

**DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14 October 2022, at Burlington House and 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); online  
Prof Stephen Eales (SE); Vice President (A)  
Prof Nick Rawlinson (NR); Vice President (G) online  
Prof Clare Watt (CW); Vice President (G)  
Prof Phil Charles (PC);  
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS); online  
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP)  
Dr Hannah Dalglish (HD)  
Prof Caroline Smith (CLS) online  
Prof Belinda Wilkes (BW)  
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) online

**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 online

**2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 The Minutes of Council Meeting on 14 July 2022 were APPROVED

The John Brown lecture was discussed at a meeting of the officers. It was suggested that the meetings could alternate between London and Glasgow. A small group will be convened to select the lecturers.

BW raised a question about the criteria for the selection of award winners. She was concerned about the possibility of unconscious bias.

MLE remarked that the panels should undergo diversity training.

JSK informed Council that another society doesn't accept CVs so as to avoid possible bias.

It was agreed that it was too late to implement this for the next awards panel meeting but it will be something to consider in future.

ACTION: MLE to write some guidance before the next meeting. MB to assist with this.

ACTION: PD to circulate a short note to the awards panels informing them that this issue had been discussed by Council.

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 reported that he had received emails regarding the European Space Agency(ESA). A Director General's document suggested that the agency is not getting sufficient funding for research, as it appears that the ESA is moving more towards technology.

RM reported that because of financial constraints further growth in science will be delayed.

ACTION: RM will check if the DG's document is shareable, in which case the RAS can comment publicly.

The President also attended a meeting of the sustainability working group. Some wording in the policy is being re-written and will be brought back to the December Council meeting. Consultants will be engaged to review BH energy costs and consumption.

The President also reported that Sheila Kanani, Education and Outreach and Diversity Officer, collected her MBE. Council passed on their congratulations.

RM reported that former Council member Megan Argo had also been awarded a BEM.

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

4.1 Council received the Statement of Accounts

The Treasurer reminded Council that committees may request a budget and should send their requests to him.

ACTION: PD to write to Chairs to remind them of this.

### **5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE**

5.1 The Executive Director updated Council on the following:

- PD and NB had a meeting with Simon D'Arcy regarding possible negotiations over the terms of the lease for BH. Simon D'Arcy is no longer in post, so the matter will be reviewed when his successor is in post.

ACTION: PD to convene a meeting of the Property Working group

- PD and NB had a meeting with OUP to discuss the new contract. Progress has been made regarding the implementation of open access.
- PD went to Germany for the Herschel Medal Award ceremony. The President could not attend. The winner also could not attend as she was unwell, so delivered her lecture on line.

So far 18 nominations have been received for next year's award.

- PD reported the RAS IT manager Steven Pryer had resigned, and options are being reviewed regarding the RAS requirements. He invited Council to thank him for seven years of service.
- He reported that Laura Dimmock Jones from the library team has also resigned as she is moving out of London. Laura is owed a debt of gratitude for her great work with books damaged during the water ingress last year.
- PD attended a meeting with the Societies of Publishers Coalition, where the RAS were invited to join. There are no financial implications. Council APPROVED joining the Society.

5.2 The Call for nominations letter for elections to RAS Council was received and APPROVED

PD advised Council that an external electronic voting system is being considered, and will be discussed with MB.

5.2b The Council nomination paperwork was received and APPROVED

5.3 The Membership Committee Minutes were received by Council.

5.4 The RAS200 meeting Minutes were received by Council.

5.5 The Letter from the Chair of the Membership Committee regarding subscriptions was received by Council.

The President remarked that subscriptions for next year have already been fixed but there may be some ways the RAS can offer help to those members who need it.

Monthly Direct Debits were suggested as a way of helping to spread the cost. It was agreed that that there is not time to implement this before renewals in January but it may be possible by next year. It was AGREED that members will be informed of this.

ACTION: PD to amend wording to renewals letter.

5.5b The Membership Strategy group paper on subscriptions was received by Council.

It was agreed that the suggestions made should be prioritised and revisited at a future Council meeting.

5.6 The Draft Bullying and Harassment Survey was received by Council.

CW asked if it could be shared with colleagues. RM said yes, but requested that people didn't tweet about it at this stage.

5.7 The Updated Election Report was received by Council

**6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

- 6.1 The paper on the Liz Truss administration and mini-budget was received by Council
- 6.2 The Response on plan B to replace Horizon Europe association was received by Council. RM thanked those Council members who sent comments to him.
- 6.3 The paper on NAM media coverage was received by Council.

MB said that she thought that insufficient press releases were produced.

**7. PUBLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Minutes from the Publications Management Committee meeting were received by Council.

**8. OTHER**

- 8.1 The Membership Officer's Reports, were received by Council. Candidates proposed for Fellowship were APPROVED.

**9. AOB**

Council were informed astronomer and FRAS Tom Marsh has been declared missing, whilst in Chile.

OK asked if the rule regarding notice for fellows to book rooms free of charge could be increased.

It was AGREED to increase it from one month to three months.

RM reported that the RAS podcasts have over 500000 downloads.

Council rose at 14.55

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**14 October 2022**