

Geophysics

# **ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

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Registered Charity 226545

C(2017/07) 2.

#### Minutes of the Council Meeting <u>12 May 2017</u>

#### 1. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

#### **PRESENT:**

Professor John Zarnecki, Professor Ian Crawford, Dr Nigel Berman, Dr Sheila Peacock, Professor Hiranya Peiris, Professor Christine Peirce, Dr Mandy Bailey, Professor Lyndsay Fletcher, Professor Mike Bode, Dr Paul Daniels, Professor Giovanna Tinetti, Professor Michael Watson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Pamela Mortimer (Executive Director) and Dr Robert Massey (Deputy Executive Director)

**APOLOGIES:** Professor Martin Bureau, Professor Yvonne Elsworth, Dr Stacey Habergham, Professor Don Kurtz, Ms Jane McArthur, Professor Christine Peirce and Professor Sara Russell.

#### 2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING (not covered elsewhere)

The minutes of the meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> March were approved. The Executive Director updated Council on matters arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda:

#### **Small Grants**

It has been agreed that the Officers with responsibility for managing the small grants shall review the criteria and grant making process over the summer and will present a paper for Council's consideration in October 2107.

#### **ACTION: Officers**

#### **Diversity and Council elections**

The matter of including analysis on the candidates' approach to equality, diversity and inclusion will be considered as part of revised paperwork to support the Council elections in 2018/19. Council will consider a paper in October 2017.

#### **ACTION: Executive Director and CDAG**

#### **Bullying & Harassment update**

No update was available on the status of the bullying and harassment questionnaire, CDAG will be asked to update Council on this.

**[POST COUNCIL NOTE:** The Membership Officer is receiving training in the use of online survey software to allow this project to get underway. We expect to see the results of the survey by the end of the year, after further input in its design by CDAG.]

## 3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

#### **Royal Academy**

The President advised that he and the Executive Director had met the President of the Royal Academy (RA) Christopher Le Brun on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017. They had discussed the position of the RA in regards to the on-going deliberations on the lease and rental charges and what their position would be if the Societies were forced out of the Courtyard by rising rents and replaced by high end commercial entities. Mr Le Brun provided reassurance that the RA is itself an independent Learned Society, which is a charity rather than commercial, and that corporatisation of the Courtyard would blur their identity. He felt that the RA interests were better served by having the Learned Societies in the Courtyard.

The Executive Director explained that meeting with the President of the RA was progress as all previous engagement with the Courtyard Societies had been via the buildings manager. This was a positive first meeting at the correct level.

#### **Institute of Physics**

The President, Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director had had a successful meeting with Paul Hardaker, the Chief Executive of the Institute of Physics, on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017. They had discussed the implications of the Industrial Strategy, Brexit, top slicing of the Research Council budgets and ongoing political engagement more widely.

Prof Hardaker had offered the support of the IOP in any forthcoming deliberations on accommodation and had advised that they would be willing to consider accommodation options, including possible co location, in the future if required. The President noted that there are approximately 300 Fellows who are also members of the IOP.

#### The proposed merger of ICSU and ISSC

Council were advised that Professor Mike Cruise will represent the Society at a meeting on the proposed merger of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) that will be held on the 24 May 2017. Council were invited to provide comments in advance of this meeting to Professor Cruise.

#### **Raymond Hide Memorial Service**

The President had attended this on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

## EWASS/NAM

The President has been invited to serve on the Scientific Organising Committee (SOC) for the EWASS/NAM meeting that will be held in April 2018. It was noted that Professor Hiranya Peiris and Dr Stacey Habergham are also on the SOC, and that the lack of solar physics representation on the SOC has been addressed. Dr Habergham is also on the Local Organising Committee. It will be important to ensure that the identity of the Society and the notion of a National Astronomy Meeting is not lost in the planning of this conference.

#### **Contact with MPs**

The Deputy Executive Director advised that as Parliament had entered the period of purdah and that there will at least be many changes in MP responsibilities via a reshuffle or more significant changes following the outcome of the election, that planned contacts with MPs has been deferred. He will provide an analysis of MPs with an interest in science after the election.

#### **ACTION: Deputy Executive Director**

#### **EXCEL Centre**

It was noted that the commercial venue the EXCEL centre had approached the President about holding IAU 2024 in their facilities. Discussion on this item was deferred until AOB.

