



Association of Clinical Cytogeneticists

<http://www.cytogenetics.org.uk>

ACC Council Meeting
Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gardens, London
Tuesday 6th March 2007

Kim Smith	Chairman
John Wolstenholme (JWo)	Treasurer
Rob Morgan	Assistant Secretary

Amanda Dixon-M ^c Iver	Ordinary Member	John Crolla	Trustee
Peter Howard	Ordinary Member	Rod Howell	Trustee
Gordon Lowther	Ordinary Member/Chair, ETC	Val Davison	Trustee
Jonathan Waters	Ordinary Member	Beverley Royston	AGTC Representative
Ros Hastings	Ordinary Member		
Sandra Birdsall	Ordinary Member		
Suzanne M ^c Phee	Junior Member		
Simon M ^c Cullough	Junior Member		
Stephen Mountford	Junior Member		
Mandeep Bahra	Junior Member		
Karen Thompson	Genetic Technologist		

1	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Teresa Davis, Edna Maltby, Maj Hulten and Fiona Harding.
2	Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 5th December 2006 Agreed
3	Chairs Report
3.1	Heads of Departments meeting 2007 This will be held on March 16 th in Oxford, and will be on Microarrays. The morning session will feature presentations from leading suppliers and collaborating laboratories. The afternoon session will be a closed session for the Heads of Departments. Council agreed to support a collaborative study if this was thought to be useful.
3.2	Heads of Departments meeting February 2006 Angela Douglas will be presenting the outcome of the automation survey agreed at the 2006 HoD meeting at the Spring Conference. Unfortunately the presentation was not ready to present to Council. Nick Telford is currently collecting the data for the Survey of Cancer Services.
3.3	Skills for Health Genetics representatives (KS for ACC, David Baty for CMGS and Sarah Willis (Cytogenetics) and Elaine Clements (Molecular) for Genetic technologists) met with SfH in February. SfH confirmed that they are re-writing the NOS, the generic ones are nearly complete and they will be consulting the professions on the specific NOS. The working group had submitted a selection of job descriptions to them, which SfH have converted into function statements that can be translated into NOS. The Genetic Technologist functions were reviewed and agreed at the meeting. SfH commented that the Genetic Technologists would be advised to wait for the new NOS before continuing the development of their National Training programme.
3.4	Northgate recruitment ACS have written to the Trainee Commissioning lead (Gordon Willing) about problems that are

	<p>being experienced with Northgate. ACS has requested that all professions should raise any problems that they have encountered.</p> <p>Action GL to collect information and respond on behalf of ACC.</p>
3.5	<p>ACC website</p> <p>GC has done an excellent job in rewriting the ACC website. Some areas will now be automatically populated via BSHG. Gavin will provide a separate website for consultation and draft documents that will be password protected.</p> <p>There was discussion about the accessibility of the ACC logo and expense claim forms.</p>
3.6	<p>Best Practice documents</p> <p>Documents ratified at the last council meeting (General Clinical Cytogenetics, Postnatal bloods and Haemato-oncology) have all been reformatted, and uploaded onto the website. It was agreed that the old Best Practice documents should be re-formatted but retain the original date of publication.</p>
3.7	<p>Healthcare regulation</p> <p>The URL for the document was circulated for information.</p>
3.8	<p>NHS Partnership</p> <p>The URL for the document was circulated for information.</p>
3.9	<p>National Screening Committee</p> <p>There has still been no official response from the NSC over karyotyping versus rapid test QF-PCR for screen positive patients. JWa reminded council that London is losing 70% of its funding for karyotyping. JCo pointed out that there seems to have been little consideration of the costs of long-term care for those cases of unbalanced chromosome abnormalities that will no longer be detected. It was also noted that many women may not be aware of what could be tested for.</p>
3.10	<p>Department of Health</p> <p>Dianne Kennard has now left the Genetics Policy Unit, and Diana Paine has taken over control of the White Paper training money. Alison Hill (GP with special interest in genetics) will represent the Unit at JCMG.</p> <p>The NGRL contracts have not yet been renewed, and this has made it difficult to renew contracts of staff who were fixed term appointments. Val Davison is meeting with Gareth Jones (Science lead for GPU) and Mark Back and will ask about the new structure and remit.</p> <p>Action VD to inform council of outcome.</p>
3.11	<p>Payment by Results</p> <p>Lorraine Gaunt was approached by a group working on PBR in Pathology and this appeared independent of the GenCAG group working on PBR.</p> <p>JCo reported that Helen Stewart (Oxford) is the CGS lead. It may also be worth contacting Adrian Newland at the Royal College of Pathologists for possible clarification of the different groups. It was noted that the different branches of Genetics are all using different units of activity, which is not helpful.</p> <p>Newcastle have been asked for indicative figures and have been told 50% of their income will be by PBR in 2-3 years. The North West have been told that they will be moving to local tariffs.</p>
3.12	<p>Eurogentest</p> <p>Eurogentest have requested a nomination for a National Contact for Cytogenetics European Quality Assessment. After discussing various options it was decided to contact Tony Parkin, as chair of the NEQAS steering group, to see if he would take on this role.</p> <p>Action KS to approach Tony Parkin</p>
3.13	<p>Donation to RCPATH</p> <p>ACC have received a letter of thanks for the £1000 donation.</p>
3.14	<p>Birthday Honours</p>

