



*Advancing
Astronomy and
Geophysics*

DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8th March 2019

1. Attendance, Apologies and Introduction

PRESENT:

Prof Mike Cruise (MC), President and Chair;
Dr Nigel Berman (NB), Treasurer;
Prof Lyndsay Fletcher (LF), Senior Secretary;
Dr Mandy Bailey (MB), A Secretary;
Prof Mark Lester (ML), G Secretary;
Prof Anton Ziolkowski (AZ), Vice President, G; (via skype)
Mr Charles Barclay (CB), Vice President A
Dr Paul Daniels (PAD);
Dr Sheila Peacock (SP);
Dr Megan Argo (MA);
Prof Steve Miller (SM);
Mr Kevin Kilburn (KK);
Dr Stacey Habergham-Mawson (SHM), Vice President (A);
Prof William Chaplin (WC);
Dr Clare Watt (CW);
Prof Giovanna Tinetti (GT);
Dr Jane MacArthur (JM)
Prof Mike Watson (MW);

APOLOGIES:

Prof Ian Crawford, (IC) Vice President (G);
Dr Claire Foullon (CF);
Prof Lorraine Hanlon (LH);

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Philip Diamond (PD), Executive Director;
Dr Robert Massey (RM), Deputy Executive Director;
Ms Siobhan Adeusi (SA), Executive Assistant

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting on February 8 2019 were approved subject to corrections to the attendance list as follows:

Prof Ian Crawford and Stacey Habergham-Mawson are Vice Presidents and should be listed as such.

The paragraph at point 5.1 was amended to read:

LF reported on the letter to fellows encouraging them to vote in Council elections, and highlighted that this year there are five Councillor positions open, four for the usual term of three years and one for one year due to the resignation of a Councillor.

Under AOB SP asked that the date of the Geological Society's celebrations are noted as being planned for 2021.

Matters Arising:

5.1 LF will review the final draft of the nominations document.

5.3 NB will ask an expert to help with the correct translation of the Latin inscription.

5.4 SHM will identify a suitable candidate to join the CDAG.

ML commented about his position being noted incorrectly as he will remain on the committee ex officio until the expiry of his tenure as G Secretary..

5.5 It was suggested that the introduction of a new brand will be an opportunity to create a standard style for Council and Committee papers.

5.8 LF reported that some Council members had sent comments regarding the proposed new Code of Conduct to SM. However, because of the Code of Conduct issue currently under investigation by Council, the working group doesn't want to release a new version until the current issue is resolved.

3. President's Business

3.1 Regional POC meeting

The president reported on an interesting and lively meeting. Ideas were exchanged and noteworthy proposals made, but it would be difficult to implement many of them before 2020. These ideas included:

- More support for career development and guidance, possibly a mentoring scheme
- Better communication from the RAS, including using more modern means of communication such as podcasts, snapchat and Instagram
- Promoting the RAS policy positions
- More coordination with other outreach activities

However, it would be possible to produce RAS stickers, posters etc which would enable universities to promote their activities next year during the bi-centenary celebrations.

4. Treasurer's Business

4.1 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer suggested a small increase to Membership fees to £130 per annum. This is slightly above inflation but generally in line with the policy of tracking the growth of costs in the long term.

SHM reported that she has received queries from part time workers on lower salaries, regarding whether or not another membership option could be introduced. NB informed Council that there is a hardship fund which people can apply for. He said that it would be difficult to have a 'low income' category as it would be the responsibility of the Society to police whether claims of part time status, etc. were valid. This would require rather intrusive questioning and a considerable burden of administration.

LF reported that the IOP has a similar category, but PD said that he was not sure if they checked the veracity of claims. For the moment, fellows in this situation should apply for support from the hardship fund.

ACTION PD to check with IOP

LF suggested that if fellows resign because of hardship, they may not reconsider re-joining.

SM asked if resignees give a reason for resigning, it was reported that some do and many do not.

Actions: PD to give reasons for the current scheme to council; NB to provide council with information on the Gerald Merton fund.

MC reported that as a fraction of average national salaries, the fees are almost as low as they have ever been.

5. Organisation & Structure

5.1 Report from the Publishing Working group meeting

PD reported on the first Publishing Working Group meeting and thanked the Council members involved.

Issues covered during the meeting included the status of Plan S. As a result of the discussion it was agreed to ask authors why they decide to publish in RAS journals. The survey will be sent out next week to approx. 3000 authors and should inform future decisions on publishing.

SP reported a conflict of interest as she is a trustee of the Geological Society which is also a learned society publisher.

5.2 Report on Code of Conduct issue - confidential discussion - redacted

5.3 Update on the lease matter - confidential discussion - redacted

5.4 Report on the Fellowship Award

MC Thanked AZ and GT as they were on the Fellowship panel. He reported that there were many excellent candidates but the panel felt that the winner was outstanding. He also praised Nush Cole, Awards Officer for her preparation of papers and administration of the scheme.

5.5 Revised Code of Conduct

This was already addressed under 5.8 of Matters Arising

7. Other

7.1 Awards Committees

It was remarked that the paper listing the members of the Education and Outreach Awards Committee, needed to add the word Awards.

LF raised a concern that there were insufficient representatives from 'G' on the committee to fully represent RAS science. SHM commented that it is always possible to add another A member if necessary but in fact the G area was better covered than was immediately apparent.

CB mentioned that there is always the potential for certain areas to be under-represented as not all committee members can make every meeting. AZ reported that it took a long time to put the committee together. MB was concerned generally about a possible lack of current research expertise, for example, to be able to judge the winner of the Gold Medal.

It was suggested that a larger committee may lessen some of the problems but there is the risk that it would become too unwieldy. However, it was noted again that it would be helpful in selecting members of committees to have a source of information on members' areas of expertise.

The additional member for the CDAG committee was approved.

MC suggested that panel chairs consider the rules that they would like regarding membership of committees, which will could be discussed with officers.

SM asked Council to approve CB remaining on the RAS200 Committee, after his term on Council ends. This was APPROVED

It was agreed that Prof Charles can assist during the first year of the new the chair of the International Committee.

7.2 Officer's report (Membership)

The nominations for membership of the Society were approved by Council

7.3 Minutes of the Ordinary meetings

The minutes of the ordinary Meetings were agreed.

The Minutes were approved but MC asked if in future the public announcement of the death of fellows should only take place if they are particularly prominent and known to most people. He suggested that a roll call could be made at the AGM of all the members that have died during the year, with perhaps a minute's silence.

ACTION: Office to organise

8. AOB

MB mentioned the deadline for applications to deliver a specialist discussion meeting had past. There are fewer applications than in previous years, but still enough to put on a varied programme. MC announced that the RAS/Winton GCSE poster competition winners will be awarded their prizes at the Ordinary meeting.

Mr Charles Barclay's term on Council finishes in May but as he cannot attend the May meeting he was thanked by the chair for his many contributions over the years, CB commented that he has thoroughly enjoyed his term on Council.

PD reminded Council to inform SA of their requirements relating to the Awards Dinner at NAM.

He also asked for volunteers to form a brand focus group to participate in the meeting with Johnson Banks. The following volunteered: MC, NB, SHM, MW and PAD.

Council rose at 2.10 p.m.

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Professor Mike Cruise

8th March 2019