

**Steering Group Meeting Minutes**  
**22 February 2010**  
**ESRC Genomics Forum, Edinburgh**

**Attendance**

**Present:**

Kenneth Boyd (Chair, Steering Group)  
Mary Porteous  
Vikki Entwistle  
Neva Haites (Chair, Health Policy Sub-Group)  
Jack Jackson (Chair, Education Sub-Group)

**Apologies:**

Gerry Graham  
Sarah Cunningham-Burley (Chair, Research Sub-Group)

**In attendance:**

Steve Sturdy (Gengage Grant Holder)  
Kathryn Hunter (Gengage Network Officer)

**1. Welcome and introductions**

KB began the meeting by thanking those who were in attendance for coming and conveying apologies for committee members unable to attend.

KB also welcomed Steve Sturdy (Gengage Grant Holder) and Kathryn Hunter (Gengage Network Officer) to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes of previous meeting accepted.

**3. Update on Sub-Group Activities**

**3.1 Health Policy Sub-Group**

Discussion of the work of the sub-group around human tissue retention in Scotland is deferred to the next meeting.

Since the last meeting, SS has organised an event at the Edinburgh International Science Festival (with James Ironside, Professor of Clinical Neuropathology and Director of the MRC UK Brain Banks, and Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Chair of the Research Sub-Group) on brain banking. The event will be held on Friday 16 April 2010 at Surgeons Hall (1.30 – 4.30 pm). This deliberative event will include a series of short presentations by scientists and social scientists on the science and ethical issues around brain banking, followed by facilitated round-table discussions. The event is free, but must be booked through the Science Festival ticket phone line.

KH, SS and JI are meeting later today, and KH, SS and SC-B on Thursday afternoon, to finalise speakers and questions for discussion.

Further information about the event will be circulated shortly. The next meeting of the Health Policy Sub-Group will take place at the beginning of May. KH to canvass available dates.

### **3.2 Education Sub-Group**

JJ gave an update from the Education Sub-Group meeting held 22 February 2010 at the ESRC Genomics Forum in Edinburgh.

JJ noted that the focus of the 2010 Conference will be on teaching genetics in schools. Speakers, dates, format and venues for the conference were discussed at the sub-group meeting. It was agreed that the conference should take place in June in Edinburgh (possibly at Dynamic Earth if available), that there should be a mix of plenary sessions and workshops and that both teachers and students should be invited to attend.

In the second part of the Sub-Group meeting presentations were given by Peter Finegold (Isinglass Consultancy Ltd) on Bringing contemporary genetics into young people's learning: The Nowgen School Genomics Programme; by Jim Stafford (SQA) on Proposals for a new curriculum in Higher Biology and Human Biology for Schools and Colleges; by Dr Marjorie Smith (Dollar Academy) on The Let's Talk Teaching Tool – how does it work, what are the opportunities and what are the barriers?; and by Dr. Alison Bell on Teaching Genetics in Secondary Schools: an empirical study. The aim of this part of the meeting was to bring together people with expertise in genetics education to share information and to facilitate ongoing collaboration.

KH will send a follow-up email to those who attended the meeting with links from JS that will provide additional information about the Proposals for a new curriculum in Higher Biology and Human Biology for Schools and Colleges.

### **3.3 Research Sub-Group**

In SCB's absence KH gave a very brief report on the activities of the Research Sub-Group. Although the Research Sub-Group has not met, SCB will be meeting with SS and KH later this week to discuss the way forward, including the possibility of undertaking some public engagement work in collaboration with the HGC, as discussed at the previous Steering Group meeting.

## **4. Update on Staffing**

SS advised the Steering Group that Kathryn Hunter took up the position of Gengage Network Officer on 1 February 2010. The position of Gengage Network Secretary has been advertised (closing 19 March 2010) and it is hoped that someone will be in post by April. In the meantime, Isabel Fletcher is assisting KH with organising meetings and events, and updating the website.

## **5. Communication Strategy and Annual Report**

KH advised that she will be taking forward the communication strategy with SS, including re-establishing links with other organisations (such as GIG), and that the Annual Report is nearing completion and will be ready for release shortly.

## **6. Review Panel**

The Review Panel was deferred until the new Network Officer was in post. KH will now take this forward with SS. It was agreed that the Review Panel would proceed after the conference in June. SS to approach prospective panel members.

## **7. Gengage Annual Conference 2010**

It was agreed that the 2010 Conference should be held in Edinburgh sometime in June. Suggested dates were June 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>; suggested venue Dynamic Earth.

JJ suggested that information about the conference could be sent to all local authorities, who could each then nominate 2 teachers to attend the conference with two Form 6 students each.

It was thought that a good structure for the conference would be a series of plenary sessions and then break-out workshops. The maximum number of participants will be 200.

In terms of organisation, it was decided to establish a Conference Sub-Group to take these suggestions forward, and to identify speakers and themes for the conference. The Sub-Group will be comprised of JJ, SS, KH, Marjorie Smith (Education Sub-Group) and Kath Crawford (SSERC). A meeting of the sub-group will take place in the next few weeks. In the meantime, KH will enquire about venues. Certain administrative aspects of the conference organisation will be put out to tender shortly.

## **8. Dates for future meetings**

Next meeting: TBC