	<p>Council were asked to consider members of the profession who they felt should be recognised in the Birthday Honours.</p> <p>Action: All Contact KS with suggestions</p>
3.15	<p>Professional Standards Committee</p> <p>Edna Maltby has stood down as the chair of the PSC, and a number of other members of the PSC are either standing down or their term of office is due to expire. KS suggested that it was a good time to consider a new structure for the PSC. She proposed a Chair and deputy chair who would be free to recruit expert members for specific Best Practice projects for the duration of the project. Council agreed that this would allow greater flexibility. Lorraine Gaunt has indicated that she would be happy to be Chair if invited. After discussion it was decided that LG should select her own deputy.</p> <p>Action KS to approach LG</p>
4	<p>Structure of Council</p> <p>PH presented the draft document on council re-organisation.</p> <p>The following were agreed</p> <p>Executive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair elected by council from council members for a 3 year term ▪ A treasurer elected by the membership for a 3 year term ▪ A Secretary elected by the membership for a 3 year term ▪ At the beginning of the Chairs 3rd year a Chair Elect will be elected from the council members or retiring council members. The Chair Elect will normally proceed to Chair one year later. <p>Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An Assistant Secretary shall be elected by the membership for a 3 year term. ▪ There was discussion about the role of the JLC, whose members sit on council in their own right, but also form a committee within the council. It was proposed that the JLC operates as a separate standing committee and is represented on council by the chair of the JLC. ▪ AGTC will be represented in a similar fashion ▪ ADM proposed that council would have a set number of ordinary members, with no reserved positions. JLC and AGTC would be represented by their chairs, who would have no voting rights, unless elected to council as ordinary members. This was voted on by council and carried by 11 votes to 2. ▪ Council decided that there should be 6 ordinary members plus the chair. This will require a rule change and will need to go to the AGM. Ordinary members will be known as Council members, and may come from any level within the profession (ie Technical, Trainee, or Registered Scientist regardless of banding or job title.) ▪ There will be 3 non-executive trustees, drawn from the senior members, who will serve for a period of up to 5 years (renewable) and have no voting rights. ▪ The president of the ACC will be elected by the membership, will have no voting rights and will serve for a period of 3 years. ▪ Chairs of sub-committees will sit on council, but will have no voting rights <p>Changes will be phased as new members are elected to council.</p> <p>Action KS/JWo to draft rule change for next Council meeting</p> <p>KS/PH to write final version of document for next Council meeting.</p> <p>GL suggested that the name of the ‘ordinary member’ changes to ‘council member’.</p>
5	<p>ETC Report</p>

