



*Advancing
Astronomy and
Geophysics*

ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

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MINUTES 12th FEBRUARY 2016

1. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

PRESENT

Professor Martin Barstow, Professor John Zarnecki, Professor Mike Cruise, Professor Ian Crawford, Dr Mandy Bailey, Professor Lyndsay Fletcher, Professor Mike Edmunds, Professor James Wild, Professor Don Kurtz, Professor Paul Murdin, Dr Simon Mitton, Professor Martin Bureau, Miss Jane MacArthur, Dr Stacey Habbergham, Professor John Brown, Dr Sara Russell, Dr Stephen Serjeant and Dr Joanna Barstow

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Pamela Mortimer (Executive Director) and Dr Robert Massey (Deputy Executive Director)

APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Professor John Brown, Professor Christine Pierce, Professor Mike Bode, Dr Sarah Matthews (who had provided written comments on the Council papers) and Dr Caitriona Jackman.

2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

2.1 The Minutes of the meeting of 11th December 2015 were approved with minor change. It was noted that paragraphs with confidential information would be removed prior to the minutes being added to the Society's website, with a note to state why this action had been taken.

The Executive Director advised that she had met with Sarah Fray, the Executive Secretary of the Geological Society of London (GSL) on the 7th January 2016; they had briefly discussed the concept of the Society becoming an associated body to GSL and Sarah was to provide further details as to what this would entail.

3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

The President congratulated Professor Mike Cruise who was an author of the paper on Gravitational Waves that had recently received worldwide celebration of the success and progress in this field.

The President also updated Council on the following:

- The sad news that Professor Francesco Palla, a member of the European Astronomical Society, had died in late January; as a consequence the EAS meeting in Rolle had been cancelled. Professor John Zarnecki and Professor David Southwood had been planning to attend and represent the Society at this meeting. It was noted that the Society will meet the costs that are not recoverable following the cancellation of the meeting.
- The useful meetings he had had with Mark Walport, (Chief Scientific Advisor), David Parker, (Chief Executive UKSA) and David Willets (previous Science Minister) whilst at the Tim Peake launch.
- That he would be giving oral evidence to the Science and Technology Committee on Tuesday 23 February, for the satellites and space inquiry.

It was agreed that the President should invite Tim Peake to become an honorary Fellow of the Society and that this should be arranged whilst he is in the International Space Station.

The President reminded Council that in addition to the RAS 200: Sky and Earth programme consideration is also being given to other ways to celebrate the bicentenary, for example options for a commemorative book and a children's history book (see agenda item 5.4) and proposed that a working group should be established to consider other activities. It was noted that the Executive Director and the President had exchanged provisional ideas on this; the Executive Director advised that activity on this would have to begin over the summer as the period from February until the Annual General Meeting is exceptionally busy.

ACTION: Executive Director

4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS

Council noted the Financial and Legal Status of the Society as set out in the table below:

RAS Financial and Legal Status	Level of Materiality	Report for February 2016
Transfers in and out of Reserves	£50k	No unplanned transfers BNY Mellon £6,689,763 Note: Our BNY holdings have risen 1.8% during the last 12 months (Dec 2015 figures)
Unplanned changes in Cash holdings	£20k	No unplanned transfers HSBC £3,343,032 Natwest £43,417 (Jan 2016 figures)
Heritage Assets	One heritage item	No change
Lease	Any change	No change
Debts	£5k	No change
Legal Agreements	Any change	No change
Insurance	Any change	No change

2. Pension Funds

The Treasurer reminded Council on the past and present arrangements for staff pension schemes. In summary:

- until 2002 staff were able to join a Defined Benefit (DB) pension scheme;
- there are no currently employed RAS staff who are members of this scheme although there are four previous staff members that have “deferred pensions”;
- the last time that the pension scheme was valued, in 2013, it was in robust surplus;
- it is hoped that the current valuation (valuation date January 1st 2016) will show the same healthy financial position;
- Staff joining after 2001 are able to join a defined contribution (DC) scheme;
- The Society has recently updated the Dc scheme to make it compliant with the new government work place pension requirements.

