

DRAFT Minutes of Royal Society of Chemistry Belgium Section 2024 AGM
19 January 2024

These minutes will be presented to the AGM of the Royal Society of Chemistry Belgium Section in 2025 for approval.

Location: The meeting was Les Amis Dînent, Mechelsesteenweg/ Chaussée de Malines 113, 1970 Wezembeek-Oppem and was followed by the section's Annual Dinner.

The meeting commenced at 19h35. Eleven section members were present: Tim Reynolds, David Terrell, Fabio Lucaccioni, Rita Woodward, Susan Schamp, Ari Koskinen, Robert Crichton, Julie Tuppeny, Ludovic Troian-Gautier, Andrei Alexandru Antonio Bara, and Andrew Dunn

Also in attendance were co-opted committee members: Bo Dahlqvist and Jonathan Norris.

Nine section members who were unable to attend the AGM sent their apologies and had asked the Chair to act as their proxy for the meeting if a vote was required. These members were: Chris Phanopoulos, Dharmjeet Madhav, Catherine Cazin, Lance Smallshaw, Roy Lavendomme, Steven De Feyter, Ricky Payen, Luis Fernando Arenas, and Richard Green.

1. Apologies for absence

None other than those noted above.

2. Approval of Minutes of 2023 AGM

No corrections were suggested, and the meeting moved (Julie Tuppeny), seconded (Rita Woodward), and unanimously adopted the minutes.

4. Committee Report on the Section's 2023 Activities (Tim Reynolds – Secretary)

The Secretary presented the 2023 report.

“During 2023 RSC Belgium organised a Café Chimique event and six public lectures that were all face-to-face events with most recorded and then posted on our [@RoySocChemBelgium YouTube channel](#). In addition, we held our 2023 AGM, a summer social trip to Ghent, our two annual school outreach events: the Chemistry Challenge and the Top of the Bench ‘Eliminator’, which was an in-person event again, plus four schools’ chemistry workshops with John O’Donoghue from Trinity College Dublin. Our ninth Norman Lloyd scholarship recipient enjoyed his first year at Cardiff University and we hope to hear the name of the tenth recipient very soon.

Our [2023 AGM and Annual Dinner](#) was held on the evening of Friday 20 January at Les Amis Dinent restaurant in Wezembeek-Oppem. At the AGM Bob Crichton was re-elected as Chair, Tim Reynolds was re-elected as Secretary and Fabio Lucaccioni was elected as Treasurer. Three members were elected to the committee: Rita Woodward, Susan Schamp, and Julie Tuppeny. All positions are for a two-year term. Two committee members are in mid-term: Dr David Terrell and Dr Dharmjeet Madhav.

During the year, your section committee met just three times on 17 January (hybrid), 27 June (hybrid), and 5 September (hybrid) with one meeting scheduled for 14 November postponed.

Our 2023 programme kicked off on 9 February with a [Café Chimique event at BSB on the topic of Sustainable Transport](#). This was followed on 23 March with a talk on [sustainable e-fuels from Damien Debecker of UCLouvain](#).

[Professor Ari Koskinen described new horizons in synthesis](#) on the evening of 20 April and on 22 May Professor David Dexter, Director of Research at Parkinson's UK, talked to us about '[Therapeutic strategies for preventing Parkinson's Disease](#)'.

Activities resumed on 9 September with [a wonderful walking tour in late summer sunshine around Ghent](#) led by Dr Paul Snell and including a (re)visit to our RSC Chemical Landmark for Kekule at the University.

September also saw [a visit to Belgium by Dr John O'Donoghue of Trinity College Dublin \(TCD\)](#) and colleagues Dr Fiona McArdle of the Atlantic Technological University Sligo and Dr Natalia Garcia Domenech from TCD. John gave us an updated talk on 'Chemistry in the Movies' on 28 September and he and the team also conducted four Current Chemistry Investigators schools' workshops (two at BSB and two at St. Johns) on electrochemistry and electroanalytical concepts. This was the first time these workshops had been given outside Ireland and were a remarkable success. The idea of a workshop tour with John had been in the RSC Belgium planning for a few years now, but various interruptions - not least the COVID pandemic - had got in the way.

John's Chemistry in the Movies talk was also the prize-giving ceremony for our [2023 Chemistry Challenge initiative](#) undertaken over the early summer with the students working remotely at their schools. For the 2023 Challenge, seven schools took part (four European Schools and three International Schools) with a total of 74 students participating.

