

LAGB Annual General Meeting

10 September 2020

Zoom

Chair: Prof. Caroline Heycock (President)

1. Welcome and apologies

Specific apologies from Rob Truswell, Teresa Bieberauer

2. Minutes of the last meeting

- Available online (<http://www.lagb.org.uk/agm-minutes>).
- The minutes were approved without changes.

3. Matters arising

- All covered in relevant committee reports below. Except matters arising from previous minutes relating to the – Anna Siewierska Prize meeting with JoL has not yet taken place.

4. Reports from committee

4.1. *President's report (Prof. Caroline Heycock)*

- Took over from David at end of January. Thanks to David for all he did during this time and for his support since then.
- LAGB has initiative various communications to public bodies and Government. Letters in support of British Council, for PG/ECR (to AHRC), response to UKRI consultation on Open Access. Currently responding to ESRC response on doctoral training (Linnaea Stockall).
- Annual Meeting postponed by one year.
- ULAB have also cancelled their conference this year. Since abstracts had already been submitted and evaluated.
- Lots of very positive collaboration both within the country and internationally. Pooling of resources for online teaching. We have also participated in the Abralin series of talks, including inviting people to give talks. Everyone responded very positively and there is now an incredible pool of resources for teaching purposes going forward. Links are on the webpage.

4.2. *Honorary Secretary's report (Dr Michelle Sheehan)*

- Extensive engagement with learned societies and associations.
- Two important new initiatives spearheaded by the British Academy. Towards a National Languages Strategy (released in June 2020). Presented proposals for the educational skills component for a national strategy for languages. This can be found on the BA website and on the LAGB Forum.
- SHAPE initiative to go alongside STEM to promote humanities and the arts.
- AMLUK have also compiled a list of online open access resources. Discussion of hostile environment and impact on staff recruitment, particularly for languages.
- Some societies have saved money due to cancellation of events and are now rechanneling money into ECR emergency funding.

- Arts and Humanities Alliance concerned about closure of departments and courses. They want to gather instances of this. Open document for people to document cases of closure.
- The LAGB raised an issue with UCML about grades for certain (community) languages not being considered in their admissions requirements.
- UCGAL are trying to carry out a survey on the public understanding of linguistics. LAGB will promote this accordingly.
- Common English Forum launched a website called ‘Your story’. No linguists posted stories here. But MS encouraged members to engage with this
- Shared futures panel postponed until next year.
- Good news! 7% increase in entry for English language, although there is still a dip (4%) for the combined A level.

4.3. *Membership Secretary’s report (Dr Laura Bailey)*

- Slight drop in membership against last year as might be expected.
- Members were asked to encourage their colleagues to join (or renew with) the LAGB as a way of supporting linguistics in the UK.
- We agreed to sponsor 3 conferences in the Feb round of applications. All were postponed or moved online meaning that the money was no longer needed.
- No applications in June or October (2019). Reminder of October funding round for conferences taking place next year.

4.4. *Treasurer’s report (Dr Chris Cummins)*

- CC gave a report on the current financial situation for the LAGB.
- With the Annual Meeting cancelled the expenditures are reduced. Something of a rebound in our asset position so far.
- Outlook is somewhat more promising due to Covid. Net cost of Annual meeting a major budget item.
- Would be good to return the float to £30k.
- There was some discussion of ways in which we could reduce some of the costs associated with this.
- However, it was felt that this was still very much in line with the LAGB’s goals.
 - Q: Are the finances sustainable? In previous years there was a small surplus which could be spent on this. But now it seems that we are creating a deficit each year.
 - CC: There have been some additional expenses, but the main issue is that it is a long time since there was an Annual meeting that made a profit. Current arrangements are not sustainable. Trade-off in future with this format for the conference and ‘trimming’ down some
 - Q: Is there room to renegotiate CUP fees?
 - CC: JoL subscriptions through the LAGB are falling. Does not affect us directly.
 - Q: What is the position re VAT and charitable status.
 - Noted that the question of whether a conference should make money has been going on for a while.

