
Minutes of meeting held on 4 February 2017, Wolfson 2 room of the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet St. London WC1E 7HU, at 11a.m.

Present: Dr Heather Shore Co-Convenor (Leeds Beckett); Dr Richard Hawkins Treasurer (Wolverhampton), Dr Daniel Grey, Secretary (Plymouth), Dr Robert McNamara (Ulster); Dr Andrew Roach (Glasgow); Dr Karin Dannehl (EHS), Dr Charles Insley (Manchester), Dr Peter D'Sena (Hertfordshire); Dr Alison Hems (Bath Spa); Dr Lucie Matthews-Jones (Liverpool John Moores); Dr Lowri Ann Rees (Bangor); Dr Bill Aird (Edinburgh); Professor Matthew Hughes (Brunel); Dr Hannah Burrows (Aberdeen); Dr Joanna de Groot in place of Dr Sabine Clark (York); Dr Paul Corthorn (Queen's University); Dr Ariel Hessayon (Goldsmiths); Dr Rachel Bright (Keele); Dr Martin Johnes (Swansea); Dr Sarah Miller-Davenport (Sheffield); Mr Tom O'Donnell (UCL – Postgrad Rep); Dr Neil Fleming (Worcester); Professor William Whyte (Oxford).

1. Apologies for Absence

Dr Kate Bradley (Kent); Dr Pippa Virdee (De Montfort); Professor Maureen Meikle (Leeds Trinity); Professor Ian Talbot (Southampton); Dr Sarah Bastow (Huddersfield); Dr Jamie Wood (Lincoln); Dr Joan Allen (Newcastle); Professor Mark Clapson (Westminster); Dr Rachel Lock-Lewis (South Wales); Dr Sabine Clarke (York); Dr Sara Wolfson (Canterbury Christ Church); Dr Mark Hutchinson (Durham).

Heather Shore reiterates the importance of the Steering Committee, and putting forward your views as members- transparency is absolutely essential, and this is a view wholeheartedly shared by the Executive of the Steering Committee.

2. Minutes of the last Steering Committee meeting

Accepted

3. Matters arising from the minutes

4. Confirmation of new Steering Committee members and Executive Officers

Heather Shore: We've had nominations for co-convenor and education officer. Lucie has put in a nomination to be co-convenor

Lucie Matthews-Jones: - I've a real interest in HE policy, and for me the co-convenor role is a great opportunity to think about moving on the organisation and to try and think much more about how the organisation can develop further and better links with universities and departments.

Peter D'Sena – I was before my current role a teacher educator, I have had a commitment to history education for about 30 years and have been a supporter of HUK since I started as a member

Heather Shore: Are people supportive of nominations?

Unanimously agreed by Steering Committee to elect Peter D'Sena and Lucie Matthews-Jones to respective roles as Education Officer and Co-Convenor Elect.

5. Convenors' Report

Heather Shore outlines the current HEFCE consultation and stresses the importance of HUK having a voice in this process.

Lucie Matthews-Jones - One thing we are very keen on happening is the SC having a more active community role, and so we would like to kickstart that by you all filling in the survey.

Heather Shore: - Portability, impact and the environment question are all key – though there may be people willing to fill in the whole thing. One of the important things is that this consultation really is meaningful – HEFCE are interested, and so this is not a fait accompli. It's really worth it to do. The British Academy survey on the value of the Arts and Humanities is also something we would really like to send a History UK response , to show we have a meaningful contribution to make to these debates. We can only have a voice if we actually fill in these things and do it, and we don't want to just present our own views- we really want them from the SC.

Sarah Miller-Davenport – Can you resend an email about which questions would be particularly helpful for us to fill out?

Joanna de Groot– For me its quite important to fill in the questions in relation to the actual document. I think it is really important to show that this organisation shows it has a voice as one of the important stakeholders. How do we show we have a distinctive view and voice? I think this is important besides the common ground of other organisations.

Heather Shore: - I think we need to do our own individual response but some sort of broader conversation would be really useful – I am assuming we will be broadly in line with other historians. But what we don't want is just mine and Lucie's vision – we all work in very different sorts of institution and we want to reflect that.

Joanna de Groot– One thing we might want to think about is how we pursue equality issues. This is something where a very vigorous campaign around REF2014 had a real impact on HEFCE in a way that had never been seen before. I think we should really think as well about 'small drawer' types of history, and also interdisciplinarity.

Heather Shore: – There has been some talk about having 'interdisciplinarity champions', but I think it is quite tough to tell how that is going to work in practice. One really important thing is to offer suggestions rather than simply saying that you don't like something. So if you don't think portability would work, what other suggestions might you have?

Robert McNamara – Portability is obviously a matter of life or death for ECRs, but it is really bad news for the rest of us.

Lucie Matthews-Jones: – What about the link between impact and portability? What was the reasoning behind that?

Robert McNamara- Portability is already dealt with to an extent by requiring everyone to go in to REF. Is anyone actually in favour of these?

