

DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 July 2021 held via Zoom

1. Attendance and Apologies

PRESENT:

Prof Emma Bunce (EB); President and Chair
Prof Mike Edmunds (ME) President Elect
Dr Nigel Berman (NB); Treasurer;
Dr Mandy Bailey (MB); Senior Secretary;
Dr Sheona Urquhart (SU); A Secretary;
Prof Ian Robson (IR); Vice President, (A);
Dr Megan Argo (MA); Vice President (A);
Dr Jane MacArthur (JM);
Prof Phil Charles (PC);
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS);
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)
Mr Martin Lunn (ML);
Prof Nick Rawlinson (NR); Vice President (G)
Dr Hannah Dagleish (HD);
Dr Matt Middleton (MM);
Prof Caroline Smith (CLS)
Prof Belinda Wilkes (BW)
Dr Jo Barstow (JB)

APOLOGIES:

Prof Mark Lester (ML); G Secretary;
Prof Steve Miller (SM); Vice President, (G);
Dr Jasmine Kaur Sandhu (JKS)

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.

The President welcomed new Council members and introduced both new and existing Council members.

She then reminded Council to complete their Conflict of Interest forms and return to the RAS office.

2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

2.1 The Minutes of Council Meeting 14 May 2021 were received by Council and were APPROVED subject to one amendment as follows:

5.4, second para "The motion will be added ..." amended to "RAS200 will be added ..."

2.2 The Action Status Report was received by Council. PD gave an update as follows:

- Re Hybrid meetings, we are upgrading the AV equipment at Burlington House better to facilitate hybrid in-person meetings together with virtual participants now out to tender
- Re BAA, a meeting was held with the Alan Lorrain, President of the BAA; They want to give up their occupancy but asked if RAS could keep their archive material. Further discussion will take place.
- The TOR for the Disciplinary Process has been amended
- Processing data for RAS Journals had been requested from Kim Clube – Head of Publishing. She has contacted the member of Council who had made the request.

3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

The Awards Review update, the report from March 2021 and the awards review by Tinu Cornish were received by Council

The Awards Review Committee agreed the medium term actions recommended in the Awards Review Paper (3.1 March 2021 Council meeting) The President requested Council approval for the following:

- setting up a new RAS education award to replace the Patrick Moore medal
- Renaming the George Darwin award
- Creating RAS role models
- Formalising how RAS approaches nominating for national honours

After a discussion all proposals were approved aside from renaming the George Darwin medal. The committee felt that the name was not relevant to the remit of the lecture, however some Council members disagreed. The President will take their comments back to the committee.

JB raised a query about self nominations for the education awards. EB responded that it has been discussed but has not worked very well in the past, but the committee will consider how it could work in the future.

4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Treasurer put forward a motion for Mandy Bailey as incoming Senior Secretary to replace Lyndsay Fletcher as signatory. This was APPROVED by Council
- 4.2 The Risk Register from 14 May 2021 was received by Council. NB reported that it has not been updated since then but was distributed for the benefit of new Council members. NB advised that everybody can contribute to the register with suggestions.
- 4.3 The Statement of Accounts was received by Council.

5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

- 5.1 The DRAFT Minutes of the 201st AGM were received by Council and were APPROVED
- 5.2 The Executive Director updated Council on the following:

NAM

- There have been 850 registrants for NAM 2021.
- The Presidential lecture will take place on Monday 19 July
- The Herschel Recital will take place on Tuesday 20 July
- The Awards ceremony will take place on Wednesday 21 July

He thanked to the RAS team who have been working on the conference

Other matters

- The contract for the new journal has been signed. PD thanked to the Council working group for their contribution. A press release will be going out on Monday 29 July during NSM and EB will make reference to it in her Presidential Address.
- Bulldog licensing have been appointed on a four year contract to help with licensing RAS branded products. They will work with RAS team members.
- An agreement has been reached with SAGA cruises to hold two astronomy related events at Burlington House next summer
- A new government sponsored Caroline Herschel medal has been agreed. RAS will be responsible for its administration. There will be a meeting with the German Astronomical Society and Carole Mundell to work through the practicalities.
- PD reported on the recent roof leak into Burlington House. The Council room, library and editorial office were affected. The emergency plan was implemented with help from RAS staff and also some staff from the Linnean Society. The damage to books was about £7k. A roof inspection identified the cause of the leak which was then resolved.
- The BH lease campaign in conjunction with AprilSix public affairs consultancy working with the Courtyard Societies is continuing. There was a successful debate at Westminster. 12 MPs spoke on our behalf

ACTION: PD to circulate the link or transcript to the debate to Council

5.3 The Honorary Auditors' report was received by Council. RD reported that it is a fair report with points to note. Some of the recommendations are in progress, others will be considered. Council were invited to comment.

MB suggested that any changes to the composition of Council be done whilst she is still a member as she has 11 years of knowledge to call upon.

NB remarked that any change would require a change to the Bye-Laws and approval from the Fellows. It would also require specialist advice.

PD commented that it should be a part of a full governance review. He suggested that an Action Status Report be used to keep track of HA recommendations.

EB said that considering which recommendations to follow and prioritise will need some work to address.

5.4 The Election statistics document was received by Council. Thanks to membership Officer Annie Hogan for providing the information. PD suggested asking the ECN to help younger Fellows to vote.

ACTION: Ideas for increasing voting numbers to be sent to PD -All

5.5 PD reported that there was no need to appoint an additional trustee to replace Sheona Urquhart as there is good representation on Council at the moment.

6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

6.1 The Commons Science and Technology Committee: inquiry into UK space strategy and UK satellite infrastructure paper was received by Council. RM reported that a response was not expected until September.

7. OTHER

- 7.1 Membership Officer's Reports, candidates proposed for Fellowship was APPROVED by Council
- 7.2 The Grants Awarded February 2021 paper was received by Council for information
- 7.3 Education & Outreach Grants panel was not approved as one of the members is not a Fellow.

ACTION: Office to follow up this matter for approval

- 7.4 The Patricia Tomkins Thesis Prize winner was APPROVED by Council

8 AOB

MB reported that RAS200 is coming to the end of its financial support but the steering committee will continue. She invited Council to let her or SM know if anyone would like to join it.

RM announced that the results of the Bullying and Harassment Survey will be presented at NAM.

Council rose at 12.25

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