4.5. *Meetings Secretary's report (Dr Robyn Orfitelli)*

- Ulster meeting postponed to 2021.
- Many thanks to everyone for their understanding of this difficult decision. Plan is for this to go ahead in 1 years' time (i.e. September 2021).
- Both invited speakers have confirmed that they can attend in 2021.
- Previous discussion of diversification of range of 'sub-fields' that are represented, particularly to target phonology, phonetics, semantics and pragmatics.
 - Plan is to also include panels targeting these topics. A call for panel topic submissions will come out in Autumn 2020, ahead of general call for abstracts in 2021.
 - Continuing to explore funding options. Looking into catering options and being creative about ways to make it sustainable.
 - Preparing for conference in-person next year. However, we do not know what the world will look like in 2021 in terms of in-person conference. Contingency plans for 100% or blended conference with some in-person and some remote attendance online.

4.6. *Assistant Secretary's report (Dr Hannah Gibson)*

- HG oversaw the OUDiL prize, which was given out for the fourth year.
 - Four winners were chosen.

4.7. *External Relations Officer's report (Dr Rebecca Woods)*

- Online resources page on the LAGB website. Would appreciate any additions to the page (via the Forum). Please also share with your networks.
- Updated the conference funding call (in conjunction with the student committee). Encourage you to tell students about the call and encourage submissions.
- CH: Education committee has also put together a great range of resources for school age learners.

4.8. *Student Committee's report (Marc Olivier)*

- The SC funded a range of conferences but many were postponed/cancelled due to the pandemic.
- MC to replace Greg Williamson (UCL)
 - The committee would like to thank Greg for his service!

5. Report from Education Committee (Dr Eva Eppler)

- LASER
 - Papers given by speakers have been published by both Language, Society and Policy and IMPACT. LASER's abstract was accepted for 'English Shared Futures' conference but this was postponed to 2021.
 - Current plans include setting up hubs around the country and identifying new ways to reach out to schools and teachers.
- UKLO

- The competition was cancelled due to Covid-19. State school participation in the UKLO is going up. However, all teams end up being all male despite equal rates at entry level.
- LAGB EC meeting did not take place because the Annual Meeting did not take place. However, now working on a webinar for next year to ensure that there is something on linguistics and community languages in schools.
- Education Committee contributed to the LAGB online resources list (on the LAGB website).
- CLiE is supporting an online resource project (OASIS) to make short summaries available online. Working on a project investigating the gap between what teachers need to know about languages and what they actually know.

6. Changes in the committee

- Rebecca Woods is stepping down as Web Administrator and External relations officer
 - The committee would like to thank Becky for her service!
- Laura Bailey is stepping down as Memberships Secretary
 - The committee would like to thank Laura for her service!
- Chris Cummins is stepping down as Treasurer
 - The committee would like to thank Chris for his service!
- Jonathan Kasstan will be assuming role of Web Administrator and External relations officer.
- Rob Truswell will be assuming role of Treasurer.
- Theresa Biberauer will be assuming role of Memberships Secretary.
 - Welcome all!

7. Amendments to the constitution

- Updates centre around means of communication – circular replaced by emails, there is now a website etc.
- Also a note that President must be based in the UK and members must be able to attend office hours in line with UK time.
- Amendments to the constitution ratified at the Annual Meeting via poll (94%, vote of 18/19)

8. Format for future LAGB meetings

- RO: There are a range of benefits and drawbacks of bringing conferences online. What are thoughts on the possibility of exploring online participation in the LAGB conference (into the future). And how might we go ahead exploring that.
 - Move to model where expensive invited speakers give their talks remotely but are not flown in.
 - A conference should break even (not make a profit).
 - A conference also provides an opportunity for new academics from abroad to meet the UK linguistic community.
 - The invited speakers also ask questions which are invaluable.
 - Would we need support in terms of the technical running of the event.

- Could provide other opportunities for invited speakers to engage with people – lunches or dedicated sections. So they still give a chunk of their time but in a different way to attend/engage with.
- In many ways Ulster meeting will provide us with a change to trial these options and this may be necessary.

9. AOBs

- Hannah Gibson: Possible call for members to join a social justice sub-committee to work alongside and feed into the work of the committee. Highlight areas in which linguistics can contribute to addressing these issues. HG to take this forward.
- Lennaea Stockall: ESRC consultation taking place at the moment on doctoral training. We are putting together a response to this. ESCR has been thinking about this for a while and have asked anyone who is interested to submit a response to the consultation which makes the case for a longer 5-year Phd, with 2 years of teaching and 3 years of research. Happy for input from others but submission is due next week.

Hannah Gibson, Assistant Secretary
(End of minutes)