The Treasurer reminded Council that they have previously been briefed on the option to wind up the DB scheme. The Society’s Pension Advisers, Broadstone advise that the likely overall cost is estimated to be in the range £15,000-£20,000. The first stage would be to reassign the current annuities to the names of the annuitants. The next stage would be to buy annuities for the four deferred annuitants. The Society would seek bulk annuity terms after undertaking a feasibility study. This would cost between £2000 and £4000. After demonstrating feasibility, Broadstone would conduct a market survey for the best deals on offer at the time. This would cost between £5000 and £10,000. There would then follow a final step of purchase of the chosen packages, finalising all the paperwork with Royal London (the current scheme providers) and completing all the necessary closure formalities with the pension regulator. This is estimated at £5000.

It was noted that the scheme closure will remove a substantial item of risk from the Society’s risk register and also that in addition to the removal of many administrative tasks from the RAS Accountant and Treasurer the closure of the scheme will save about £4,000 every three years for valuations and £3,000 every year for pension audits.

Council discussed this matter briefly. It was noted that a full consultation with the deferred staff members would be required and would be undertaken after Council give approval to proceed.

The Treasurer agreed that he will investigate who owns the risk after the pension scheme is wound up and undertook to discuss this issue with Broadstones during the preparation for scheme wind up and report back to council.

ACTION: Treasurer

Council approved the proposal to wind up of the defined benefit scheme at an estimated cost of £15,000 to £20,000.

3. Salaries and Remuneration

The Treasurer introduced this item and then together with the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director left the room as they have conflict of interest in regards to the proposal for an increase in salary/remuneration.

It was noted that the staff of the RAS have letters of appointment stating that their salaries will be inflated according to the RPI – the retail price index. This statistical

index is not now formally recognised although it continues to be calculated and published. The index from December 2014 to 2015 rose by 1.2% and it was proposed to inflate the staff salaries and other remuneration by this amount.

Council approved the following increases in salary or remuneration that are effective from January 2016.

Remuneration Category	2015	Proposed for 2016
Staff Salaries		increase on 2015 by 1.2%
Editor in Chief MNRAS	£8043	£8139
Editors MNRAS	£5361	£5425
Editor in Chief GJI	£1361	£1377
Editors GJI	£907	£918
Treasurer	£5361	£5425
A&G Graphics Designer	£3244	£8756 (inc. VAT)

Council is invited to approve these new rates of remuneration.

4. NAM 2016

Council were reminded that early estimates of the cost of NAM 2016, which will be held under the auspices of the Nottingham Conference Centre, showed that this could be a more costly venue than normal. Confirmation that STFC would provide £20K to support NAM 2016 had been received recently and also that the application for VAT exemption has been accepted; which brings a saving of approximately £20k.

Council approved the following proposed registration fees:

- Non RAS Full registration £260 (Day rate £90)
- Non RAS Student registration £170 (Day rate £50)
- RAS Full registration £220 (Day rate £70)
- RAS Student registration £110 (Day rate £45)

Council noted that with an assumed attendance of 450, the overall deficit will be about £10k if we do not pay VAT.

It was noted that the Treasurer, Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director plan to meet with the academics managing the Scientific Organising Committee and Local Organising Committee on the 18th February 2016.

5. Gentle Reminder

The Treasurer delivered a gentle reminder to Council members to take care in keeping receipts for their expenses claims.

6. Overall spend profile

The Treasurer advised that the total of the requests for additional funding being made at the February Council meeting was for £225K and warned that the Society cannot continue to spend at this rate. He proposed that full consideration is given to the overall spending profile for the coming few years at the March Council meeting and that decisions on large areas of expenditure are postponed until that Council has the opportunity to consider the individual requests on their merit against each other and within the overall financial profile.

5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

5.1 RAS 200 brief

Professor Steve Miller updated Council on the progress made in the RAS 200: Sky and Earth programme and sought approval for £100K evaluation costs to be made available from new funding as opposed to taken from the £1M allocated to fund outreach projects.

Dr Stacey Habbergham declared a conflict of interest and left the room for this item as she is involved in one of the funded projects.

Professor Miller reminded Council that:

- expenditure of £1M (from the RAS Reserves) was approved for RAS 200: Sky and Earth projects at the AGM in 2014.
- 6 project awards have been made (with the Society partnering with a range of diverse organisations such as Care4Carers, the Workers Education Association, the Princes Trust, the National Autistic Society, the National Space Centre and the University of Aberystwyth working with arts professionals at the National and Urdd Eisteddfods).
- In May 2015 they approved spending of up to £10K on evaluation and postponed discussion over whether the evaluation costs should be funded from the core £1M allocation or be additional ‘new’ money.
- Following a competitive selection process Jeneseys were appointed as the evaluators.

