BCS - The Chartered Institute for IT
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the 2021/22 Session
of the South Wales Branch
18:00 Tuesday, 16 November 2022
Online Webinar
DRAFT

1.   Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Andy Bellamy welcomed everyone to the meeting. Outlined the aims, approach for and the agenda or the AGM.

Committee members Paul Bulmer, Jonathan Fish, Michael Warman, and Fred Long the along with both BCS members and non-members joined the webinar.

Apologies had been received from Rob Ludman and Ed Swires-Hennesy.

2.   Minutes of the Previous AGM

Last years, along with all our pervious AGM minutes are available on our BCS branch web page. Andy asked any comments on last year's AGM minutes, no comment were received, so the minutes of the previous AGM (September 2021) were accepted.

3.   Chair's report

3.1.   Branch Committee

Andy reviewed the activity of the Committee and explained that our meetings are held on the first Wednesday evening in the month, and everyone is welcome to attend these online meetings. The active committee have had eleven formal Committee meetings had been held, ten online and one social meeting had been held in person during the past year. Committee minutes are posted on the branch web page.

Andy introduced the current committee members and their roles for 2021 to 2022.

He expressed his thanks for the work of the two Branch Vice Chairs for all their support and advice over the last year. Mentioning the new branch roles that would be discussed later.

He then thanks Jeremy, Lauren, and Neil for their support, who are stepping down and not seeking re-election this year. Jeremy was also thanked for recruiting him and being is mentor for many years. Jeremy having been a member since 1998.

3.2.   Branch Events and Activities

Andy described the events we had run during the past year and thanked our hosts and speakers. Details are held in the past events section of our web pages (including video recordings).

The branch had delivered eight public online webinars, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, one of which was a joint event with IET South-East. These are available on the BCS YouTube channel for the branch. He asked those attending to suggest a topic for a future event or perhaps if they could deliver one for everyone.

3.3. Branch Special Projects

Robotics & STEM for schools: Andy introduced the wonderful work the branch working group had done over the last year as a special project. To support our local community Paul and Jeremy had been delivering Lego MindStorm sessions in person, online and in the medium of Welsh

The aim of the project was to link with the local science fayres and schools to engage with computing, and robotics. The two-fold aim is to support teachers to design lesson plans and develop a team within the branch to deliver the sessions

Since COVID-19, this work has had to pivot to online. Positive feedback from a recent teachers CPD event, and the impact on the children that have been engaged.

Looking ahead the project will be involved with future science fayres, conference, exhibitions, the topic for the DVLA Coding challenge. If anyone has experience or an interest in getting involved, which is open to everyone, please email Andy as the South Wales chair, who would pass on their details to Paul.

My Digital Future: BCS in London have asked us, one of only two branches to pilot this (outside of London), to get involved in a new project named, 'My Digital Future'. Which is part of the new charity, BCS Foundation, to support disadvantaged young people to working with all forms of technology and computing.

Andy and Michael will complete their training soon to support young people, to coach and signpost you people to access education and further support into education or work in our community. This opportunity to support of contribute is open to everyone. To encourage people to start a career in STEM.

3.4. Branch Social Media and Website

Andy explained that our web pages remain a key way of communicating what we do. Our events pages contain details of future event and the recordings of our previous events. We also have linked to the BCS branches in Mid Wales and Chester & North Wales. Along with the Bristol branch.

The Branch runs have twitter and LinkedIn accounts, which we use to post news for events, competitions and much more as well as using the more traditional Email notifications.

Together with BCS Mid-Wales and BCS Chester & North Wales, we make up "BCS in Wales" region.

3.5. Membership

Andy handed over to Michael, who as Membership & Branch Secretary, will provide an overview of our fantastic membership numbers.

Michael welcomed everyone and apologised of the technical delay in starting the event. He then explained the increase in our membership, driven by a massive increase in BCS student membership, from the many colleges and universities in our community. BCS are also consolidating their grades of membership, which explains the shift away from Affiliate and Associate grades to the Professional grade which had stabilised our previously reducing Professional membership.

We also have a discount code to reduce the membership fees by 20%.

Michael then discussed the demographic distribution of the BCS membership by grade, age and gender. Which he believes have been skewed, by such a large student intake this year. For the next year we will aim to create student chapters in each of the colleges or universities. He then asked if anyone had any questions on membership.

Andy thanked Michael and was pleased with the current numbers, given the reductions in last year. He expected the student increase was based at Cardiff University. With and attractive rate of £20. Which extends to post graduate or research posts. If anyone has any questions, please contact Andy or Michael via the branch.