#### 4. TREASURER'S BUSINESS

#### 4.1 Audit and Accounts for 2016

Eddie Finch from Buzzacott, the Society's external auditors, attended and updated Council on the audit and accounts for 2016. In summary the Society had received a clean audit opinion and the audit process had gone well. He briefed Council on the following points, the change in the classification of funds, the total return policy applied to permanent endowment funds and two contingent liability disclosures. Council had discussed the reclassification of funds and agreed the change to a total returns policy at the meeting in March 2017.

The first contingent liability related to gift aid of  $\pm 106$ K reclaimed in previous years which may need to be repaid to HMRC (although discussions are still on-going on this matter) and the second relates to the Society's share of the legal costs incurred by the landlord in connection with the arbitration which may become payable by the courtyard Societies.

The Executive Director had received information earlier that day that the arbitrator had issued his award on liability for costs and that the landlord had been ordered to pay the Society's costs of the arbitration up to and including 29 March 2016, including the arbitrator and the QC fees and expenses that date. The Societies have been ordered to pay the Landlord's costs from 30 March 2016 to 30 November 2016. Deliberations will continue in the coming months to agree these figures.

Mr Finch and members of Council discussed this matter; Mr Finch advised that there was no need to restate the accounts, rather a note to the accounts could be altered to address this matter. Council agreed this approach and noted that an adjustment will be made in the accounts next year.

On behalf of Council the President thanked the Executive Secretary, the Treasurer and the accountants, Michael Kyriakides and Mark Piper for all their hard work on the annual report, accounts and audit process.

The President thanked Mr Finch for his presentation and Buzzacott's work on the accounts and audit.

### 4.2 Formal approval of paperwork

Council approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2016, the letter of representation from the Society's Trustees to Buzzacott and the noted the Post Audit Report from Buzzacott.

#### 4.3 **Risk register**

Council approved the risk register that had been modified to take into account comments made by Council during the meeting in March 2017 and comments made at the recent Finance Committee meeting.

#### 4.4 **Treasurers report – other matters**

The Treasurer advised that he plans to carry out an assessment of fund managers in the coming year; it is good practice to review the performance of fund managers on a regular basis.

#### **ACTION: Treasurer**

### 5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

#### 5.1 Arrangements for AGM 2017

The Executive Director drew attention to a paper that had been tabled that listed the expected attendees at the Ordinary Meeting where an announcement of the award winners from tranche 2 of the RAS 200: Sky and Earth will be made.

It was noted that Charles Ennis, the National Secretary, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada would also attend for the Ordinary Meeting and drinks party.

The President advised that the Executive and Officers had spent a considerable amount of time contingency planning for possible disproportionate reactions to administrative errors made during the election process this year. He noted that action had been promptly taken to address the errors and that there is no significant concerns over the validity of the process.

There was some debate as to whether the number of electronic reminders to vote was effective or excessive. Consideration could be given to sending out targeted email reminders in future years. It was noted that over 800 people had voted on line and around 100 had voted by hard copy.

#### 5.2 Honorary Auditors report 2016

Council noted the Honorary Auditors report for 2016 with thanks to Dr Euan Monaghan & Dr Katherine Joy. The Executive Director agreed with the position taken by the honorary auditors that the workload put on staff is not matched by the number of staff in Burlington

House and that in particular additional administrative staff should be employed. She noted that it was important for Council and the Fellowship to understand the resource reality and have realistic expectations of what can be achieved. It was noted that Council needs to undertake a review of its funding priorities; this has been put on hold as the arbitration has been on-going on the lease and rental costs. It was hoped that this position would be clearer in the autumn. Regardless Council will be asked to consider proposals on additional staff resources in October (or earlier, out of committee by email over the summer.)

### **ACTION: Executive Director**

There was some debate on the information available on the number of committees, subordinate to Council. It was agreed that more information, including terms of reference etc. would be provided. This would happen as staff revise text for the new website.

#### 5.3 Lease and rental negotiations

The Executive Director advised that there was nothing significant to report on this item expect for the news received that morning on the arbitration costs; this had been discussed under agenda item 3.1).

