

**DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 May 2022, at Burlington House  
and 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; online  
Prof Mark Lester (MLE); G Secretary;  
Prof Ian Robson (IR); Vice President, (A);  
Dr Megan Argo (MA); Vice President (A);  
Dr Jane MacArthur (JM); online  
Prof Phil Charles (PC);  
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS); online  
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)  
Dr Hannah Dalglish (HD)  
Prof Caroline Smith (CLS)  
Prof Belinda Wilkes (BW)  
Dr Jo Barstow (JB)

**APOLOGIES:**

Prof Steve Miller (SM); Vice President, (G)  
Prof Nick Rawlinson (NR); Vice President (G)  
Dr Sheona Urquhart (SU); A Secretary  
Mr Martin Lunn (ML);  
Dr Jasmine Kaur Sandhu (JKS)  
Dr Matt Middleton (MM)

**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 11 March 2022 were APPROVED

Matters Arising: Council were asked to approve the following:

Membership Committee member – Hannah Dalglish APPROVED  
Diversity Champion - Jasmine Kaur Sandhu APPROVED

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 updated Council on the strategy groups:

- The Library & Heritage, Membership and Education & Outreach (E&O) groups all met recently
- The Library & Heritage group visited Burlington House; their vision is to achieve maximum impact
- The membership group considered the members' journey, and how they can best be supported
- The E&O group conducted a community survey on the question *How do we improve E&O visibility to and impact to reach underserved communities?* 170 responses were received. Two suggestions highlighted were: high impact events and partnerships.

The President thanked everyone involved with the groups.

MB reminded Council that the evaluation of RAS200 had been very useful and evaluation should be incorporated into E&O.

BW reported that Jenesys will be invited to some of the strategy meetings.

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

4.1 Eddie Finch from Buzzacott delivered a presentation outlining the audit for 2021. Key comments:

- The audit was 'clean'
- The Annual Report contains more information than the statutory requirements
- There were no adjustments, however historical unclaimed grants should be reviewed in the coming year
- There were no serious concerns found
- The RAS should report where there may be a risk of fraud
- It would be a good idea to look at online events

**ACTION:** PD to send Council link to Buzzacott's events

4.2 Council were asked to approve the following paperwork:  
a. Annual Report and accounts for 2021  
b. Post Audit Report from Buzzacott  
c. Letter of representation

All were APPROVED by Council.

4.3 Council received the Statement of Accounts

4.4a The Treasurer asked Council to approve Prof Lyndsay Fletcher as member of the Finance Committee, in place of Tim Horbury. This was APPROVED.

4.4b The Treasurer reminded Council that the Risk Register is a live document. The Finance Committee had made two changes:

- Reopening BH has been reset to level
- There is a high probability that the RAS response to geopolitical risks may affect their reputation.

JB asked if the risks related to UK matters or to global events only.

It was suggested that the register should cover anything that the RAS should respond to.

ACTION: PD to review

PD reported that there had been reports of a suspicious person in the courtyard.

CLS asked if there were formal links with anti-terrorism. If not she offered to put the RAS in touch with the organisation used by the Natural History Museum.

ACTION: CLS to put them in touch with PD

The Treasurer reported on the matter of Ukraine, which was discussed in the Publishing Management Committee meeting.

It has been suggested that the RAS stop taking papers from Russian authors who are principally funded by the Russian state. The RAS should also make a public statement about this.

Council had an in-depth discussion of this matter with the following questions raised:

- How do we determine who is Russian funded?
- What about where there has been collaboration with a Russian author
- Does this apply to new papers only, or papers already submitted?
- What will be the effect of excluding authors?

The President asked Council to vote on whether or not to exclude Russian authors. Council voted to NOT exclude.

ACTION: NB to contact COPE (Committee on Publications Ethics) to update their statement

The President asked for a vote on the NAM query, whether or not Russian funded talks and presentations should be banned from the conference. This was AGREED.

The Treasurer asked Council to vote on whether or not the RAS should offer financial support to Ukrainian scientists by making a small amount of money available to support someone working to help displaced Ukrainian academics in the relevant fields, by funding the travel and accommodation of someone prepared to work to find institutions and departments that could offer space and facilities to those individuals. A budget of £10,000 was suggested.