Martin Johnes – Its not black and white, and the gaming won't stop - people will be moved onto teaching only contracts. I'd be in favour of portability for ECRs only.

Heather Shore: - I agree with Martin it is quite complicated, are there other ways we can do this? I think we need to get as many views as possible. I think that gaming is to an extent unavoidable.

Robert McNamara- I think the constraint on individual freedom is really worrying about portability.

Heather Shore: - I think the other thing is the complications provided by TEF, and how this will work together and impact on REF.

Joanna de Groot- I think we need to be really worried about the colleagues who will be put on teaching only contracts

Heather Shore: – I'd really welcome further email correspondence about any of these issues if people would like to contribute? Some other things I'd like to report - Richard [Hawkins] and Jamie [Wood] went to a conference at the IHR which went really well, and Richard also went to an Arts and Hums Alliance meeting which took place at SAS – it is quite dominated by colleagues in English.

Richard Hawkins – This is really largely run by colleagues in University English, which is the rough equivalent of History UK, and most of them are in the leadership positions for the Alliance.

Heather Shore: - We will get a rep to go to this, which is in process – we thought it was a place where we should get ourselves known.

Richard Hawkins- They seem to have irregular meetings but since the University of London one went so well they are minded to have others.

Heather Shore: – We should really keep a watching brief on these organisations to be clear we know what is going on. Related to research officer and events officer: Research officer we think is a really important role, and it would be great to have some help with this. History Lab Plus are very keen for us to support an event they run called “Life After the PhD”. We'd like to support it in some way –maybe offering some bursaries.

Lucie Matthews-Jones: - I think it would be really good to do the Academic Boot Camp again. Keep to the same format as last year – people offer do it who come to the main meeting in May.

Various SC members suggest lunch rather than perhaps dinner?

Richard Hawkins observes that last year the accommodation was generously provided by the IHR, which may not be possible to get for this year. The charges for this if its not possible may be problematic.

Joanna de Groot – Does anyone have connections that could get us cheap London accommodation?

Richard Hawkins- We need to think about bursaries and if we can provide these?

Heather Shore: – We start with the IHR, I think for trying to book rooms. With regard to the research event I think we want to try and have this in the north of England – maybe Liverpool. Our very hypothetical plan is to do something on digitisation of archives. It would need to be a weekday so we can get people along from Gale and the British Library to talk about these things. Lucie and I are starting to talk about this and have some ideas but I'm wary of over- committing us. We really do need a volunteer for Research Officer – ideally from the SC, but if not then can we have suggestions? I think it is a really exciting opportunity to make sure that HUK is represented fully in debates about research, relating to Stern and so on. Being research officer is a great chance to do that.

Paul Corthorn – This is a great opportunity for HUK to raise its profile significantly, especially among people who *aren't* ECRs, one thing I think is a particular challenge is stuff like how do you set up a collaborative project – these are things I am having to think about, and it would be so useful to have shared ideas.

Heather Shore: - Yes, I understand completely the focus on ECRs but it is really good to go beyond that

Lucie Matthews-Jones: – Yes, this is a great way to show the relevance of HUK and importance to departments

Joanna de Groot- Most of us have been raised with the idea of the lone scholar and it would be so useful to have an event that focuses on that?

Robert – I think one thing we might need to lobby the AHRC and so on about is that it is increasingly hard to get funding for the lone scholar because schemes are so focused on the idea of collaborative working.

Heather Shore: - I wonder if this is something we might want to do for the Plenary?

Martin Johnes – Its really interesting having sat on my first of these how MCR funding bids work, because it is not necessarily how one might assume.

6. Treasurer's Report

Richard Hawkins: We've already referred to the success of current admin arrangements. Current balance is over £12,000 and so far we've only had 35 subscriptions paid – so once the others come in we will be above that, despite the fact there will be outgoings such as for the ECR Boot Camp.

Heather Shore: Reminder to SC members to please chase it up at their institution if they have not paid. We also have made a point of getting in touch with current HoDs to let them know what we are doing, to show value for HUK.

Lucie Matthews-Jones: - This raised an interesting point for events. Are these going to only be open to subscribing institutions? Are we going to make individuals pay? Would we want to get into policing this?

Richard Hawkins- What we could do is have differential fees for the plenary between subscribing and non-subscribing institutions. I would guess we have about 2/3 of History departments signed up to HUK

Joanna de Groot asks do we have any way of contacting non subscribers to invite them to join and show what we do?

