POLITICAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION
of the United Kingdom


Present
Charlie Jeffery (Chair), John Benyon (JB), Jacqui Briggs (JBr), Rosie Campbell (RC), Paul Carmichael (PC), Terrell Carver (TC), James Chiriyankandath (JC), Alistair Clark (AC), Matt Flinders (MF), Rose Gann (RG), Cathy Gormley-Heenan (CG-H), Lisa Harrison (LH), Jennifer Hudson (JH), Andrew Massey (AM), Gerry Stoker (GS)

In attendance
Helena Djurkovic (HD), Louise Bates (LB), Sandra McDonagh (SM), Jack Neenan (JN), Orlanda Ward (OW)

Apologies
Neil Collins (NC)

CJ welcomed RG and OW to their first EC meeting.

1. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 28th June 2013
1.1 The minutes were approved.

2. Matters Arising
2.1 CJ explained that NC had not been able to make a trip to meet the ArXiv people in Cornell when he was in the US for the APSA Congress and hence CJ was trying to find a time to hold a virtual meeting with them over Skype (Chair’s Report and Management Committee Update, Item 3.8).
2.2 CJ explained that a Departmental meeting for Manchester and neighbouring universities had been planned for the previous day but was cancelled due to the funeral of Norman Geras.

3. Chair’s Report and Management Committee Update
3.1 CJ reported that the announcement of the institutions that had been selected as Q-Step Centres was extremely positive for Politics with 12 of the 15 institutions intending to include Politics and IR in their programmes of activity (the highest number for any subject and matched only by Sociology).
3.2 CJ reported that HEPAG event at the LSE on 26th October, which had effectively been organised by HD and LB, had been a success and provided the PSA with an opportunity to engage with civil servants. LH said she would write a report on the conference for PSA News. Action: LH
3.3 CJ explained that he wanted to build on the momentum created by the event and had asked MF to both develop a strategy on impact and take over the Chairmanship of the Research & Impact sub-committee. He added that the ESRC was now funding a full-time Parliamentary Social Science officer, Abbi Hobbs, and he had initially thought it would useful to work with her but after finding out that she was co-funded by UCL he wanted to delay any decision until the funding arrangements were clarified and it was clear that there was sufficient institutional diversity in the way the role was run. Action: CJ and MF
3.4 CJ reported that six applications for the Special Projects Fund had been received, three of which were credible. These would be sent to the jury for evaluation. Action: CJ
3.5 CJ explained that he had consulted with HoDs on the state of their departments. Over 20 had responded. He said very few replies had been received from trustees’ institutions and asked the trustees to encourage their HoDs to respond.

3.6 CJ reported that most responses were positive, and some departments (not just in the Russell Group) were doing especially well, appointing new staff and demanding higher grades. He thus expected the overall UCAS statistics to be good. However, almost all the post-1992 institutions that had responded reported less positive news and there appeared to be growing stratification within the university sector with respects to levels of demand for places and qualifications that could be demanded. He planned to report on the findings at the HoDs conference.

4. **CEO’s Report**

4.1 HD spoke to her report.

4.2 HD reported that the student video competition had attracted a reasonable number of good submissions but the slogan competition for younger students had attracted just one submission and the political songs competition had also been unsuccessful, with just 4 songs nominated and three schools voting to date. It was agreed that if the turnout in the vote for the political songs competition did not improve significantly, the PSA should not announce the winner at the PSA Awards dinner.

4.3 HD asked for approval to spend £1,360+VAT on enhancements to the online membership system. This was agreed.

4.4 HD explained that the response from politics departments to the PSA’s Rock Enrol initiative had been extremely positive and it was important to ensure that, regardless of whether the PSA secured any Cabinet Office funding, the enthusiasm for youth engagement and outreach activities should be captured in some other way. **Action: HD**

4.5 CJ explained that the Scottish Government White Paper on Independence would be published on 26th November and since this coincided with the Awards dinner he would be around to participate in a media briefing on the subject on either the 26th or 27th November.