#### 5.4 NAM update

Professor Brad Gibson updated Council on plans for NAM 2017 that will be held in Hull. Early bird registration was set to end on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May, there had been 227 registrations made to date, and 245 tickets had been sold for the public lecture that will be given by Professor Chris Lintott. It was noted that 450 people have submitted abstracts and that astronomers are notorious for booking at the last minute.

The President asked for volunteers to be poster judges, as three people (who need to attend all week) are required to be there. It is common practice for the President/President elect to lead on this during the conference supported by at least one A and one G scientists. In the past this support task has been undertaken by Officers/members of Council.

[**POST COUNCIL NOTE:** The Deputy Executive Director met with Professor Brad Gibson on the 8<sup>th</sup> May and agreed that the following will act as poster judges: Professor Mark Lester, Dr Marco Pignatari, Lawrence Bilton (post-grad student).] Council considered the funding arrangements for NAM and agreed the following:

- The Society will remit £25,000 to the University for the purposes of organising and delivering the NAM 2017, this being in addition to the £25,000 remitted at an earlier date in April 2017; this total of £50K includes the funds received as sponsorship from STFC.
- The Society will underwrite the University against losses/shortfall resulting from the organising of the NAM 2017 up to a further £10,000.
- If the agreed profit/surplus in excess of £10,000 the excess amount over £10,000 shall be remitted to the Society within 30 days of the RAS agreeing the figure.

[**POST COUNCIL NOTE:** The Treasurer and Professor Brad Gibson on behalf of Hull University have signed a funding agreement reflecting the above conditions.]

### 5.5 **Progress on RAS Website**

Council noted that interviews with prospective companies were scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017; the following three companies (website links presented here) had been invited to present their case:

Betton Design https://bettondesign.co.uk/

Brookstone Creative Ltd . http://www.brookstonewebandgraphic.co.uk/

Yonescat https://yonescat.com/#/

Professor Mike Watson, Dr Robert Massey, Annette Webb and Steven Pryer will conduct the selection interviews.

[**POST COUNCIL NOTE:** The selection panel down selected two companies and obtained references. Council will receive a paper out of committee by email to consider over the summer.]

## 6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

#### 6.1 **Update on RAS 200: Sky and Earth,**

The Deputy Executive Director provided a short update on the winners of tranche 2. He noted that as in tranche 1, the quality of the bids received had been exceptionally high. From the 70 submissions received the selection panel down selected to 17 who were invited to present fuller proposals. The selection panel met on the 26<sup>th</sup> April and agreed proposals from the following five winning organisations:

- **Girl Guides** who will work with the RAS and the UK Space Agency to inspire girls and young women aged 5 to 25, giving them a host of opportunities to develop their interest in astronomy, space and planetary science, with events and activities taking place in different communities (£95k)
- **RNIB** who will work with the Glasgow Science Centre to create more tactile resources for blind and visually impaired people, to be developed in Glasgow and deployed in ten science centres across the UK (£95k)
- **Bounce Back**, a social enterprise focused on the training and employment of exoffenders, mostly in London, will use A&G within a new programme to inspire prisoners, bringing the wider universe into prisons in the southeast (£95k)
- **Making Space,** who are a collaboration in Galway comprising the university, local museums and cultural centres, will develop a programme including public installations, music, creative events and engagement with diverse communities in the Irish city and its surroundings (£95k)
- **Cornwall: Sea to Stars**, will showcase the astronomy and geophysics intrinsic to the county, with a mobile trailer purpose-built for communities across the region (£30k)

[**POST COUNCIL NOTE:** Members of Council can see the Education, Outreach and Diversity Officer interviewing some of the RAS 200 grant winners at

<u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLtw8TSIEJk</u> (this was originally broadcast live as a Google Hangout).]

## 6.2 Building our Industrial Strategy: RAS response

Council noted the RAS response to the Governments consultation on 'Building our Industrial Strategy'. The Deputy Executive Director thanked those who had contributed and noted that this will shape research funding for the coming years.

#### 6.3 **Demographics and Research Interests of the UK Astronomy and Geophysics Communities**

The Deputy Executive Director updated Council on the demographic exercise that is carried out every 5 years. Full analysis had not been undertaken yet. Council will be provided with a full report as an information item at the Council meeting in July and will be added to the agenda for the October Council meeting to allow discussion on the findings.