As a consequence of the decision taken under the previous agenda item, Treasurers business, this funding request will be considered at the Council meeting in March 2016. Council will be provided with a copy of the Jeneseys bid.

[POST COUNCIL NOTE : Council are advised on the following key dates for the second tranche of receiving nominations, scrutiny and making awards for RAS 200: Sky and Earth:

- Launch on May 13th 2016 at the AGM
- Stakeholders’ meeting at RAS 13th July
- Town Hall meetings take place between September and December. (There will be 10 town hall meetings (mainly) in locations that did not have the meetings last time.)
- Outline proposals open on 10th October 2016
- Deadline for Outline Proposal 9th December 2016
- First meeting of Grants Panel 8th February 2017
- These people will be notified by 1st March 2017
- Deadline for full proposal is 7th April 2017
- Second meeting of grants panel on 19th April 2017
- The winners will be presented at the RAS AGM on the 12th May 2017.]

5.2 RAS Council Elections 2016

The Senior Secretary briefly introduced the ballot paper. Council approved the ballot paper.

5.3 Proposals to a) support a Media Fellowship Science writing workshop and b) hold a Science writing workshop and blog at NAM

Dr Jo Barstow briefly introduced her proposal to support a British Science Association Media Fellowship at a cost of £5000 per annum. Discussion on this item was postponed until the Council meeting in March, following the decision taken under Treasurers business.

Council agreed that Dr Barstow should approach the NAM organisers to discuss her proposal to hold a scientific writing workshop and blog at NAM. It was noted that the Editorial Office Manager and the Editor of A&G have previously presented sessions on a similar theme so it would be important to ensure there was no duplication.

5.4 RAS Bicentenary books

a) Proposal for a RAS Bicentenary Children's history book

The Executive Director advised that she had met with Liz Cross, Head of Children's Publishing, Oxford University Press on the 13th January 2016 to have a preliminary discussion on publishing a children's history book as part of the outreach and education activities to celebrate the bicentenary of the Society.

Council approved:

- the concept of developing a children's book, set in Burlington House, using time travel of a youngster to see first-hand key events in the history of Astronomy and Geophysics.
- funding of £3K to develop the concept further; a final proposal with projected costs and possible income streams will be prepared for Council's approval in May 2016.

b) Proposal for a History of the Society/Commemorative Volume

Dr Simon Mitton reminded Council that at the October 2015 meeting they had briefly considered commissioning two books in celebration of the bicentenary. One of which could be a history of the Society from 1820 to the present, and the other would be a commemorative volume telling the story of the Society's history through its treasures and tangible assets.

Council discussed both options and agreed that further consideration should be given to publishing a History of the Society legacy volume (i.e. not an update to the existing two history volumes) but that this proposal would need to be considered against other requests for funding, following the decision taken under Treasurers business.

There was some discussion over the proposal to produce a commemorative volume telling the story of the Society's history through its treasures; it was felt that whilst it was a good idea to make use of and publicise our heritage assets this could perhaps be done in a different way, for example by making an on line catalogue that would be free to Fellows. It was felt that if there was a commercial market for a commemorative volume then further consideration should be given to the proposal.

The President concluded that Council had mixed views on these proposals and that a conventional publishing proposal should be generated in order for Council to give further consideration to the commemorative volume. It was noted that this would not be available for March 2016. The President thanked Dr Mitton for his work on these proposals.

5.5 Governance Review

a) Awards Regulation

The Executive Director introduced this item and thanked everyone who had been involved in the review for their hard work, it had been a time consuming and intense task the results of which are worthwhile by the production of a revised regulation that sets out the processes in a one stop shop for information on the various medals, awards and thesis prizes etc. and addresses the criteria issues that have been niggling for years.

Council approved the revised awards regulations with a few minor corrections.

b) HR update

The Executive Director advised that the money spent on conducting an HR review was well spent. The consultant had updated existing HR policies and generated a plethora of other policies that the Society did not have. The consultant and Executive Director had reviewed the full set of documents once and would do so again prior to sending out to staff for consultation. A staff meeting was scheduled for the 4th March.

c) Scrutiny of the Ballot

The Executive Director reminded Council that they approved the regulation on the scrutiny of the ballot in December 2015 and that this requires that Council each February approves the members of the scrutiny panel that will serve at the forthcoming election in May.

Council agreed that Reverend Garth Barber, Mr Marcus Hope, Ms Candice Mansell should be asked to serve as members of the scrutiny panel for 2016.

ACTION: Executive Director to approach each member to confirm that they are willing to serve.