Our lecture programme continued with a talk from [Prof Kevin Lam of the University of Greenwich](#) on 12 October on Chemistry with Potential and concluded with a presentation on Hydrogen as an Energy Vector by [Alexandra Kostereva of the European Gas Research Group](#) on 22 November.

On Saturday 18 November we held our [2023 Top of the Bench \(TOTB\) regional heat at BSB](#). This year six teams from three different schools (BSB, ISF and St Johns) participated and after a very tight contest team Baekeland from BSB were declared winners and will represent Belgium at the UK National finals on 16 March 2024. Team Sodium our 2022 winners, also from BSB, had represented Belgium section at the [London finals in March 2023](#).

Thanks as ever to Rita and Susan for developing the content for our educational activities and all the teachers and students who participated.

During the year, our ninth recipient of a Norman Lloyd scholarship at Cardiff University, [Benjamin Condon](#), worked hard. The 2023-2024 academic year sees the tenth recipient of the award – whose name we hope to announce soon – and we also hope to organise a celebration of this milestone during 2024.

As mentioned earlier we now have a YouTube channel where you can find our videoed webinars. Some of our [@RoySocChemBelgium](#) 'content' is proving to be very popular. Our Top Three videos (as of noon on 18 January 2024) are at #3 [Philip Ball](#) with 1,181 views,

second spot goes to [Plasma-based CO2 conversion](#) with 5,705 views, while [Nick Lane](#) remains top of the pops with a remarkable 19,891 views.

On a sad note, I would like to mark the passing of one of our most enthusiastic and active supporter of the section's activities: Brian Sutcliffe. We will miss him and hope to mark his passing with an appropriate event during 2024.

We aim to run a full programme of events during 2024 and look forward to seeing many members and friends during the year. [Details of forthcoming events can always be found on the RSC Belgium blog.](#)"

There were no questions on the report, and the meeting moved (David Terrell), seconded (Andrew Dunn) and unanimously approved its adoption.

5. Financial Report of 2023 (Fabio Lucaccioni – Treasurer)

The treasurer presented the 2023 financial report and accounts.

"The 2023 balance sheet is presented by listing revenues and payments allocated to a series of categories pre-assigned by the RSC.

The overall balance at the end of 2023 on the current account is €5,799.05 and the global expenses (receipts minus payments) were -€5,915.49. The saving account overall balance is €4,503.27.

During the year, the total income amounted to €3,941.06, mainly from a grant from RSC headquarters (€2,999.60) but also from the AGM and the annual dinner, as well as fees relating to the visit to Ghent in August.

Expenses for the year amount to €9,856.55 €. The main expenses concern:

- The six lectures and the "Café Chimique" organised during the year (€3,897.47), with a total audience of 177 people.
- Our annual Top of the Bench and Chemistry Challenge activities and also in 2023 some Chemistry Workshops for an amount of €677.70 (involving 160 students).
- Social events, which are the AGM and its dinner as well as the visit to Ghent (€2,130.45)
- Transfer of money to the savings account (€2,400.00).

This year, and following an email from headquarter dated January 11, 2024, we do not need to have our accounts audited as our entries are less than £10,000."

The meeting unanimously adopted the Treasurer's report.

6. Chair's Remarks (Bob Crichton)

The Chair thanked all members of the committee for their continuing hard work and support and looked forward to continuing success in the new year.

During the Annual Dinner, the Chair presented Rita and Peter Woodward with some tokens of the committee's appreciation for their efforts in providing refreshments for our evening talks over many years.

7. Election of committee members and section officers

The following nominations had been received for election to the committee.

Committee: Dr David Terrell and Prof Ari Koskinen.

Both positions are for a two-year term. As the number of nominations equalled the number of vacant positions, both candidates were duly elected.

Other committee members in mid-term are Bob Crichton (Chair), Tim Reynolds (Secretary), Fabio Lucaccioni (Treasurer), Rita Woodward, Julie Tuppeny and Susan Schamp.

The committee thanked Dharmjeet Madhav for his contribution to the committee over the last two years.

At the first committee meeting of 2024 Bo Dahlqvist and Jonathan Norris will also be co-opted onto the committee.

8. Auditing arrangements

As noted above as the section turnover did not exceed £10 000 then RSC rules indicate that no formal audit is required before the accounts are submitted to HQ.

9. Any Other Business

The meeting adjourned at 19h52. The first meeting of the new 2024 committee will be arranged soon.