

**DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 May 2023, at Burlington House  
and Zoom**

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

**PRESENT:**

Prof Mike Edmunds (ME); President and Chair  
Dr Nigel Berman (NB); Treasurer;  
Dr Mandy Bailey (MB); Senior Secretary;  
Dr Sheona Urquhart (SU); A Secretary  
Prof Ian Robson (IR); Vice President, (A);  
Prof Stephen Eales (SE); Vice President (A) online  
Prof Clare Watt (CW); Vice President (G) online  
Prof Phil Charles (PC); online  
Prof Colin Snodgrass (CS);  
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)  
Dr Hannah Dalglish (HD)  
Prof Caroline Smith (CLS)  
Dr Jasmine Kaur Sandhu (JKS) online  
Mrs Patricia Tomkins (PT;) (A)  
Dr Olivia Keenan (OK); (A)  
Prof Silvia Zane (SZ);  
Prof Belinda Wilkes (BW) online  
Dr Joanna Barstow (JB)  
Prof Steve Miller (SM)

**APOLOGIES:**

Prof Mark Lester (MLE); G Secretary;  
Prof Nick Rawlinson (NR); Vice President (G)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

## **2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 The Minutes of Council Meeting of 10 March 2023 were APPROVED subject to the following correction:

OK attended in person

2.2 The Action Status Report was received by Council. PD reported that all actions from the last Council meeting were completed.

## **3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS**

3.1 Progress with Monthly Payment of Membership Subscriptions: PD reported that he had had a meeting with the IT provider, and the plans are on track.

3.2 G7 Summit and Protection of Astronomy, letters as below

3.2a The Letter from ME to UK Space Agency was received by Council

3.2b The reply from UK Space Agency was received by Council

The President thanked RM for his assistance with the letter to the UK Space Agency.

It was agreed that a letter of congratulations would be sent to King Charles III.

ACTION: PD to draft the letter

## **4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS**

4.1 Eddie Finch from Buzzacott joined at 11.15 to update Council on the audit for 2022 and made the following points:

- Overall funds have decreased because of investment movements, however cashflow has increased
- There is a large amount in heritage assets which are not realisable
- The accounts are a true and fair view of the current situation; all laws and regulations have been complied with

4.2 Council received the following papers: for approval:

- a. Annual Report and accounts for 2022
- b. Post Audit Report from Buzzacott
- c. Letter of representation

All papers were APPROVED by Council.

ME thanked EF and his team for their hard work.

NB thanked Mark Piper for his meticulous work on the accounts.

PD thanked Sue Bowler for her work on the Annual Report.

4.3 The Statement of Accounts was received by Council

4.4a Treasurer's Report was received by Council

The Treasurer updated Council on the structure of the Remuneration Sub Committee. The committee will comprise: The Treasurer, Senior Secretary and one other person.

The President commented that there should be one other Council member on the committee and that the Executive Director should also be invited.

4.4b Risk Register was received by Council. NB reported that the Register had been reviewed by the Finance Committee and it did not suggest any changes. He also reminded Council to propose any risks that they identify.

4.4c The Treasurer requested that Council approve Mark Lester, as Senior Secretary being put on the RAS bank mandates. This was APPROVED.

## **5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE**

5.1 The DRAFT Arrangements for AGM 2023 (Executive Director), were received by Council.

PD commented that the number of people signed up so far is good, bearing in mind there will be a train strike on the same day.

He also reported that voting take up was up on last year, at over 800 people. Mi-Voice, who took over the process this year, were very efficient.

5.2 The Executive Director's delivered an oral report on the following:

- To put before the AGM: Prof Loraine Hanlon, University College Dublin, who was on Council 2018-21 to act as Honorary Auditor for 2023. This was APPROVED

5.2a Strategy aims update (including background documents)

- The Fellowships group met
- The Property Group will meet within the next few weeks
- Membership group – Jane MacArthur is doing good work; need to revisit the Mission statement

ACTION: PD to put this on the agenda for next meeting.

- Awards Group will meet next week

5.3 The Report of the Honorary Auditors was received by Council

ME reported that the auditors had made some recommendations which should be carried forward to the December meeting.

ACTION: PD

NB suggested that the auditor's remit should be reviewed as it hasn't been done for a while.

5.4 Council received the paper Renaming the Ordinary Meeting.

MB reported that she had received more suggestions for the new name of the Ordinary Meetings. After a brief discussion Council voted on the suggested names and agreed that "A&G Highlights" should be put to the AGM.

## **6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

6.1 The paper Update on Horizon Europe was received by Council

6.2 The 2023 Spring Budget was received by Council

- 6.3 The paper UK Space Strategy and UK Satellite Infrastructure: government response was received by Council.
- 6.4 The paper House of Commons Science, Innovation and Technology Committee was received by Council
- 6.5 The Science & Technology Framework was received by Council
- 6.6 The paper Nurse landscape review was received by Council

## **7. PUBLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The GJI Editor in Chief Report 2022 was received by Council
- 7.2 The MNRAS Editor in Chief Report 2022 was received by Council
- 7.3a The MNRAS Editorial Board Meeting Minutes 13 March were received by Council
- 7.3b The MNRAS Editorial Board Meeting Minutes 24 March were received by Council
- 7.4 The RASTI Editor in Chief Report for 2021 was received by Council

ACTION: PD to set up a meeting with the EICs and ME

- 7.5 The A&G Editor's Report 2022 was received by Council

MB asked whether or not there had been any progress with the suggestion of an online version of A&G or an app.

PD reported that he and Sue Bowler (A&G editor) will be meeting with OUP next month.

## **8. OTHER**

- 8.1 The Membership Officer's Report was received by Council and APPROVED

A query was raised about a number of candidates being sponsored by the same person, as a Sponsor should have personal knowledge of the candidate.

ACTION: PD/ME to investigate further

- 8.2 The 2022 RAS Michael Penston Thesis Prizes were received by Council and APPROVED.

SM and SZ remarked that there was a fantastic field of candidates, many of whom deserved a prize.

- 8.3 Minutes of the March Ordinary meeting were received by Council and APPROVED
- 8.4 Minutes of the April Ordinary Meeting were received by Council and APPROVED

## **9. AOB**

- 9.1 SM asked if MB could remain on the RAS200 committee despite coming off Council this year.

HD asked if she needed to leave the membership Committee as she is rolling off Council too.

ACTION: PD to check.

- 9.2 Ok asked if the RAS could support an open letter to the IAU regarding their naming conventions.

ACTION: PD to circulate the link to Council; comments to ME

9.3 SU reported that the programme for SDMs has now been completed, with one A group asking to hold their meeting in Edinburgh.

9.4 Goodbye and thanks to outgoing Council members.

The President thanked the outgoing members of Council. He gave special thanks to MB for her 12 years of service.

Council rose at 15.00

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**12 May 2023**