Council had been provided with a revised version of the regulation drafted by Dr Quentin Stanley where the following three key changes were proposed:

- That the scrutineers should have at least 5 years continuous Fellowship of the RAS before being appointed
- There is a new role of Shadow Scrutineer - *Quis custodiet ipsos custodiet* – established
- Emphasis of the point that the balloting documents need to be examined by the Scrutineers before dissemination to the Fellowship.

Council agreed that the existing text of the regulation approved in December 2015 should stand. In response to the three main points raised the rationale for not accepting the proposed change is set out below:

5 years as a Fellow

- The byelaws and regulation were deliberately revised to allow more flexibility (and movement) in the composition of the scrutiny panel, with the idea that regular fresh insights from new members would be useful.
- The process is well within the abilities of [most/all] Fellows and 5 years' experience as a Fellow will not influence this.
- The 5 year caveat is not applied to any other position within the Society including the position of President and Officers.

Shadow Scrutineers

- Inefficient to have two shadow scrutineers standing by in case there is a need to attend to a recount, or some irregularity.
- Following the direction in the byelaws that the President appoints scrutineers on behalf of Council, the President can react appropriately to difficulties that arise in the conduct of the ballot, for example by appointing a second set of scrutineers to manage any irregularity.

Balloting document to be examined by the Scrutineers before dissemination to the Fellowship:

- The byelaws require Council to prepare the ballot list at the first meeting of the year.
- Normal practice would see the ballot paper ran past the members of the Scrutiny panel prior to the paperwork being despatched to the Fellowship but Council has the responsibility for its content.

d) Code of Conduct

The Executive Director introduced this paper and highlighted the excellent job that Dr Jacqueline Mitton had done in revising the previous draft that Council had seen in December 2015. Council considered the revised draft and approved it subject to changes to some minor amendments.

ACTION: Executive Director to discuss with Dr Stephen Serjeant and Professor Martin Bureau.

e) Library Regulations

The Executive Director introduced this short paper. Council approved the revised library regulations.

f) Honorary Auditors

The Executive Director reminded Council that that remit of the honorary auditors was clarified in the byelaws revised in May 2015. Byelaw 11 directs:

SECTION III. General Meetings

11. A General Meeting of Fellows shall be held annually, normally on the second Friday in May, to discuss and determine matters relating to the affairs of the Society, including the Annual report and accounts; reports of the professional auditors; appointment of professional auditors; election of Council; Membership Subscriptions for the ensuing year; and, as deemed necessary, the enactment, revision, and repeal of Bye-laws. In addition, two or more Fellows, not being members of Council, chosen by the Society at each General Meeting as Honorary Auditors, will deliver a personal report on the resources, goals, structures, activities, conduct and general health of the Society but not matters relating to finance, law or personnel.

and that Professor Paul Crowther and Dr Euan Monaghan are the honorary auditors appointed for 2015. They will make a report at the AGM in 2016.

During the process last year, Paul Crowther requested that an email should be sent to the Fellowship to give them the opportunity to raise any issues with them in advance of them meeting with Trustees and staff.

Council agreed that an email will be sent to the Fellowship and that the President will make an announcement at the Ordinary meeting on the 12th February 2016 and 11th March 2016. A notice will also be posted in the March e-newsletter.

5.6 Burlington House

The Executive Director updated Council on the ongoing deliberations around the rental cost and lease for Burlington House. The detail of this discussion is confidential and is therefore not reproduced in these minutes.

5.7 IT and information management update

The Deputy Executive Director introduced this paper. In summary there has been significant progress in the last year on IT and an information matter but there is still a long to-do list; a great deal has been achieved with limited resources.

Council noted the following progress over the last 12 months:

- a) The following websites have been developed :
 - <http://solareclipse.ras.ac.uk> – A site where visitors could place a pin for their location when viewing the solar eclipse.
 - <http://women.ras.ac.uk> – A brochure site celebrating 21 women of the RAS, to mark the 100th anniversary of the election of women to fellowship.
 - <https://fellows.ras.ac.uk> – A web application for fellows to safely and securely view the personal data that is held about them by the RAS, and to facilitate payment of their subscription online.
 - <http://courses.ras.ac.uk> – A virtual learning environment for the students currently studying GCSE Astronomy at the RAS (using the Moodle platform).
 - <http://rascommunity.org> – A hosting solution for Fellows to host their own websites of particular use to the affiliated bodies such as the scientific interest groups.