5.1	<p>Pre-registration Training</p> <p>The first round of assessments following the implementation of the revised training system are due, an update will follow.</p> <p>The password on the ETC site will be changed shortly, all labs will be informed when this is done.</p>								
5.2	<p>Post-registration Training</p> <p>A questionnaire has been circulated regarding MRCPATH training opportunities, and responses are currently be collated. Results will be discussed at the next ETC.</p>								
5.3	<p>Technical Training</p> <p>The technical training document is on hold until SfH rewrite the NOS.</p>								
5.4	<p>Workforce Review team meeting 26th January</p>								
5.4.1	<p>Only 6 trainees required for year 2007-08 from White Paper monies. Next years budget has been set and the trainer posts and administrative support are secure for 2007-08.</p>								
5.4.2	<p>Subsequent to meeting GL recommended DH consider support for trainers for technologists and higher specialist trainees.</p>								
5.4.3	<p>Workforce data will be sent to council, any comments to GL within one week please. Action: GL to e-mail workforce data</p>								
5.5	<p>Case Handling Training System</p> <p>RHa presented a proposal for an Online Case Handling System. ACC were invited to help with development. Development costs up to January 2010 are being met Eurogentest, CEQA and NEQAS. From 2010 the cost to the ACC, if it wishes to be involved, would be a maximum of £2000 per annum, or costs could be met by increasing NEQAS subscriptions.</p> <p>After some discussion, Council felt that it would like to see more details regarding structure, support, input and costings before commenting.</p> <p>RHa will be the contact point for this development.</p>								
6	<p>Professional Standards Committee</p> <p>This was covered in the chairs report.</p>								
7	<p>JLC report</p>								
7.1	<p>Structure</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Mandeep Bahra</td> <td>Chair</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Suzanne M^cPhee</td> <td>Meetings</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Simon M^cCullough</td> <td>Training</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stephen Mountford</td> <td>Website</td> </tr> </table>	Mandeep Bahra	Chair	Suzanne M ^c Phee	Meetings	Simon M ^c Cullough	Training	Stephen Mountford	Website
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7.2	<p>Committee name</p> <p>There was some discussion about re-naming the JLC, so that it is more representative of their constituency and the career stages following Agenda for Change. The JLC to bring a suggestion to the next Council meeting.</p> <p>Action JLC</p>								
7.3	<p>CPD portfolio</p> <p>A survey by the JLC showed that 50% of junior staff were recording CPD in their personal notes. A sample CPD portfolio was circulated prior to the meeting, which also contained space for recording Personal Development Plans. The portfolio will be made available for the membership, but members will need to be aware that there are other ways of recording their CPD activity. KS thanked the JLC for their work. The front cover needs changing to reflect the ACC corporate style. Departments will need to develop their own in-house scoring system for CPD.</p> <p>Action SuM^c to feed back at Spring meeting GL to give talk on CPD at Spring meeting.</p>								
8	<p>Technologists Report</p>								

8.1	<p>Registration</p> <p>Janice Nunn has drafted a letter regarding references for registration. This will be circulated to HoDs when guidance notes have been updated on the VRC website.</p> <p>There has been some confusion about registration. Some of this has centred around AfC banding, as some MTO 1s are the same band as MTO 2s. AGTC will need to liaise with VRC over this issue.</p>
8.3	<p>VRC newsletter</p> <p>This was circulated to contacts. The next newsletter will appear on the Professional bodies websites.</p>
8.4	<p>Websites</p> <p>It was decided that the ACC and CMGS websites should contain the same information about registration for Genetic Technologists. Marcus Allen has compiled information that will be applicable to both the ACC and CMGS sites, this will be sent to Gavin Cuthbert to upload onto the ACC website.</p>
8.5	<p>Training</p>
8.5.1	<p>Training for Trainers</p> <p>AGTC asked if ACC ETC and CMGS TAB could investigate funding for a ‘Training for Trainers’ course for GTs. KS stated that trainer places were allocated to laboratories and it was up to the laboratories to select the trainers they sent. She said a one off course of Training for Trainers for Technologists could be set up, but the courses usually require 18 participants. Travelling expenses would have to be found by the laboratories.</p> <p>Action KS/GL/KT</p>
8.5.2	<p>Competencies Manual</p> <p>As the NOS are being re-written, the AGTC has decided to continue using the current competencies manual for cytogenetics GTs until the NOS are complete. The Molecular GTs will continue writing their training manual as they currently have nothing in place.</p>
8.6	<p>Contact Lists</p> <p>Jane Cooper will contact Ruth Cole to fill in any gaps for the contact list for GTs and Heads of Laboratories.</p>
9	<p>Scientific Matters.</p>
9.1	<p>GenCAG</p> <p>JCo did not attend.</p>
9.2	<p>UKNEQAS</p> <p>The participants meeting will be in June, the venue is yet to be confirmed.</p>
9.3	<p>UKCCG</p> <p>No representative was present.</p>
10	<p>Reports back from meetings</p>
10.1	<p>RCPATH</p> <p>There has been no meeting since the last council. The next meeting is in May.</p>
10.2	<p>JCMG</p>
10.2.1	<p>Department of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Following the spending review, there will be no centrally funded projects. ▪ There will be no radical change to the direction of policy. ▪ GenCAG will continue, but there will be a review of membership and an independent chair.
10.2.2	<p><u>Bearing Good Witness</u></p> <p>The Chief Medical Officer has published a consultation document on medical expert witness evidence.</p>

