

DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14 May 2021 held via Zoom

1. Attendance and Apologies

PRESENT:

Prof Emma Bunce (EB); President and Chair
Dr Nigel Berman (NB); Treasurer;
Dr Mandy Bailey (MB); A Secretary;
Prof Lyndsay Fletcher (LF); Senior Secretary;
Prof Mark Lester (ML); G Secretary; left at 12.48
Prof Steve Miller (SM); Vice President, (G);
Dr Paul Daniels (PAD) Vice President, (A);
Dr Megan Argo (MA); Vice President (A);
Dr Jane MacArthur (JM);
Prof Lorraine Hanlon (LH); joined at 11.08
Prof Phil Charles (PC);
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS);
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)
Mr Martin Lunn (ML);
Professor Mahesh Anand (MHA); Vice President (G)
Mr Kevin Kilburn (KK).
Dr Sheona Urquhart (SU); joined at 10.10
Dr Hannah Dalglish (HD);
Dr Matt Middleton (MM);

APOLOGIES:

Dr Claire Foullon (CF) ;
Prof. William Chaplin (WC);

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

2.1 The Minutes of the meeting of 13 March 2021 were APPROVED subject to the following amendments:

- 3.1 2nd para insert "not" before "know how to"
- 5.1 1st bullet should be "There are"
- 5.4 1st para delete first occurrence of "studies" in 1st line
- 2nd para replace form with from

2.2 The Action Status Report

The Executive Director updated Council on the following actions:

Feb 5.6, There is no exclusivity clause in the Cunard contract precluding an agreement with another travel company

Mar 5.1, The Courtyard Societies were not keen on involving mayoral candidates with the campaign, until after the mayoral election if at all

Mar 3.1, EB will amend the Awards Review group paperwork to clarify 'single piece of work' for Herschel, Eddington, Chapman, Price and Jackson-Gwilt prizes.

2.3 Update on Licensing proposal

The Executive Director informed Council that three companies have been interviewed. PD has gone back to two of them to ask for more details regarding financial information.

3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

The President reported on the Officers' meeting on the format of Specialist Discussion Meetings (SDMs). It was agreed that further discussion is required. The Officers were not keen to separate the A&G meetings on to separate days as there was concern about moving them away from the Ordinary Meetings and Council meetings. Investment into equipment to run hybrid meetings will also be required in addition to checking with the Geol.Soc as to what they can offer in that regard.

PAD reported that IT working group is reviewing AV options.

ACTION: EB to form a small working group to discuss hybrid meetings, to report back to Council.

The President reported on policy work relating to science funding from the EU Framework Programme Horizon Europe. The UK Government reversed its decision to fund the subscription from the UKRI budget, though this change only applies for one year, so there is not yet any long term commitment on the financial arrangements. In a related issue, the EU still plans to exclude the UK from access to some programmes in the space sector.

She met with Lord Willetts to discuss this and the cuts to the Official Development Assistance programme.

Robert Massey was thanked for his work in this area.

LF requested more information regarding Horizon Europe.

ACTION: EB to send information to LF

The President also mentioned the Honorary Auditor's report. She said it was fair and any actions will be brought back to Council at a later date.

ACTION: PD and EB to decide which Council meeting would be appropriate.

4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS

4.1 Helen Haddock (HH) (associate director) from Buzzacott joined at 10.15 to update Council on the audit for 2020. She thanked all those that had been involved with the audit, in particular Mark Piper, the RAS accountant.

The report was very positive, with nothing untoward being found. The financial activities were not adversely affected by the pandemic as there was an increase in income and a decrease in expenditure. In addition, there were no significant changes or adjustments, except for furloughed staff.

It had been recommended that the Treasurer reviews the credit card statements of the Executive and Deputy Directors.

NB reported that he had done this but had not made a note.

4.2 Council received and APPROVED the following paperwork:

- Annual Report and accounts for 2020
- Post Audit Report from Buzzacott
- Letter of representation

NB thanked HH for her update and Mark Piper for his work on the audit.

