

**DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14 July 2022, at NAM,  
Warwick University and via Zoom**

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

**PRESENT:**

Prof Mike Edmunds (ME); President and Chair  
Dr Mandy Bailey (MB); Senior Secretary;  
Prof Mark Lester (MLE); G Secretary;  
Prof Ian Robson (IR); Vice President, (A);  
Prof Stephen Eales (SE); Vice President (A)  
Prof Nick Rawlinson (NR); Vice President (G)  
Prof Clare Watt (CW); Vice President (G)  
Prof Phil Charles (PC);  
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS); online  
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)  
Dr Hannah Dagleish (HD) online  
Prof Caroline Smith (CLS)  
Prof Belinda Wilkes (BW) online  
Dr Jo Barstow (JB)  
Dr Jasmine Kaur Sandhu (JKS) online  
Prof Steve Miller (SM); (G)  
Mrs Patricia Tomkins (PT; ) (A)  
Dr Olivia Keenan (OK); (A)  
Prof Silvia Zane (SZ);(A)

**APOLOGIES:**

Dr Sheona Urquhart (SU); A Secretary  
Dr Nigel Berman (NB); Treasurer;

**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 on 13 May 2022 were APPROVED subject to the following amendment:

8.1 JB requested that her comment re resignations be rephrased to:

JB commented that currently you have to resign if you are on maternity leave, to avoid unnecessary expenditure.

2.2 The Action Status Report was received by Council. All actions from the last Council meeting were completed.

### 3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

The president asked for a moment's contemplation for recently passed Fellows:

David Hughes from Sheffield, and Marcus Hope who acted as organiser of events from the Friends of the RAS for many years.

### 4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS

4.3 Council received the Statement of Accounts

### 5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

5.1 The draft minutes of the AGM 2022 were received by Council and APPROVED

5.2 The Executive Director updated Council on the following:

- The Societies were asked to prepare for a ministerial visit, which was cancelled at the last minute.
- The representatives from the Courtyard Societies met Michael Gove in a virtual meeting; it was a positive meeting but as he left Government the following day, there is a need to follow up with his successor, Greg Clark. Mr Clark attended the RAS Parliamentary Event.

**ACTION:** Joint letter to Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Greg Clark MP to be circulated to Council – PD

- The IAU General Assembly will be held in Busan, South Korea. They will ask if Georgia should be affiliated to the Society.

Council were asked to vote and it was APPROVED

SM raised the question of whether or not Council wanted him to continue his work with the IAU, on culturally sensitive sites. In addition, he asked if Dr Megan Argo should be replaced as she is no longer on Council. Council AGREED that SM and MA should continue working with the IAU.

- It has been suggested that the James Webb Space Telescope be re-named. The AAS has written to NASA expressing concern about James Webb's potential involvement in LGBTQ+ persecution and also expressing misgivings about the general process of naming NASA missions via top-down decisions from NASA leadership instead of via a process that is inclusive of the communities and the public that those missions serve. Council were asked if the RAS should also write a letter to NASA

Council agreed to write a letter of concern.

**ACTION:** A letter in support of an investigation will be sent to NASA: RM to draft  
Council also AGREED that the RAS should use the acronym JWST unexpanded in its journals and that this should be announced on the website.

5.2a Council received the proposal to hold an annual lecture in honour of John Brown, who passed away suddenly in 2019. Council APPROVED the proposal

**ACTION:** Officers to consider the matter and bring back to the October meeting.

5.2b Council received a letter that had been sent to Simon D'Arcy, a representative of the landlord, regarding the affordability of the rent.

5.2c Council received the Publications Tender update. PD reported that the process was arranged by Sue Thorne, an external consultant, Sue Bowler A&G editor and Liz Baker, Publications manager were in attendance.

- Six publishers submitted bids
- 3 were selected for interview: redacted
- All proposals were based on a move to open access in 2024
- All offers were very similar
- for discussion and approval

Council was asked to approve OUP as the publisher and the flip to OA in 2024. This was APPROVED.

5.3 Council received the Election statistics. MB reported that some election data from previous years was missing. She also remarked that voting numbers were down since online voting was introduced.

ME asked if the voting system should be reviewed.

ACTION: MLE to review the current system and report back to Council's October meeting

5.4 Council received the paper on new CDAG Committee members

and were asked to approve Prof Farideh Honary (Lancaster University) and Nisha Grewal (Edinburgh). Both were APPROVED.

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

6.1 Council received the paper APPG on Dark Skies. RM asked if any Council members were able to support the work; HD offered assistance.

6.2 Council received the Ofcom consultation on use of Ku band. RM asked Council for comments to be sent to him.

ACTION: Comments to be sent to RM by Council

## **7. PUBLICATIONS**

7.1 The MNRAS Meeting Minutes were received by Council

## **8. OTHER**

8.1 The Membership Officer's Reports, candidates proposed for Fellowship were received by Council. It was APPROVED

8.2 Council received the Grants Awarded February 2022 paper.

8.3 Council received the Awards Panel membership and was asked to approve them. SM reported that he wishes to make a nomination for a G award. He was advised that he will therefore need to stand down from G panel.

MB reported that as there are many new people on the panels, historical knowledge is missing.

ME asked Council to send nominations to PD, and asked if somebody previously on a panel could be asked to come back.

CLS volunteered to join the G panel.

SE said he could cover cosmology for the A panel.

ACTION: PD to send ME list of panellists from the last five years

**9. AOB**

PD reported that strategy groups are working towards papers for the awayday in September. BW requested a discussion on the criteria for the panels selecting award winners prior to the panel meeting.

BW requested that acronyms be defined in the minutes. Action: office

ACTION: PD to brief BW offline.

JB raised a concern that the RAS should think about people who identify as non binary for specific awards categories.

PD said this can be fed into the strategic review regarding inclusivity.

SM reported that he and RM attended the EAS conference in Valencia and suggested that the RAS should consider having a stand at future EAS conferences.

ACTION: A meeting to be organised for the RAS and EAS Presidents to discuss.

Council rose at 14.00

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**14 July 2022**