

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF
THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF IRISH STUDIES, HELD
ON 22 FEBRUARY 1992, BIRKBECK COLLEGE, LONDON

IN ATTENDANCE

S. HUTTON
J. O' HARA
R. DUDLEY EDWARDS
G. DAVIS
J. MOORE
J. MCAULEY
S. UI NEILL
D. CAIRNS
M. HICKMAN
S. RICHARDS
B. BELL
N. SAMMELLS

1 APOLOGIES

G. BOYCE
N. DANAHER
T. DOWNEY
E. EVANS
S. MACMAHUANA
B. PURDIE
J. SHEERAN
K. THOMPSON
G. WATSON
S. REEGAN
P. BEW

The Chair informed the meeting of the recent illness of Bob Purdie. There were widespread wishes of goodwill expressed and it was agreed that the Chair should write to him conveying this.

ACTION : RUTH DUDLEY EDWARDS

spending money for the day - very appropriate. We should consider our profile as well as other academic study organisations.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed as a true record

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 SURVEY DC Informed the meeting of the current state of the members survey - replies had been recieved but unfortunately he had no time at present to do work on these. It was agreed that DC should send a copy of original entry non replyers to the office with text of covering letter Polly M would distribute these.

ACTION DAVID CAIRNS

4. MOTION- N. SAMMELS BE APPOINTED AS NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Following the resignation of E. Hughes as Newsletter editor it was proposed that N Sammels be coopted unto the Executive as the membership had not yet been formally balloted. This was agreed by all those present.

5. REPORTS A

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

5.1 The chair had recieved several letters of congratulation concerning the new publicity brochure which she made known to the meeting

5.2 As usual much of the time had been preoccupied with fundraising. - Johnson Matthey had promised £5,000 per year for the next three years if this was matched from elsewhere. the chair stated she was optimistic that this could be done.

5.3 There followed a series of contributions highlighting the need to take more seriously the funding situation. The Vice -Chair highlighted the need to consider "the other side of the coin". DC believed that we spend a disproportionately high amount of time and resources chasing funding and that the high profile, high spending model for the BAIS was no longer appropriate. We should consider our profile as similar to other academic study organisations.

The Secretary reemphasised the need for an agreed strategy to run down the BAIS in a structured manner if adequate funding was not forthcoming.

GD suggested that a number of models should be considered and debated focusing on future strategies if the money came through and a smaller scale operation.

DC supported the need for a well thought out strategy and suggested a full executive within three weeks.

This was opposed by the chair who said she needed the next three weeks to work on fundraising.

It was agreed that a meeting be held on 25/4/92

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

5.4 Sean spoke to a written report

5.5 The Executive Director drew particular attention to the Tripartiate Conference these had been successful in the past had proved the basis for a successful network to be built up and had obtained funding.

5.6 The Chair suggested that these could be written up for the membership and also used for publicity.

5.7 DC suggested approaching someone he knew, Michael Bromley, a member of the NUJ who may undertake the task. This was agreed

6. REACTIONS TO DISCUSSIONS

ACTION: DAVID CAIRNS & SEAN HUTTON

TREASURERS REPORT

5.8 Graham spoke to a written report

5.9 He placed his report in the context of much of what had been said. The bottom line was that funding was running out and the next few months were likely to determine the future organisation of the BAIS

SECRETARY'S REPORT

5.10 The Secretary emphasised the need for a consideration of the future organisation and structure of the BAIS

CONFERENCE SECRETARY'S REPORT

5.11 Jon reported that he had written to both Oxford and Cambridge concerning locating the next BAIS conference

5.12 There followed a wide ranging discussion regarding the cost and location of the next conference. whether it needed to be located in an academic institution and in the north or south of the country. DC suggested using a hotel SR, JMCA the need to move away from a format whereby BAIS bore the burden of cost. JOH, JMCA the need for an effective local secretary if it was to be institutionally based

5.13 It was agreed that the conference secretary convene a subcommittee to discuss these issues

6. REACTIONS TO BROCHURES

Taken under chairpersons report

ACTION: RUTH DUDLEY FORWARDS

8. 1993 IRISH STUDIES CONFERENCE

8.1 Much of the discussion concerned the Secretary's Report

7. IRISH STUDIES REVIEW - EDITORS REPORT

7.1 Neil spoke at some length concerning the format, layout and content of the new journal. Overall he was very happy with both content and advertising it had attracted.

7.2 The committee discussed the broader terms and direction of the journal. The independence of the editor was emphasised by several contributions. It was agreed that a "contract" be drawn up between the executive and the editorial group.

ACTION: JON MOORE

7.3 MH expressed some concern that Social Sciences were underrepresented.

7.4 There was a possibility of an official "launch" for the magazine at the Irish Embassy

8. BAIS/ Trinity Lectures

8.1 As part of the celebrations the Trinity London group had suggested that the BAIS organise a series of lectures funded by the Trinity group.

8.2 While all were agreed that this should take place there followed a protracted discussion regarding the composition of speakers. The chair was to coordinate with Trinity group and was asked to take into consideration the views expressed by the Executive.