- <http://nam2015.org> – A brochure site for promoting NAM 2015, including a web application for managing abstract submissions. <http://nam2016.org> has been deployed using an updated 'template' of last year's website and is under development. <http://helpdesk.rascommunity.org> – A helpdesk for tracking IT issues raised by RAS staff.
 - <http://aandg.org> - Support, advice and guidance were given for the initial stages of development of the new A&G website (see agenda item 5.9) but then a decision was made to move this project to an external supplier.
- b) the old telephone system that was not fit for purpose has been replaced with a new system supported by Lily Comms.
 - c) Membership data has been successfully migrated from a legacy Access database, to a more secure MySQL database, using a content management system.
 - d) The public lectures and talks given at the monthly Ordinary meetings and are now recorded, and so far 31 lectures have been made available online via the new RAS website.

Council noted the following high priority projects that will be delivered in the next 12 months.

- Records Management: high priority

The IT and Information Manager and the RAS Librarian have completed interviews with almost all staff at Burlington House on their information management needs. They now have information on how they create and store digital and paper based records that will shape the final data management plan. This project is still in progress, but is a high priority and is expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

- Updating the main RAS website: high priority

A longstanding request from Council, Fellows as a whole and staff alike has been the upgrade of the main RAS website, something which has been frustrated by historical contractual issues, including access to the underpinning code and architecture of the site. The plan now is to build a new website with a different (academic) domain name (<http://www.ras.ac.uk>), in consultation with staff and key Fellows. For at least the next five years after completion of the new site, browser requests for <http://www.ras.org.uk> will be redirected to the new domain.

The RAS IT and Information Manager will convene a working group for the purpose of steering and guiding the development of the future website.

Development of the new site and its content is expected to start by the end of March 2016, with a soft launch of June 2016, and a main launch of September 2016. Internal staff will need to be trained in the use of the new system and a number of bespoke features will need to be created (for example online resource maps for schools and additional membership services).

Council noted that work on Web hosting and support is also a high priority and agreed the plan to redevelop the RAS website, work that will be led by a committee of staff and users. Council also agreed to migrate the hosting of the website from Redstation to Siteground, and to end the contract with HPS Research.

Council agreed that the annual maintenance budget should be increased to £5K. This budget will cover the following:

- Replacement components for desktop or servers as required.
- Software upgrades, or maintenance.
- Medium cost replacement items such as external hard drives.
- Consumables like blank CDs and DVDs.
- Replacement RJ45 cables.
- Research and development.

5.8 RAS Instrument Collection

Professor Mike Edmunds introduced the paper on the RAS instruments collection and made the request for a temporary Documentation Officer to be employed.

Council agreed that that £3000 allocated to the library for project work in 2012 (but not yet spent) could be used to appoint a temporary documentation officer to document the collection of instruments currently located in Burlington House. The will create an accurate inventory of objects. The inventory would be a useable, sustainable resource which would be a foundation for future activities, such as exhibition loans.

5.9 A&G website

On behalf of Dr Sue Bowler, the A&G Editor, the Executive Director advised Council that there had been a further delay to the production of the A&G website. It is hoped that the launch will be in March 2016.

5.10 Final Report from Dr Hilary Kay, RAS sponsored Daphne Jackson Fellowship

Council noted the final report from Dr Hilary Kay who has completed an RAS sponsored Daphne Jackson Fellowship. It was noted that the frequency of support to Daphne Jackson Fellowships will be discussed as part of the financial profile deliberations that will happen at the Council meeting in March 2015.

6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

6.1 The demographics and research interests of the UK astronomy and geophysics communities

Council approved expenditure of £14.5K for Dr Sean McWhinnie to carry out a follow on survey of the demographic and research interests of UK astronomy and geophysics communities.

6.2 ‘Science and Technology Select Committee: Inquiry into Satellites and Space’

Council noted the above paper.

6.3 GCSE Astronomy Consultation.

Council noted the above paper. Council noted the above paper, the Society's response to the Department for Education consultation on the future of GCSE and A level courses.

7. PUBLICATIONS

7.1 Minutes of the GJI Editorial Board

Council noted the minutes of the GJI Editorial Board held on 16th December 2015.

7.2 Consideration of the embargo period for MNRAS

The Executive Director introduced the paper by Adam Leary, OUP that considered options to change the embargo period for MNRAS. Council agreed with the recommendation not to alter the embargo period of 36 months at this point.