4.3 Council received the Statement of Accounts

4.4 The Treasurer updated Council on progress with the new OUP contract for the new journal. Negotiations are almost complete.

PD reported that Dr Kim Clube, RAS Publishing Manager has contacted active researchers on Council for suggestions for members of the editorial board of the new journal.

4.5 The Treasurer updated Council on the setting up of the Accommodation Fund. This was APPROVED by Council. **for approval**

4.6 The Treasurer updated Council on the changes he had made to the risk register and reminded them that they should contact him with any risks they may identify

5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

5.1 Council received the paper Arrangements for AGM 2021. PD reported that there will not be a Presidential Lecture following the meeting, as this will be given at NAM. Instead, SM will give an overview of the work of RAS200, and report on the Society's work with the IAU on observatories situated at sites of cultural sensitivity.

5.2 The Executive Director reported on the following matters:

- The BAA want to leave BH but wish us to store their archives.

ACTION: Office to arrange a meeting with BAA representatives to discuss this.

- There has been a positive response from Fellows relating to the BH campaign. Many letters from Fellows were sent to MPs.

5.2a PD has sent a holding email to MHCLG in response to the letter to RAS as the Council need to consider its contents.

5.2b Proposed Terms for RAS - Confidential discussion - redacted

5.2d Council received the TOR for Disciplinary Procedure committees. Council APPROVED the procedure with the following amendments:

- Clarity about the process of hearings
- Clarity on whether or not you can be on multiple panels
- Clarity about whether or not Council can override the panel's decision

ACTION: PD to make amendments

5.3 NB left the meeting.

The Treasurer's Honorarium was APPROVED by Council.

5.4 Council received the RAS200 5 year Evaluation Report and APPROVED SM's motion to schedule an extended discussion of RAS200 at its October or December 2021 meeting, to invite the RAS200 evaluators Jenesys to present to that meeting, and to start the discussion on how to build on and extend the legacy of the scheme.

EB thanked SM for his work on RAS200 and his contribution to the AGM. RAS200 will be added to an upcoming Council agenda.

ACTION: EB/PD to find a suitable time

6. PUBLICATIONS

6.1 Council received the GJI Editor in Chief Report 2021

6.2 Council received the MNRAS Editor in Chief Report 2021

6.3 Council received the MNRAS Editorial Board Meeting Minutes

6.4 Council received the A&G Editor's Report 2019

PC asked how the processing time for RAS journals compared to other main journals.

NB reported that there is data available from OUP and that is very similar to other journals.

ACTION: PD to ask KC for data to send to Council.

7. OTHER

7.1 Council received the Membership Officer's Reports, candidates proposed for Fellowship were APPROVED.

PAD asked if those Fellows resigning because of the cost were informed about The Gerard Merton Fund. The treasurer assured that they were.

7.2 The Grant Status Report was received by Council.

7.3 The 2020 RAS Thesis Prizes report was received by Council and APPROVED.

SM suggested that the working of call for nominations should emphasise that the Patricia Tomkins Prize can be for A or G fields.

He also reported that currently the Patricia Tomkins prize requires much less paperwork, and suggested consistency across all awards.

ACTION: Awards Panels to consider this.

ACTION: PD to review awards wording.

7.4 The Minutes of the March Ordinary meeting were received by Council and approved.

7.5 The Minutes of the April Ordinary Meeting were received by Council and APPROVED subject to the following change:

The President did not chair the meeting; it was conducted by VP PAD.

ACTION: Office to amend

8. AOB

- EB thanked Sue Bowler for 25 years of hard work and dedication editing the A&G magazine. It is a highlight of RAS membership.
- EB thanked the outgoing Council members for their valuable contributions, especially during the last difficult year, due to the pandemic.
- LF thanked Council as outgoing senior secretary. She also thanked the officers, PD, RM and staff.
- MB reported that there had been a good response to the 2nd call for SDM organisers.

Council rose at 13.12

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14 May 2021