4.6 MF commented that Sheffield also had a Parliamentary internship and ways should be explored of combining the various Parliamentary internships offered by universities around the country.

5. **Reserved Business** (at this point LB, SM, JN and OW left the room and PC took the minutes)

5.1 Staffing and office space was discussed.

5.2 HD then left the room and staff pensions were discussed.

6. **International Relations Report** (HD, LB, SM, JN and OW rejoined the meeting)

6.1 TC reported that the latest issue of PSA News included a report on the APSA Congress. He noted that the PSA reception was well attended and a video of Carole Pateman accepting her award was now on the website. He went on to say that both the co-sponsored panels were very successful.

6.2 TC observed that there was more scope for office-to-office cooperation between the PSA and APSA. He said that APSA seemed very interested in the new PSA website. HD replied that APSA had made initial contact asking for an opportunity to discuss the website but had not followed up. CJ suggested that APSA might be interested in following up on research and impact activities.

7. **Report of the Honorary Treasurer and Finance Sub-Committee**

7.1 JB explained that it was extremely difficult to estimate income from Wiley-Blackwell but he expected overall PSA income to come in about £20k below budget at £764k. However, since expenditure was also some £80k less than budgeted, he expected a surplus of around £58,000 for the year.

7.2 JB reported that investment income was coming down and alternatives were being investigated.

7.3 HD explained that she had visited Wiley-Blackwell in Oxford on 23rd October with Husein Mussa and a colleague from BDO to undertake an audit of Wiley-Blackwells records. The information available was incomplete and there was lack of clarity as to how revenue from bundled sales
was entered into the system. However, there was nothing to indicate that expenditure was being misallocated. A major issue arising from the visit was whether the PSA should tell Wiley-Blackwell it no longer wanted to be included in any new bundled sales given that revenues were trivial but the possibility of selling the PSA journals at at some point in the future at full price to an institution taking the Wiley collection was removed. Other learned societies had already withdrawn. AC said that if other learned societies journal sales had not been hurt by withdrawing from collections he would support this move. It was agreed that HD should find out which learned societies had withdrawn from the collections. **Action: HD**

7.4 CJ explained that the budget for 2014 had to be formally approved. JB reported that the major changes for 2014 were that an additional member of staff had been included for the whole year (though it was unlikely they would be hired until some way into the year), that more money had been provided for the London office, expenditure on IR had been cut, expenditure on the annual conference had been increased as Manchester was a slightly more expensive venue than Cardiff or Belfast, and that the specialist group budget had been included under Research and Impact.

7.5 RC questioned the budget procedure. She said she had received a request for budget figures at the start of the term with a week to respond. She added that if a sub-committee chair had a question to share with the EC regarding new initiatives requiring additional funding, as she had regarding the Blog and plans for the Magna Carta anniversary, they were unable to do so given current procedures. JB responded by saying that chairs did not have to wait to be asked about the budget but were free to request money beforehand. He added that money could be switched across internal sub-committee budget headings within a given year. CG-H noted that she also had not asked for more money for specialist groups because she felt it important that the EC first had an opportunity to discuss reforms to specialist group funding. CJ suggested that the EC reviewed patterns of spending at its meeting in June and if the budget was inappropriately allocated it could be adjusted.

7.6 PC observed that if expenditure in 2014 was as predicted in the budget, it would not be possible to hire a second person.

8. **Search Committee** (at this point CJ and JBr left the room)

8.1 AM explained that CJ had asked him to set up and chair a search committee to find a new Chair and Vice-Chair. He said he wanted gender balance and fair representation of the EC on the committee and hence he had invited PC to represent Man Com and CG-H to represent the EC. Both had agreed. He also felt it was important to have an external person on the committee and hence had approached Elizabeth Meehan. She had agreed.

8.2 AM explained that it was the committee’s aim to find a Chair who would work well with the EC, would be an effective representative of the PSA externally and was a well established academic. He said he would produce a set of criteria and welcomed suggestions from the EC. He said he would also consider the appropriate voting mechanism for selecting the candidate. MF said he understood why the posts were not chosen through election but, given members accused the EC of operating as a clique, he urged full transparency.

