

## Executive Committee Meeting 15th September 2016



**Present:** Bridget Holligan (BH), Karl Byrne (KB), Lucy Moorcraft (LM), Natalie Ford (NF), James Bamford (JB), Andy Miah (AM), Rachel Mason (RM) and Sarah Vining (via Skype)

| Item                        | Discussions  | Actions  |
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| Minutes of the last meeting | Approved.  |  |
| Matters arising             | SV has sent out induction pack to committee and requested that the committee read it and send any comments back to SV. She noted that some of the sections were out of date (particularly the constitution) and it should be brought up to date.   | ALL – Read and identify changes needed. Send comments & questions to SV.   |
| Admin report                | <p>SV ran through the admin report that she had sent out (see report for more).</p> <p>She emphasised for new committee members that there are far more people on BIG chat that are BIG members and only about half our members are on BIG chat.</p> <p>The last newsletter was in September and the next one would be December. RM commented that she felt the newsletter had more varied and interesting and had been steadily improving. SV gives priority to new writers and weeds out a lot of unsuitable content (usually press releases).</p> <p>The early results of the survey about the BIG event timing suggest people want to keep it at the same time. The survey officially closes on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September and SV will circulate results next week.</p> <p>Many pages on the BIG website need updating so could everyone on the exec take a look at it and check for stuff that needs doing. e.g The science communications courses were very out of date. In fact, these have now been updated by Vicky Curtis (strictly speaking, by her students!) but ultimately SV would like the website divided up into three sections, say, and one member of the exec taking responsibility for each area. SV and RM have access to edit the pages.</p> | ALL – Look at website to see how it could be improved. Identify a section that <b>you</b> could work on based on your knowledge. |
| Treasurer's report          | LM ran through the treasurer's report (see report for more). Income from BIG event mostly comes in Q2 and expenditure mostly in Q3. Admin costs include fees we pay Sarah for her time, Exec expenses (except BIG event related ones), Website costs, Corporate memberships e.g BIG's ASDC membership, consumables etc.  | Action: PLI to be checked by LM  |
| Josh Award ceremony         | BH will act as BIG representative for this and has been liaising with Josh's father. This has also led to a useful   | SV to circulate schedule for   |

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| scheduling and plan              | meeting with Katherine Mathieson from the British Science Association to discuss the organisations' respective roles. Now BIG Exec meetings are now being held in Manchester, communication may be more straightforward.   | award to committee.   |
| BIG Event 2016 and the future    | <p>RM ran through the BIG event report for 2016 (see report). Overall it went well and the things that didn't were largely either not noticed by the delegates or were specific to things that would change for the next event anyway (eg caterers). The BIG demo should to be revisited by the exec in a future meeting to see if they can create a situation where there are more high quality entrants. RM reiterated her intention to stand down as event manager but is happy to do one more event if that is helpful.</p> <p>RM suggested Derby Silk Mill as an interesting future venue. LIFE have offered to host the BIG event again and the committee felt this would be a good venue for next year to ease the transition to a new event manager.</p> <p>RM said that requesting expressions of interest from organisations who wanted to host the BIG event been useful as it lead directly to at least three offers which were taken up in successive years. W5 approached RM directly to offer themselves as a venue as well. RM now asks venues whether they would host BIG again, so we could potentially rotate between a few different venues who have already hosted the event once. The committee agreed that W5 would be a good future venue. The committee felt it would be good to put out another request for venues for BIG 2018 onwards.</p> | <p>RM to contact LIFE and check offer stands for 2017.</p> <p>RM to find text for last call for venues for the BIG event.</p> |
| Events manager - Future Planning | It was decided that one of the best uses of our additional funds this year would be to appoint a new paid events manager who would also be responsible for both the BIG event, the little event and 3 additional skills days (as opposed to just the BIG event). This person would work with RM on the BIG event in 2017 to ensure a smooth handover.  | RM & BH to draft a job specification  |
| Spending of additional funds     | <p>The committee felt that priority should go to improving the offer to current members rather than to using funds specifically to increase membership. They felt one of the best ways to do this was to pay for someone to be responsible for the skills days (see above). It was also decided to spend an additional £500 on improving the BIG website and to consider spending some money on additional bursaries for different categories of members to the current ones – although this was felt to be a lower priority.</p> <p>AM suggested that having a professional photographer/camera person at events who would create professional photographs and show reels for members would be very valuable. The committee agreed and felt there could be other similar member benefits including potentially PLI (which GEM members get).</p>   | <p>All: Consider other possible member benefits.</p> <p>KB: Look into possible PLI offers.</p>                                |
| Succession planning              | There was some discussion about whether provision should be made to try to avoid a situation where the whole committee leaves at once and also whether the 3 year rule makes this more likely to happen. The possibility of moving to a system where only 1/2 posts should come up for reelection each year was discussed. However, in the end, it was decided that the current system works and is more   |   |

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| Skills Days | <p>democratic. In practice committee members do stay longer than three years if necessary (eg no one else wants to stand for a post) and the committee has the power to co-opt two additional members who could be from the previous committee if that was felt useful for continuity.</p> <p>BH flagged up that she would probably be too busy to stand for reelection next year and that as the chair is a difficult post to fill, we should consider making it the expectation that the vice chair would take over the reins.</p> <p>Aside from the Little Event no additional skills days are currently planned, although it would be desirable to hold one later this year. AM said that he could invite Manchester institutions to bid to host a skills day on a topic of their choosing.</p> <p>Next year is the 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday of the BIG event (originally held at Herstmonceaux – home of the Observatory Science Centre). It might be good to combine a fabricator skills day with a birthday party with participants being able to camp on site, if they wished.</p> | <p>AM to invite Manchester institutions to suggest/host a skills day.</p> <p>RM to talk to Science Projects about hosting the birthday party/skills day</p> |
| AOB         | <p>The possibility of corporate membership was discussed again, particularly as a benefit for organisations hosting events. Historically BIG has been a member organisation, but it might be possible to offer places for specific named individuals at a given organisation as a benefit.</p> <p>The venue for this exec meeting was much appreciated. AM suggested that other Manchester venues might be interested in hosting future meetings. The next meeting will be in Manchester in November date/venue tbd.</p>   | <p>NF to send doodle poll</p> <p>AM &amp; NF to liaise to consider other Manchester venues.</p>   |