4.   Treasurer's Report

Andy handed over to Jonathon, who as branch Treasurer would discuss our next year's budget. Jonathan welcomed everyone. He mentioned the underspend as an impact of COVID-19 with fewer event-based expenses on 2021-2022. Which had reduced our budget for 2022-2023, along with a change to how our student prizes are allocated. Had reduced our budget by about half.

We can make budget requests if needed but given our current budget will be looking to continuing with online events to reduce costs. Jonathan asked if anyone had any questions or needed a more detailed.

Andy thanked Jonathan confirmed that student prices would continue, only how the prizes are funded as changed. Also, that while we intended to offer more face-to-face events in the coming the cost of venue and catering was a challenge with our current budget. We can't expect to have such favourable rates as in the past, the have now started to charge us to provide to our guests. If anyone was able to help use with accommodating events or guest speakers, please get in contact. As a charity we aim to 'Make IT good for everyone', and help would be greatly appreciated

5.   Student Chapters

Andy mentioned due to COVID 19, there has been an understandable reduction in activity in student chapters. The Branch is second, to London, as the largest branch. Covering the M4 corridor with many colleges and universities. Student chapters are important to use, allowing use to engage with early careers in technology not only as members but as future professionals. So, if you have any links to in this area and would like to start a student capture, please get in contact with him so we can get the ball rolling with you and BCS HQ.

6.   Future Directions

Andy described the basis for the coming year's plans beyond the regular events programme. The main themes from the branch and BCS are:

BCS 2025 Strategy

- Our digital lives should be in the hands of competent, ethical, and accountable professionals.
- Greater diversity and inclusion in the IT profession benefits society.
- The Digital Divide is a modern measure of inequality; it can be closed by access to skills as well as technology.
- The world will achieve Net Zero more rapidly with support of digital and data technologies.

The branch volunteers are committed these and ask that if you have an interest in any of the above, as the second largest branch please get in contact.

Branch aims

- To continue our work within education and STEM through our development of online learning material, particularly our LEGO Robotics Initiative for Schools.
- Continue to encourage new members volunteers to join the South Wales committee, and improve the balance of diversity, gender, and age.
- Engage with local IT business and industry to develop and delivery relevant and exiting events for our members with a key focus on the 2025 strategy
- To work closely with the new Early Careers Executive group to support the future talent pipeline of our IT industry in the region
- To continue our work with the Higher Education institutions in the region and help to develop and nurture more student chapters and encourage more student members to join the organisation.

If you know anyone that is in the local space, IT, or digital organisations, please let them know we would love to get in touch with them.

7.   Election of Committee

Andy introduced election for the committee for 2022 to 2023. The approach will be in two parts. Individual votes for the mandatory roles of Branch: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Followed by a vote for the other roles. There were no nominations in advance or from the floor, although some people expressed an interest in joining the volunteer committed in the future. We will be in contact with you soon.

Andy presented the proposed committee roles and nominations and asked everyone to attend to vote via Zoom reactions with a 'raised hand'. The recording was paused, and each nomination discussed and voted on.

- Andy Bellamy was re-elected as chair.
- Jonathan Fish was re-elected as treasurer.
- Mike Warman was re-elected as secretary and membership secretary.

The remainder of the committee was elected en bloc with a unanimous vote of those present at the AGM.

Paul Bulmer	Vice chair
Fred Long	Chair, mid-Wales Branch
Rob Ludman	Member
John Tucker	Computer Heritage Coordinator

Andy mentioned we are also seeking nominations for the mandatory roles for the roles of Early Years Advocate and Inclusion & Diversity Officer, with a proposer and seconder all from BCS members. We also have volunteer roles for non-BCS members, please get in contact if you wish to discuss any of these roles.

8. Any Other Business

There were no other business requests received.

Michael mentioned a suggested from Ed, to share the video on the changes to the membership grades for everyone. Andy committed to provide link via email and signposted those present to the BCS membership website.

Andy asked if anyone present have any other business, there were none

Andy thanked all those who attended and supported the BCS & branch every year and this year, hoped to see everyone at our next branch event and then closed the AGM.

For more information contact our Branch contacts:

Chairs email swales-chair@bcs.org.uk

Branch web page http://southwales.bcs.org

https://twitter.com/bcs_south_wales

https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8843006/

The recording for this year's ADGM can be viewed here.

For last year's AGM: https://www.bcs.org/events-calendar/2021/october/webinar-rethinking-digital-wales-future-of-education-infrastructure-and-the-economy/

End of Document