8.3 AM said it would be useful if the two new appointments could attend ManCom meetings in advance of taking over at the end of June and thus it was his intention that the committee would reach a decision by February and make an announcement at the April AGM. **Action: AM**

8.4 AM invited the trustees to submit names to the Search Committee and it was agreed that AM would draft a message to go out in the e-Newsletter explaining the process and criteria and inviting nominations. The message should mention that the EC was a largely elected body.

9. **Sub-Committee Reports**

*Research and Impact Sub-Committee*
9.1 MF explained that as the new Chair of the Committee he was planning to produce a new, more detailed strategic plan. He said the plan would consider Horizon 2020, the likely future of the REF and ESRC funding for REF case studies and that one of the first actions of the sub-committee would be to ask Colin Hay if he wanted to arrange another meeting of REF sub-panel members and assessors.

9.2 CG-H explained that she had met with HD and SM in London in August to discuss specialist group reform. HD had subsequently undertaken an analysis of data about membership that the specialist groups were asked to send in. Only half had responded to date. CG-H said she believed that the statistics would paint an even worse picture once data from the other groups was added.

9.3 HD ran through the analysis contained in the paper she had circulated to the EC. It revealed that the majority of funding provided by the PSA to fund specialist group activity was, in effect, benefiting people who were not members of the PSA. JBr said the paper was a revelation and PC noted that the analysis was long overdue and confirmed what many had long suspected. He said that the ECPR had got into serious dispute over its specialist groups and this had now progressed to legal measures. He said the PSA could not allow so much free-loading and given the financial pressures the organisation would face from Open Access it could not subsidise non-members so heavily.

9.4 JB said he favoured the fourth funding model proposed in the paper but with a lower fixed element. He said the findings were shocking and the organisation could be held up to ridicule. He said the PSA should be willing to accept the possibility of some groups choosing to go their separate ways as a result of changes to funding.

9.5 RC said she welcomed the suggestions in the paper. She noted that EPOP would not be significantly affected and would still want to be associated with the PSA.

9.6 CJ suggested that the PSA had to be careful about how it presented the analysis but it was clear things were out of balance. CG-H suggested the reforms should start in 2014 but that the specialist groups should be given a little more time to prepare their bids in this funding round. This was agreed.

9.7 It was agreed that HD should model the four funding options in such a way as to produce a total that hit budget. **Action: HD**

9.8 It was agreed that CG-H should produce a revised Code of Conduct for the specialist groups. **Action: CG-H**

*Communications and Engagement Sub-Committee*

9.9 JH explained that the PSA Blog had developed to the point where one new article was being added a day but the status quo was unsustainable, given that those approached had little incentive to write for the blog whilst readership remained so low. The LSE blogs received over 5,000 views a week.

9.10 MF observed that the LSE blogs not only had a long head start but also had four full-time people working on them and hence it would be extremely hard for the PSA Blog to catch up. However, he did not think that the PSA and LSE blogs were mutually exclusive. HD agreed and said that given the LSE blogs had a relatively narrow focus the PSA could focus on addressing complementary issues. GS said he supported more investment in the PSA Blog, since it was likely that in 4-5 years blogs would be the obvious way of communicating the value of political science. He offered to ask the Southampton University blog editor to send one in three of its blogs to the PSA. It was agreed that the PSA blog should be discussed at the HoDs conference. **Action: GS and CJ**

9.11 MF suggested that the journals should require authors to write blog pieces and the managing editor should try to get bigger names to write for the blog. He also suggested approaching people at the Awards dinner. AM said he supported MF and observed that when a blog piece was controversial or related to a campaign it tended to get noticed.

9.12 CJ said he was minded to put more resources into the Blog but felt a plan for how the money would be deployed needed to be articulated. He noted that different parts of the Association were not well connected and the ways in which the journals, media briefings and conference could contribute to the future success of the Blog needed to be considered. HD commented that
the journal editors and conference convenors were given too much autonomy and they needed to be told what was expected of them on appointment. MF said the PSA conference was too narrowly academic to be of interest to the media and that some sessions needed to be created that were of wider public interest.

