

# Irish Council for Bioethics

*Comhairle Bitheitice na hÉireann*

**Thursday 11 July 2002**

**In the Chair:** Professor P. Fottrell

**Also present:** Professor E.P. Cunningham; Mr M. Dempsey; Dr P. Flanagan; Mr D. Gleeson; Professor P. Hannon; Dr M. Lawler; Dr P. McKenna; Ms M. Mulvihill; Professor F. O’Gara; Professor R. O’Regan; Mr A. Sheikh; Professor J. J. Strain; Professor P. Whittaker;

**Apologies for absence:** Dr D. Dooley; Dr M. Fitzgerald; Canon K. Kearon; Professor C. Kelleher; Dr T. McGleenan; Dr N. O’Brien; Professor A. Scott;

**Also in attendance:** Mr P. Dempsey; Dr S. Thomas

**1. Address by Dr Sandra Thomas,**

Dr Sandra Thomas addressed the Council on the work of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, of which she is director, and best international practice.

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters Arising**

As Dr McGleenan was unable to attend the meeting it was decided to defer item 5 re: members’ declaration of interest until the September meeting.

Dr Didier Sicard, President of the French Bio-Ethics Committee has agreed to address the Council at the November meeting.

The Council agreed that the official launch be deferred until the Scientific Director is in place and the work programme decided.

The Council was informed that interviews for the post of Scientific Director will take place on 17 July 2002. Four applicants have been short-listed for interview.

4. **Correspondence**

As all correspondence was in connection with the work programme it was decided to deal with this item under item 6.

5. **Declaration of Interests**

Deferred until the September meeting.

6. **Establishment of Working Groups**

Professor P. Whittaker circulated draft terms of reference for the proposed Working Group on Ethical Aspects of Genetically Modified Organisms. Professor P. Whittaker agreed to report back to the Council at the September meeting re: feasibility of undertaking the study as proposed by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. The document will be circulated before the next meeting.

Dr M. Lawler and Mr A. Sheikh circulated and spoke to a document entitled 'Human Biological Collections' proposing the establishment of a working Group to examine ethical issues in relation to human biological collections.

Dr M. Lawler and Mr A. Sheikh agreed to circulate a more detailed document before the September meeting. Mr A. Sheikh also agreed to prepare a document on stem cell research for circulation.

Professor F. O'Gara agreed to discuss the subject of pharmacogenomics with his UCC colleagues and brief the Council at the September meeting.

Mr D. Gleeson circulated a Decision of the Court of Appeal on Cloning Control in the United Kingdom for the information of the Council's Members.

Dr T. McGleenan circulated a draft Declaration of Interests to be discussed at the September meeting.

Dr P. Flanagan circulated a document entitled 'Consulting and Informing the Public' and addressed the Council on the main issues.

7. **Any other business**

Members were invited to attend a lecture by Onora O'Neill, author of *Autonomy and Trust in Bioethics*, entitled "Trust and Accountability" on Monday, 23 September, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 5012, Arts Building (Philosophy Department), Trinity College, Dublin.

8. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Council will take place at 10.30am on Thursday, 12 September 2002 in Academy House.