10.2.3	Public Health Genetics Unit The Cambridge PHGU will no longer receive NHS or DH funding. A private benefactor has been found, and it will continue as a private charitable foundation.
10.2.4	Medical Revalidation The RCP is taking a lead in this.
10.2.5	Roche and PCR patent The laboratory in Exeter responded to a Roche questionnaire and have now been invoiced for using RT-PCR. There will be a meeting with the patent office in March.
10.2.6	Non-invasive testing SAFE (Special Non-Invasive Advances in Fetal and Neonatal Evaluation Network) are supporting methods to detect foetal mRNA in maternal blood as a means of detecting Down syndrome. NBTS are developing fetal sexing from maternal blood. Peter Soothill is to lead for JCMG on how the new technologies are transferred into NHS laboratories.
10.2.7	Carrier Status Stephen Abbs had prepared a paper for UKNEQAS on reporting of carrier status for recessive diseases. Only about half the laboratories reported carrier status. JCMG believed it was unsupportable not to report on carrier status and have issued a response accordingly.
10.2.8	Genome Websites Connecting for Health has improved speed of access, with dedicated bandwidth for some business sensitive sites.
10.3	BSHG There will be a 2 day away-day on 15/16 th May. JCo and JWo will attend.
10.4	FHCS The AGM will be on 12 March. ADM will represent the ACC.
11	Treasurer's Report
11.1	Internet banking This is now set up. The process involves a large number of checks. Once account details have been given to JWo, only the last 4 digits of the account number need to be provided on claims.
11.2	Paying for events In future members may be able to pay for events by credit or debit card. The ACC can hire a machine that allows card payments for about £10/month, it currently costs the ACC £1 to clear each cheque. Action: JW to investigate
11.3	Travel Awards There have been two applications, both from Newcastle, to attend the ECA conference in Istanbul.
11.4	Accounts These were circulated and agreed.
11.5	Research Grant Awards Grants are to be made to registered staff, and should not be related to A-grade projects. Grants will be awarded in the range of £5,000-£10,000 up to ~£15,000 in any one year. The grants will be advertised in the Newsletter and launched at the Spring Conference. Proposals will be scrutinised by an ad hoc committee of JWo, JCo, MH and JWa. The timetable will be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposals invited at the end of June ▪ Response by the end of August ▪ Decision first Tuesday in September Proposals will go to JWa, who will distribute them to the rest of the committee.
12	Correspondence Edinburgh University Careers have written asking for a Clinical Scientists profile. This will be

	undertaken by the JLC. Action JLC
13	Applications for Membership These were agreed.
14	Matters Arising from previous meeting 3.3 Concerns over consultation were discussed with Dianne Kennard 3.4.3 KS responded to HPC consultation about fees. 3.5 KS spoke to UKGTN about the profession taking array CGH forward. 3.7 TD has collected responses for the consultation on validating new tests. 3.8 Part 1 data is out for validation. Diane Kennard requested data to inform planning, but is no longer a part of the Genetics Unit.
15	Any Other Business Council asked to consider the venue for the AGM, should it be during the Spring Meeting or at BSHG in September.
16	Date and Venue of Next Meeting 5 th June 2007, Cartwright Hall, London

The meeting closed at 4.25pm.