 *Noted* a paper from the Secretary [Doc. 06/38](#)
- 5.2 *Confirmed* the appointments (made earlier by e-mail) of Anne Bell as SCONUL's representative on the libraries, archives and information services constituency panel of Lifelong Learning UK Ltd, and of Kevin Ellard (University of Central Lancashire) as SCONUL's representative on the Board of Share the Vision
- 5.3 *Confirmed* the appointments (agreed earlier by e-mail) of John Hall (University of Durham) and Sara Marsh (University of Wales Swansea) to the SCONUL Access Steering Group [with subsequent agreement by e-mail that John Hall be Chair of the Group and that Caroline Lloyd (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) also be appointed to the Group]

6 Minutes

Approved the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 21 February 2005
[Doc. 06/35](#) (previously circulated)

7 Dates of next meetings

Noted that future meetings of the Executive Board would be held on the following dates in 2006

Wednesday 21 June (11.30, Copthorne Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne)
15-16 August (SCONUL Strategic Planning meeting, Møller Centre, Cambridge)
Tuesday 3 October (10.30, SCONUL office)
Wednesday 29 November (10.30, SCONUL office)