

## **ACB Council March 2007**

### **Welcome**

Miss Katy Cooper, new Chair of the Trainees Committee, and Dr Jo Sheldon, representing the Immunologists, were welcomed to Council.

### **Election of Chair of the Association**

The Office of Chair of the Association is a position that is determined annually. The Chair is elected by Council and the decision is reported to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Dr Ian Watson, who has served one year of a possible three as Chair, left the Council meeting whilst the election took place. In his absence Dr Graham Beastall, the Association President, proposed Dr Watson for a further year, and this was carried unanimously by Council. Dr Watson is to be congratulated on his re-election.

### **Association Articles, Memorandum, Byelaws and Rules**

A change to the organisation of the ACB had started with a report from the Council National Members who had consulted with the Regions and Membership prior to producing the report. Some months on, now, proposed changes to the organisation of the ACB have been discussed at length by Council, Executive, Regions and by the Membership. The new structure necessitated a major re-write of the Articles, Memorandum, Byelaws and Rules of the Association. These had to be scrutinised by the ACB solicitors to ensure they were legally correct and binding. During the re-writing of the above, several anomalies in the documents have been removed and some pieces that were open to more than one interpretation have been tidied up to remove confusion.

All these had been pre-circulated to Council members to give them adequate time to consider the proposals and the re-write. It had been important that the new Articles etc. were written taking into account the Immunology Members joining the Association, and with a view to future co-operation between other organisations. Council agreed unanimously to recommend the changes and they will be circulated to the Membership prior to the AGM in April.

In line with the above changes, the Federation of Clinical Scientists (FCS) also tabled amendments to their constitution. These will be tabled at the FCS AGM prior to the Association AGM.

### **Association Finances**

The Honorary Treasurer, Dr Steve Smith, had proposed to Regional Treasurers that some of the Regional accounting procedures could be processed in a more central fashion, by the Honorary Treasurer and the ACB Office. Regions had discussed the proposals and the Regional Representatives reported to Council that, by and large, this would be an unwelcome move. In the absence of the Honorary Treasurer, Council agreed to leave procedures as at present, but to discuss the topic at a future Council meeting.

### **Royal College of Pathologists' Education Centre**

Dr Watson reported on the recent increased co-operation between the ACB and the Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH). A major driver for this co-working

has been the need for Pathology to speak as a single voice, a view made very clear when Pathology organisations' views were sought for the Carter Report.

The College is seeking sponsorship for the construction of its new Education Centre, and the ACB had been specifically invited to co-operate and had been asked for £150,000 towards the cost of the enterprise. In return one of the Education Centre rooms would be named after the ACB. The ACB would obtain unique access to the rooms, free of charge, for five days per annum over a period of seven years and thereafter at preferential rates. Other groups would use the rooms and see the name of the ACB in the Centre. The Pathological Society and the haematological Society have already signed up.

The proposals have been scrutinised very carefully and, using the venue for meetings such as FiLM, the venture would be effectively cost-neutral.

Council Members were very supportive of the idea, and saw it as an excellent, and unique, opportunity to work closer with colleagues in not only the College, but also other organisations similar to the ACB. Council agreed to go ahead with the proposal.

### **Regional Reports**

The Regional Representatives, as ever, had pre-circulated their reports to Council Members. There was good and bad news.

Regional scientific meetings continue to prove to be excellent education vehicles with good attendance at meetings covering a diversity of topics. Reports of the meetings that contain competition for the trainees in the ACB demonstrate the extremely high calibre of the Association's younger Members. However, many Regions reported the adverse effect that Agenda for Change had had on the number of trainees recruited in the recent round. The lack of Higher Specialist Trainee posts was also noted.

### **Association Awards**

A number of nominations for Honorary Membership, Emeritus Membership and Fellow of the Association were received by Council. These were discussed and recommendations to be tabled at the AGM were agreed.

It was re-iterated that none of the Awards are superior to the others in their importance, rather they reflect the relative areas of contribution of individuals, and the areas of their expertise and work.

### **Nomenclature**

In discussions following the Trainees' Committee report, presented by Miss Katy Cooper, it was noted that the terms Grade "A" and Grade "B" are now obsolete. The terms "Pre-registration Trainee", Grade 7 or Higher Specialist Trainee should be used in future. Council agreed that a 50p donation should be made into a swear box should any Member use the obsolete terms!

Steve Goodall, Assistant Secretary