The Treasurer was asked to examine the implications of a 12-month embargo period on MNRAS compared to the 36 months proposed. It was agreed that he will bring this issue to the attention of the Publications Management Committee for comment and report back to Council.

ACTION: Treasurer

7.3 Consideration of the option to move to Online-only publishing for GJI and MNRAS

The Executive Director introduced the paper by Adam Leary, OUP that considered options to move to on line only publishing for GJI and MNRAS. It was noted that the established financial model for MNRAS and GJI fully supports the continuation of print publication and that at the present time a conversion to online only publication is very likely to result in reduced income to the Society from its publications. Council agreed that a move to on line publishing only should not happen at this time.

8. OTHER

8.1 Officers Reports, for approval of candidates proposed for Fellowship

Last Name	First Name	Town/University	Sponsor
Rabilizirov	Robert	Hendon	Membership Committee
Mishra	Aadarsh	Cardiff	Dr Enzo Pascale
Asquith	Rachel	Nottingham	Elizabeth Cooke
Schram	Franklin	London	Ian Crawford
Karjalainen	Raine	Santa Cruz de la Palma	William John Ian Skillen
Gaunt	John	Rotherham	Andrew Norton
Usatov	Maxim	Prague	Membership Committee
Wilson	Dean	Coxhoe	Christine Peirce
Lawton	Thomas	Macclesfield	James Gilmour
Badole	Shruti	Brighton	Stephen Wilkins
James	Alexander	Cranleigh	Lucie Green
Ranjan	Adarsh	Manchester	Clive Dickinson

Krzesinska	Agata	London	Sara Russell
Wilkinson	Aaron	Nottingham	Lyndsay Old
Mayhew	Ryan	Canterbury	Michael Smith
Long	Tobias	Wigtoft	Alfonso Aragon-Salamanca
Ansarinejad	Behzad	Durham	John Lucey
Holt	John	Leicester	Jane MacArthur
Alesbrook	Luke	Canterbury	Michael Smith
Tomkins	James	Kidderminster	Alan Wood
Harper	Caroline	Swindon	Dr Christian Castelli
Tsiaras	Angelos	London	Giovanna Tinetti
Damiano	Mario	London	Giovanna Tinetti
Ali	Abrar	London	Dr Lara Silvers
Yamsiri	Anoma	London	Dr Francisco Diego
Sigloch	Karin	Oxford	Professor Parsons
Keenan	Olivia	Cardiff	Dr Matthew Smith
Sahoo	Sourav	Southampton	Dr David Cornwell
Evans	Rory	Oxfordshire	Neil Bowles
Laurens	Hannah	Lancaster	Adrian Grocott
Gomez	Haley	Cardiff	Mikako Matsuura
Nichols	Claire	Cambridge	Mark Hoggard
Keys	Peter Hugh	Belfast	David Jess
Baccichet	Nicola	London	Morgan Hollis
Purves	Michael	Bromley	Professor J.P

8.2 Minutes of the Ordinary Meetings (December, 2015 and January, 2016)

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meetings held on 11th December 2015 and 8th January 2016 were approved.

9. AOB

9.1 Garden Party

Council were reminded that a ballot will be held to allocate two sets of tickets for the Queens Garden Party on the 24th May. Details will be provided to Council members by the Office, Events and Buildings Manager.

9.2 Queen's birthday celebrations

Council agreed that the Executive Director should issue a note to the Fellowship inviting them to enter into a ballot to buy tickets for Patrons Lunch in celebration of Queen Elizabeth's 90th Birthday.

9.3 AAS summer meeting

It was noted that whilst there had been some ambition to reschedule the RAS drinks party and exchange Gold Medal lecture from the AAS winter meeting to the AAS summer meeting this would not be possible. The exchange arrangements would continue in 2017.

9.4 RAS Research Fellowship

The President and Dr Jo Barstow declared a conflict of interest and were not present whilst this item was discussed.

Following an open and competitive competition Dr Jo Barstow had been successful at interview for an RAS Research Fellowship. Council considered how to manage the conflict of interest matters that this brings.

It was agreed that Dr Barstow should resign from Council prior to her being formally offered the Fellowship and that as her father is also a Trustee she is legally considered as a 'Connected person' so the Society should approach the Charity Commission for permission to make the award.

[POST COUNCIL NOTE: Dr Jo Barstow offered her resignation on the 12th February. The Executive Director wrote to the Charity Commission on 16th February.]

Council rose at 15:15



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Professor M. Barstow

11th March 2016