

RSC Annual General Meeting

Outstanding successes in publishing and the promotion of chemistry were highlighted by Dr Simon Campbell at the RSC Annual General Meeting in Burlington House on 25 July 2006.

The meeting was opened with a message of loyal greeting to the RSC's patron, Her Majesty the Queen. The Report of the AGM on 23 June 2005 was noted.

Simon Campbell addressed the meeting 'Our publishing activities continue to be extremely successful globally with highlights of the year including the doubling in frequency of *Chemical Communications* and the *Journal of Materials Chemistry* to weekly issues, the launch of two new interdisciplinary journals *Molecular BioSystems* and *Soft Matter* and increased Impact Factors for RSC journals.

'We continue to highlight the importance of providing excellent chemical science education at all levels. HEFCE has awarded £3.6m to support the RSC's 'Chemistry for our Future' project. The upturn in the number of applications to study chemistry at university in the UK continues. We have initiated successful collaborative activities with Heston Blumenthal and Bill Bryson.

'Following the implementation of our new governance structure, we held a very successful first General Assembly in November, bringing together representatives from our Local Sections, Divisions, Forums and Subject Groups as an invaluable means of ensuring that our members could contribute to the development of our new strategy.

'We are strengthening our international visibility and recently opened an office in Beijing. We play a key role in EuCheMS, working with decision makers in EU institutions. The RSC is a partner in SusChem, the European Technology Platform developing the research agenda for sustainable chemistry.

'During the year, the RSC commissioned a number of important reports on science policy including 'The Costs of Chemistry Departments in UK Universities', 'Chemical Science Priorities for Sustainable Energy Solutions', 'Chemical Science Spin-outs from UK Universities' and 'The Economic Benefit of Higher Education Qualifications'. We are the host organisation for the DTI-funded Chemistry Innovation Knowledge Transfer Network with an initial grant of £4.7 million.

'We have continued our contacts with politicians in the UK, including the Prime Minister Tony Blair who spoke at our 2005 Parliamentary Links Day and Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett who spoke at our 2006 Links Day last month. The RSC's campaign was influential in the decision to retain the chemistry department at Sussex University, and this very morning RSC Council was at 10 Downing Street to present our views on energy to the minister, Malcolm Wicks.

The Honorary Treasurer, Elliot Finer, was unable to attend the meeting and Mike Graves, RSC's Finance Director, presented the accounts which show that the RSC had a good year financially in 2005. Publishing produced an excellent surplus of £11m. There was a rise in membership income and there was also a good return on long-term investments. Total funds, after deducting the pension shortfall (FRS17) rose from £26m to nearly £50m. The deficit in the defined benefits pension scheme was reduced to £15m, there is an agreed schedule of payments for further reductions in the future, and the future operations of the final salary pension scheme are being reviewed. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Henry Warson and seconded by Diana Simpson and carried by a show of hands. The AGM approved the appointment of PriceWaterhouseCoopers as auditors of the RSC for 2006.

Simon Campbell announced that, following a ballot for the position of Elected Member of the Education and Qualifications Board, Philip Hugh Smith was declared elected. In respect of the vacancy for Elected Member of Professional Affairs and Membership Board, no nomination had been received and Council had appointed Geoffrey Collier, the immediate Past Chairman of the North Humberside Local Section.

The AGM unanimously approved a resolution to amend the Trust Deed of the Benevolent Fund.

Duncan Burns formally thanked the many volunteers who had helped towards the RSC's successes. He thanked the members of the new Council and all those who had given their time voluntarily to serve on Divisions, Boards, Interest Groups and other committees, those involved in sections in the UK, Europe and other countries, RSC representatives and Benevolent Fund volunteers. He also thanked the Chief Executive and his staff.

Concluding the meeting, Simon Campbell handed the President's badge of office to the incoming President, Jim Feast, who thanked Simon Campbell for his significant contribution to the RSC during his term of office.

Full details of the accounts are shown in the Annual Record.