BCS Treasurer's work report to August 2015

Richard Maddison

Each year the Treasurer's biggest job is to bid for the following year's budget allocation. This has to be prepared on the BCS HQ spreadsheet and submitted by the end of March. The problems are as follows.

* Our branch committee can in March only guess at the likely pattern of speakers, locations, dates and costs, yet the form asks for the detailed expenditure under each of various headings and each in the column corresponding to the month.

* Special events, such as our schools competition project, have to be included appropriately.

* The whole has to include text justifying the various proposals.

* This needs input from other members of the Branch Committee, obviously, and circulation to them for comments on the drafts as it is developed.

* We sometimes manage to arrange a meeting in a room that costs nothing to use, but this cannot be guaranteed when bidding.

BCS HQ does not allocate funds for the coming year till about July. The Committee that allocates the money have been and still are impressed by the way we manage our finances.

In July 2014 for meetings they allocated us more than we had bid for, inviting us to have a fuller programme this last year. However, they did not then allocate anything for our schools project. Maybe they initially did not allocate anything for such special events for any branch.

I then had to submit a bid on a different supplementary funding form to get the further funding for our schools project, with justification again. They would not accept my request that we be allocated as in my original bid. So I bid on the form and they then allocated the amount I had bid for. To me this seems to be extra work to no purpose.

In July this year they allocated for meetings what I had bid for, but nothing for our schools project. So as last financial year I shall have to bid again on the supplementary funding form for our schools project for the coming year.

The rest of the Treasurer's role is:

* to attend the various committee meetings, submitting reports if necessary in advance, or reporting that everything is satisfactory;

* to keep records of what is committed, even though not spent yet;

* to watch emails and at committee meetings for indications of things that are going to cause some expenditure, and to keep a record. I have recently changed how this is done. We now have a spreadsheet of the proposed programme with extra columns giving the best estimate of the expenditure as it all gradually evolves. This gives for each meeting or event the budget, what is committed, what is already spent and other details. So it is easier to check monthly our figures with the spreadsheet of the accounts paid by BCS HQ.

* to get people who are planning meetings or events to find out the cost of hiring rooms and other likely costs, and to estimate the expenditure;

* to authorise payments, liaising was necessary;

* generally to try to get the meetings and events to both not exceed the allocation, and also if possible not be significantly underspent against the allocation;

* to report to the Member Group Committee when required;

* to prepare accounts for the Branch AGM.

In recent years up to 2014 we did not run anything that generated income for the BCS, so our bids did not have to include details that would be needed. However, our recent event at The National Museum Of Computing was financed partly from our original bid and partly by asking those who attended to pay.

I am grateful to the relevant other committee members for so excellently doing their jobs. I particularly thank Fan, Saverio and Sue for making arrangements for meetings bearing in mind the allocated budget; and Chris for his help in preparing our bid last March.