Heather Shore: That would be a really good thing to do

7. Secretary's Report

Nothing to report formally

8. Education Officer's Report

Peter D'Sena – Three things really. First is that very recently, the RHistS have been focusing on REF and TEF, nothing that we wouldn't have discussed on our own meeting. One other thing that they do is have an annual meeting with A-level examiners. Secondly, I have organised almost annually a teaching and learning in HE conference to pull organisations together, and I have got some money to support that from the RHistS which will be 13-14 September (with an event funded by RHistS the day before) and would encourage as always HUK members to distribute this through their networks but also to attend. We are also going to be running another New to Teaching Event. I'll send more details about this, it is already being advertised by the IHR. Third, something I've organised about a dozen times, I worked out Glasgow, Manchester and London were key transport hubs for people travelling from across the country. What HUK did last year for the New to

Teaching event was to provide all the personnel for the sessions, and ideally I would like people from the SC to offer a 45 minute session on 12 September for this. The last session of this is always about applying for jobs.

Hannah Burrows: Thinking for the future, is it worth thinking about the fact term has already started in Scotland when these events run in September – this will be fresher's week.

Peter D'Sena – The question of when we have it has been discussed before, so we might want to think about moving it earlier in that month? The British Academy advertises grants for conferences on their premises, and perhaps what HUK should do, is try and get one for a bigger event in 2018.

9. Media Officer's Report (for distribution)

Heather Shore: reads this out from Jamie Wood: We have the blog launched now, and volunteers for blogging are always welcome. We'd really encourage any ideas and contributions. We have over 1800 followers on Twitter, and again, we need more people to volunteer to tweet for us. Website has now been updated.

10. Reports from

i. Northern Irish Representatives

Robert McNamara- Ulster not taking part in TEF.

Paul Corthorn- Queens is exactly the same.

Robert McNamara- But we think teaching will be shaped by it nonetheless, just in case they change their minds later.

ii. Scottish Representatives

Andrew Roach- Scottish universities split on whether to enter TEF or not – Dundee, St Andrews and Aberdeen are Yes, Glasgow and Edinburgh are No. Suspect that this will nevertheless shape teaching and learning. The other development is the Scottish Budget went through yesterday – its likely going to be a tight settlement, a cut in real funding.

Hannah Burrows- Lots of concern about what will be a substantial change in student numbers and demographic after Brexit. Rural deprivation is not well recognised, and Aberdeen is an expensive place to live.

iii. Welsh Representatives (Diamond Report)

Lowri Ann Rees– Rachel [Lock-Lewis] also asked me to raise the question of HEFCW draft strategy. She notes that universities and various bodies such as UCU were invited to respond, but would like to flag the awareness of the existence of the strategy for Wales- opening statement that HE is a force for good and emphasis on apparent commitment to widening access and desire to support teaching of Welsh culture and history, which requires an HE system that will stress community engagement with this. Rachel is worried about the veiled proposal for more HE to be delivered by FE places.

SC discussion emphasises the diversity in experience of colleagues and students. Does HUK want to develop a policy or formal organisational statement about this?

11. Reports from:

i. Historical Association

Richard Hawkins observes we have rather lost contact there and it would be of immense benefit to have someone as a rep for this.

ii. Royal Historical Society

Paul observes need for a new RHistS rep.

iii. Institute of Historical Research

iv. History Lab/History Lab Plus

v. Postgraduate Representative

Tom O'Donnell reports that it is good that some postgrads are meeting HUK – a problem I occasionally have is that people don't really know what the organisation is and so it can be a bit difficult to get people to feed it back to me.

12. Any other business – Historians for EU (Rachel Bright)

Rachel Bright – Not sure if anyone has been following 'Scientists Against Brexit', an overtly political hub for scientists who are against it and can submit anecdotes about this that can be reported on FB and twitter. It has become a really successful advocate for the impact negatively on the scientific community. This occurred to me as something that we could do in a rather

more neutral fashion for historians. The idea is that there would be relatively little manpower involved.

Heather Shore: notes we want to be careful not to take any one particular view

Joanna de Groot– Has HUK put in anything to the Parliamentary Education Committee, which has started to take the view that HE should be high on the list of industries/groups at risk of being damaged by leaving the EU. I know UCU has reshaped its legal and support systems to help colleagues who have EU citizenship and are at risk.

Heather Shore: I think we should show our support for colleagues who are from an EU background

William Whyte – It's well within our remit to speak on behalf of people who will be impacted by not being able to get EU funding. We might also want to respond formally to the White Paper making the argument that HE is being lost in this debate and that will have very serious consequences for colleagues, not only in science but also for us. The UK has been incredibly successful in getting European funding and this is something that is just going to go if we're not careful.

Charles Insley- University leadership lobbied hard in the run up to the EU but have been pretty muted since, and colleagues who are very anxious are finding that quite difficult.

Rachel Bright – If everyone is OK then the final product could go on a website or be tweeted.

13. Dates of future meetings

Second Meeting

20 May 2017: Held at 11a.m. at Senate House, University of London, in Wolfson Room 1.

Third Meeting

7 October 2017: Held at 11a.m. at Senate House, University of London, in Wolfson Room 1.

Annual Plenary

4 November 2017: Held at 11a.m. at Senate House, University of London, in Wolfson Room 1 & 2.