Council voted IN FAVOUR of offering help.

ACTION: PD to take this forward by communicating with Fellows.

## **5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE**

5.1 Council received the Arrangements for AGM 2022 document.

5.2 The Executive Director reported on the following:

- It may be possible to meet with Michael Gove to discuss the BH lease matter
- PD and NB are working on a letter on the affordability of the rent to Simon D'Arcy (the landlord's representative)
- PD asked for approval to put John Zarnecki and Yvonne Elseworth before the AGM, to act as Honorary Auditors next year. This was APPROVED.
- The revised Code of Conduct is now on the website
- Council members attending the Council meeting at NAM, should please let SA know by 1 June
- The September away day dates will be shared shortly
- The merchandising project is progressing well; there will be a full update at a future meeting

5.3 Council received the paper on Honorary Fellowships and were asked to agree the revised wording in the letters sent to new Honorary Fellows as follows:

As an Honorary Fellow you are entitled to all the privileges of Fellowship except those of being eligible to hold office in the Society and voting rights. However, if you are currently a Fellow and wish to retain voting rights in Council elections and to hold office, you will need to continue to pay your membership fee.

This was APPROVED by Council.

5.4 Council received the Report of the Honorary Auditors

5.5 Council received the CDAG Meeting Minutes

5.6 Council were asked to approve the new Chair for CDAG, Ben Fernando. He was APPROVED

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

6.1 The Ofcom Space Spectrum Strategy paper was introduced by RM.

MLE reported that as radio was also used for plasma physics, and this could possibly impact on radar systems.

ACTION: MLE to send information to RM

## **7. PUBLICATIONS**

7.1 The GJI Editor in Chief Report 2021 was received by Council

7.2 The MNRAS Editor in Chief Report 2021 was received by Council

7.3 The MNRAS Editorial Board Meeting Minutes were received by Council

7.4 The Publications Management Committee meeting Minutes were received by Council

7.5 The RASTI Editor in Chief Report for 2021 was received by Council

7.6 The A&G Editor's Report 2020 was received by Council

## 8. OTHER

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

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

MLE replied that this is something that the Membership Committee is currently looking at.

8.2 The 2020 RAS Thesis Prizes, was received by Council and APPROVED, however there was disappointment that there had only been one entry for the Patricia Tomkins prize.

MLE remarked that there are few undergraduate students in this area as they don't receive funding until PhD level.

EB asked that recommendations in relation to the Keith Runcorn prize from the previous meetings be reviewed. The recommendations were:

*The 2019 and 2020 panels recommended that each nominator provide a complete list of publications for the respective nominees, which would improve efficiency (since each panel member would not have to independently source a publication list for each candidate) and help ensure that each candidate is judged using the same information. However, this is yet to be implemented, so we would urge the RAS to update the nominator requirements accordingly.*

ACTION: PD to talk to Awards & Grants Officer about this.

8.3 The Minutes of the March Ordinary meeting were received by Council and APPROVED

8.4 The Minutes of the April 8 Ordinary Meeting were received by Council and APPROVED

8.5 The Minutes of the April 22 Ordinary Meeting were received by Council and APPROVED

## 9. AOB

JB raised the following matter:

The new publishing regulations brought in by UKRI, which require open access on a CC-BY basis for all UKRI funded publications. There's still a lot of confusion about exactly how this will play out so it may be worth waiting until the dust has settled as the change is recent, but she thought we should be thinking about potential impacts on how people will choose to submit to MNRAS. In particular, it is looking as though the green OA route (submit as normal and put author copy on arXiv), that has been adopted by most authors in recent years, is no longer supported due to the CC-BY requirement.

PD reported that the Society will be updating our policies with further guidance following the UKRI policy change, and we expect most authors to be compliant using one of the UKRI open access routes.

OUP has confirmed that they will allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscripts in an institutional repository under a Creative Commons Licence (CC-BY-NC-ND).

RM suggested that this could be discussed at the Astronomy Forum or the Community Meeting at NAM

EB suggested that UKRI could be invited to a meeting to discuss.  
Action RM

RM reminded Council about the Parliamentary event to be held 18 May

ACTION: RM to send invitations to Council

The President thanked outgoing Councillors.

Council rose at 13.07

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**13 May 2022**