ADULT & FURTHER EDUCATION

ACTION: RUTH DUDLEY EDWARDS

9. 1993 IRISH STUDIES CONFERENCE

9.1 Much of the discussion continued on from the Conference Secretary's Report.

9.2 The discussion considered in some detail the nature of the conference. There appeared some agreement that the format of the conference should change away from what it had been towards the style of a more "traditional" academic conference with a "call for papers" and non funding of academics. JM pointed out that this would have serious implications for the nature of the conference, JMca emphasis that we simply could not afford to continue funding as we had done.

9.3 It was agreed that the Conference Secretary form a Sub committee to discuss these issues and formulate policy

ACTION: SEAN HUTTON & IRISH LANGUAGE SUB-COMMITTEE

ACTION JON MOORE

10 REPORTS B

HIGHER EDUCATION

10.1 In his absence GB had tabled a written report. Several members of the committee expressed concern that they felt over what they saw as the ineffectiveness of this subcommittee. The group had never met and several members who had expressed a desire to be active on the subcommittee had not been approached. It was agreed that the officers invite GB to their next meeting to review the situation.

ACTION: SEAN HUTTON

CULTURE

ADULT & FURTHER EDUCATION

10.5 No Report SH informed the meeting that there was to be an
10.2 No Report in June with which he would expect to have
Reagan to be involved and the BAIS to have a high profile

11. AOB

11.1 Several members expressed concern regarding the late notification of the meeting. The Hon. Sec. apologized and said he would ensure that in future there was no such thing as a last minute

ACTION: JIM McAULEY

IRISH LANGUAGE

10.3 The written report was adopted. SUN the IOL increasing demands for fees for students undertaking Irish Language examinations. The discussion which followed surrounded the cost to BAIS and what IOL did for this money. It was agreed that a paper be presented to the next executive re. main issues and the request for sponsorship

ACTION: SEAN HUTTON & IRISH LANGUAGE SUB-COMMITTEE

SCHOOLS

10.4 BB and JS were still working had to get this up and running. Material had been distributed at Soar Valley conference from which there had been a limited but steady return. BB felt he had a less than positive feedback from JEP and had in effect been "cold shouldered". JOH, GD, JMcA and DC all expressed concern about the lack of information re. JEP. There had been no closing report and no one appeared to have received information which was a poor reflection on BAIS. which it did not deserve. It was agreed that BB and JS be invited to the next Officers meeting and that JS be asked to produce a short report re. strategy.

ACTION: SEAN HUTTON

CULTURE

10.5 No Report. SH informed the meeting that there was to be an Oxford Irish week in June with which he would expect Steve Reegan to be Involved and the BAIS to have a high profile.

11. AOB

11.1 Several members expressed concern regarding the late notification of the meeting. The Hon Sec apologised and said he would ensure that in future three weeks notice would be given.

ACTION: JIM McAULEY

11.2 JOH raised the issue of the existence of the European Irish Studies Association (EISA) which had been around for about a year and had organised a conference. He was concerned that no formal contact had been made with the BAIS. MH who was a member of both organisations was surprised that BAIS had not been contacted but informed the meeting that much of the momentum for EISA had come from Liverpool. GD and SH also expressed concern. There were obvious problems re. overlapping activities and fundraising, but SH could confirm that Liverpool was a focal point of the organisation. The discussion which followed polarised around the issue of whether the BAIS had been deliberately excluded. The chair believed it had been a "mistake" by Liverpool several other contributors were unsure of the motivation. DC said we should welcome the organisation but it reflected bad faith on Patrick Buckland's part that the BAIS had not been informed and that he was looking to bodies outside the BAIS. These central points were supported by contributions by JOH, JM, SH, JMcA and SR. DC said it was typical of the low regard in which Liverpool held BAIS and was a further indicator of the wider BAIS - Liverpool relationship. He linked it with a previous point and proposed :

That the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR write to P. BUCKLAND asking for a report on the JEP to form a wind up report on sponsorship to the AIB and to enquire re. publications made drawn up under the JEP and their availability to the BAIS for distribution outside the North West

AGREED AS A TRUE RECORD
MOTION PROPOSED David CAIRNS
SECONDED Jim McAULEY

seconded :
The Motion was CARRIED

Chairperson's signature

ACTION: SEAN HUTTON

11.3 JMcA informed the meeting that since moving to Huddersfield Plytechnic he had made contact with several people who were either BAIS members or active in Irish matters. He proposed the fomation of a Northern region group of the BAIS. This was accepted.

ACTION: JIM McAULEY

The Hon Sec further proposed that given the current direction of the organisation that regional initiatives may be one option for future organisational structure of the BAIS. It was agreed that he should prepare a discussion paper for the next meeting.

ACTION: JIM McAULEY

JM proposed that a London group be formed. It was agreed that he organise the initial meeting.

ACTION JON MOORE

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 5.15 pm

AGREED AS A TRUE RECORD

proposed :

seconded :

Chairperson's signature :

The Chair informed the meeting of the recent visit of Ann Purdie. There were widespread wishes of goodwill expressed and it was agreed that the Chair should write to her conveying this.

ACTION: RUTH DUDLEY EDWARDS
