

DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 February 2022, 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 Mark Lester (MLE); G Secretary;
Prof Nick Rawlinson (NR); Vice President (G)
Prof Steve Miller (SM); Vice President, (G);
Prof Ian Robson (IR); Vice President, (A);
Dr Megan Argo (MA); Vice President (A);
Dr Jane MacArthur (JM);
Dr Matt Middleton (MM)
Prof Phil Charles (PC);
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS);
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)
Dr Hannah Dalglish (HD)
Prof Caroline Smith (CLS)
Prof Belinda Wilkes (BW)
Dr Jo Barstow (JB)

APOLOGIES:

Mr Martin Lunn (ML);
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.

2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

2.1 The Minutes of Council Meeting 10 December were received by Council and were APPROVED

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

- 5.1a STFC have been contacted in order to support the honours nomination process.
- 5.3 EB, PD and SK (Sheila Kanani, Diversity Officer) will meet to work on rewording the wording for the Winton medal.
- 5.4 Jenesys will be invited to the E&O strategy group meetings when appropriate
- 6.3 RM received the requested input from the forums for paper on STEM.
- 9. OUP have been contacted regarding the price of journals for overseas researchers in countries less able to afford the subscription costs

3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

The President updated Council on the strategy work, including how the sub groups were decided and how they will report back to Council at the March Council meeting. She explained that the Property group will work in a slightly different way as its work has a longer time horizon.

The next steps will be to discover:

- What do we do?
- Strengths
- Improvements to be made/challenges
- How have things changed over the last two years
- Specific actions
- KPIs
- Financial resources needed

More work will be done at the away day.

- 3.1 The update on the strategy paper was received by Council.
- 3.2 The constitution of working groups was received by Council
- 3.2 The Vision, Mission and Values document was received by Council.

The President updated Council on the situation with Horizon Europe funding, as the UK has no formalised relationship and therefore may struggle to access research grants. The UK government will underwrite contracts, although there are no details on how to access them at the moment. If there is an update she will send details to Council.

PD asked if the RAS should communicate the information to the community.

EB suggested talking to RM about this.

ACTION: EB to discuss with RM

4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Treasurer presented his report. Staff were asked to leave the meeting at that point as staff salaries were on the agenda. The recommendation was APPROVED.
- 4.2 The Bank Account Statements were received by Council
- 4.3 The Finance Committee Meeting Minutes were received by Council.

5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

- 5.1 The Executive Director updated Council on the following matters:

BH lease – There will be a meeting with the landlord next week. The Societies' Presidents will send a letter to Michael Gove.

Tim Loughton MP was going to ask cross-party sample of parliamentarians to co-sign the letter.

Merchandising - The licensing agency has recommended the designers who will create a design guide that will specify the distinctive *look* of RAS products. . They will visit BH to research our heritage assets.

Caroline Herschel medal – The awards panel met last week and a winner has been selected. The award ceremony will take place on 18 March. EB will have a formal role. IR remarked that there was a strong set of applicants, with the top three agreed unanimously by the panel.

Staff – The Publications Manager will shortly become part-time. A person has been recruited to share the role. They have a good breadth of experience and will start on 1 April.
Hybrid Meetings – The May SDMs and the AGM are planned to be hybrid meetings. There will be trials beforehand.

PD asked Council to provide feedback on good or bad experiences with hybrid meetings.

NAM - PD and SA will be conducting a site visit to Warwick University.

Code of Conduct – This will be launched at the AGM alongside the disciplinary procedure. The preamble to the Code will need a slight revision.

ACTION: PD to send back to SM

- 5.2 The RAS Council Elections 2022 paperwork was APPROVED by Council, subject to one amendment to a factual error in a candidate's statement.

MB asked to make it clear on the letter that voting is online only.

ACTION: MB to amend, office to update.

- 5.3 The E&O Committee Meeting Minutes were received by Council

5.4 The RAS200 Committee Meeting Minutes were received by Council
SM reported that RM would like to invite some of the RAS200 partners to the Parliamentary Meeting.

RM informed Council that if they wanted to attend, they should let him know.

Action Council....

5.5 The Astronomical Heritage Committee Meeting Minutes May were received by Council

5.6 The Astronomical Heritage Committee Meeting Minutes December were received by Council

5.7 The Astronomical Heritage Committee membership paper was received by Council and APPROVED

5.8 The E& O Committee new members paper was approved by Council and APPROVED

5.9 The new Scrutineer for 2022, Professor Ian Crawford was APPROVED

6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

6.1 The Sustainability Policy was presented by RM. The policy reflects how the RAS can reach the carbon goals of 50% reduction by 2030, net 0% by 2050, although it may be possible to reach the targets more quickly.

NB was concerned that the wording was inflexible in relation to grants for travel, for example, in some cases train travel is much more expensive than air travel. There needs to be flexibility.

IR remarked that it needs clarity so that the Grants Panel know the boundaries.

EB asked Council to approve the policy in principle, subject to amendment of some wording. It was APPROVED subject to this.

ACTION: EB and RM to work on the wording.

6.2 The Diversity in STEM inquiry: RAS response paper was received by Council. RM thanked Council members for their input.

6.3 The 2021 Press and media summary was received by Council. RM reported that this morning, a RAS story appeared on the BBC website and on the Today programme.

7. PUBLICATIONS

7.1 The Minutes GJI Editorial Board Meeting were received by Council.

7.2 The Minutes of the RASTI board meeting were received by Council.

8. OTHER

8.1 The Membership Officer's Report was received by Council. This was APPROVED subject to one amendment.

IR noted that there was an error in the route 2 applications, as one name was missing.

ACTION: PD to check with Membership Officer and amend and will be returned to Council for approval.

8.2 The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting December 2021 were received by Council and APPROVED

8.3 The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting January 2022 were received by Council and APPROVED

9. AOB

SM asked if RAS is sending a representative to the European Astronomical Society's conference, as if so, he will step back from chairing the meeting.

RM said he is likely to attend.

ACTION: PD Finalise offline

Council rose at 12.35

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