9.13 JH explained that Robert Hazell (RH) had produced a proposal for a Magna Carta publication. It was envisaged as the backbone of a major event at the Guildhall. JB said the event had to be seen as a PSA event. JH suggested approaching CUP to publish the book and parallel publish a number of the articles in BJPIR. AC asked what incentive existed for a journal to publish articles that were being published elsewhere. HD suggested the articles could be published in Political Insight instead of a journal. MF suggested that if the RH book and event were to be the signature piece of the PSA’s Magna Carta celebrations, then they needed to be made a little less dry. JH said that RH welcomed feedback and was trying to create something that was both historical and forward-looking. HD suggested organising something that was of wider public and youth interest through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

9.14 MF expressed serious concern that the PSA was planning to give the award for Politician of the Year to Nigel Farage (NF). He said many members would be very embarrassed by the decision. JB said the PSA had given awards in the past to people with whom it did not agree but GS said he thought the award should be withdrawn. AC said it was important to remember that the PSA was a political studies organisation and should act accordingly and MF said that an award would give Farage the legitimacy of the PSA, which would have a broader impact on the organisation. JC said people would only look at the title of the award and not the grounds for awarding it. HD suggested changing the title of the award to Political Impact Award. This suggestion was accepted and it was agreed that CJ would write to NF informing him of the change in the name of his award. Action: CJ

Report of the Honorary Secretary and Membership Sub-Committee

9.15 PC reported that he was working on a new Survey of the Profession ready to go out in late 2013 or early 2014.

9.16 PC reported that the PSA had received an approach to host the annual conference in 2016/17.

9.17 CG-H reported that she had received a letter from Martin Lodge complaining about the cost of the PSA conference. It was agreed that HD should respond saying that numbers attending the conference were much higher than when the conference was held on university campuses, that prices had come down since 2012, the early bird rate for members was just £199 and cases of financial hardship were given careful consideration. CG-H suggested that when booking opened in December an email should go out to members explaining how the conference costs were calculated and showing the conference was good value for money. Action: HD and LB

Education and Skills Sub-Committee

9.18 AC reported that even though politics had done very well in the recent Q-Step funding exercise, it was important to avoid stratification between those departments that had funds to invest in QM teaching and those that did not.

9.19 OW reported that even though the new Graduate Network executive had only been in place for a few weeks it had managed to organise two events, a Graduate Conference in Oxford on 12th December and a Professional Development conference in Birmingham in early February. She said the first two events would be kept relatively small but that the Graduate Network would be more ambitious in future.

9.20 LH reported that she and AM would be attending the next Edexcel curriculum meeting in November. She said the committee would have to anticipate the impact of planned reforms to the exam system but that there was no prospect of overturning policy.

9.21 RG explained that she wanted to explore what undergraduates might value from involvement with the PSA and how undergraduate activities might be funded. She said she would talk to APSA about how it engaged with undergraduates and would work on a plan with JBr that she would bring to the EC in January. Action: RG
9.22 JBr reported that a Northern Irish teachers group had approached the PSA with a view to working together on a schools event. She said the group wanted the PSA to provide speakers and that she would work with CG-H on how the PSA could contribute to the event.

Publications Sub-Committee

9.23 CJ reported that the tender document that had been circulated would go out to publishers in the spring. It was agreed that HD should send the document in strictest confidence to all the journal editors for feedback. Action: HD

9.24 HD explained that she would complete the HEFCE consultation on OA on behalf of the PSA but wanted to know whether the trustees favoured the handling of exceptions on a case by case basis or on the basis of a fixed percentage. It was agreed that the PSA should state a preference for a fixed percentage approach but at a lower level than currently proposed by HEFCE. Action: HD

10. AOB
There was none.

11. Dates and Venues of Next Meetings

   Friday, 24th January 2014, Birmingham
   Monday, 14th April 2014, Manchester
   Friday, 28th June 2014, venue tbc

HD 28/11/13