## 6.4 **Patrick Moore Award, criteria.**

Council approved the recommendation of the Education and Outreach committee that the Patrick Moore conditions are extended to allow both primary and secondary school teachers to apply.

## 7. PUBLICATIONS

## 7.1 **PMC Summary**

Council noted the summary of the Publications Management Committee held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017.

Professor Don Kurtz registered his strong advocacy for MNRAS to only be available on line and A&G to remain available in hard copy. The Treasure explained that the number of hard copies of MNRAS published is small and diminishing and it is more a case of when MNRAS will be published on-line only rather than if that will happen.

There was a proposal to contact those that receive MNRAS in hard copy and ask them what action they would take if the Society changed to online only. This proposal will be passed to the Editorial Office Manager and OUP to consider and take forward.

## 7.2 MNRAS, Editor in Chief Report

Council noted the report.

## 7.3 **GJI, Editor in Chief Report**

Council noted the report.

## 7.4 MNRAS Editorial Board Meeting Minutes

Council noted the minutes of the MNRAS Editorial Board meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017. There was some discussion on why the scientific editors are anonymous. It was agreed

that Council should be provided with a paper on the rationale behind the PMC position (and current working practice) that the editors are anonymous for the NAM meeting however as there will be limited time to discuss it, this item will also be added to the agenda for the Council meeting in October.

### 8. OTHER

#### 8.1 Officers Reports, for approval of candidates proposed for Fellowship

Professor Lyndsay Fletcher noted that one individual had nominated 40 students through the Route one process for membership and that she was uncomfortable with this as it did not provide surety that sufficient scrutiny had been undertaken. Council discussed this and the broader need for the Society to review its membership criteria. It was agreed that the Membership Committee would be asked to consider both issues and report to Council in October 2017.

#### **ACTION: Membership Committee**

**[POST COUNCIL NOTE:** The Executive Director spoke with Dr Richard Holmes, the Chair of the Membership Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and asked him to get the committee to consider these issues and also the membership of the committee, that had not been updated for a number of years (whilst the committee continued to process Route 2 applications but had been was in abeyance in regards to policy matters that had largely been undertaken by Council.]

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Council approved the list of candidates proposed for Fellowship.

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Laura	Hayes	Bray	Ireland	Aoife McCloskey
	Foxley-	-		-
Max	Marrable	Portsmouth	UK	Robert Crittenden
Charles	Powell	Sidmouth	UK	David Strange
Benjamin	Savill	Cowes	UK	Andrew Norton
Keith	Inight	Belper	UK	Andrew Norton
Caroline	Bertemes	Bath	UK	Carolin Villforth
Abigail	Frost	Leeds	UK	Rene Oudmaijer
Matthew	Green	Coventry	UK	Thomas Marsh
Sheona	Urquhart	Leighton Buzzard	UK	Stephen Serjeant
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Robert	Burston	Bath	UK	committee
Raphael	Shirley	Falmer	UK	Jon Loveday
Douglas	Boubert	Cambridge	UK	Mark Hurn
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Peter	Cook	Kong	China	Roger Clowes
Oliver	Newton	Durham	UK	Adrian Jenkins
Ashley	Smith	Edinburgh	UK	Kathryn Whaler
Pamela	Armstrong	Cheltenham	UK	Daniel Brown
Simon	Rix	St Austell	UK	Brian Sheen
Giulia	Magnarini	London	UK	Peter Grindrod
David	Norris	Chester	UK	Robert Fear
Lauren	Doyle	Armagh	UK	Simon Jeffrey
Wren	Montgomery	London	UK	Ian Bastow
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Adam	Ali	Cardiff	UK	committee
Christiane	Lorenz	Oxford	UK	Garret Cotter
Frances	Butcher	Milton Keynes	UK	Andrew Norton

#### 8.2 Minutes of the A&G meetings of March & April

Council noted the minutes of the A&G meetings of 10<sup>th</sup> March and the 7<sup>th</sup> April.

#### 8.3 2017 RAS Thesis Prizes

Council approved the following winners for the RAS Thesis Prizes:

#### **Michael Penston Thesis Prize 2016**

**Dr Justin Alsing** (Imperial) as the winner **Dr Antonia Bevan** (UCL) and **Dr Tom Louden** (Warwick) as the runners up

The respective thesis titles were:

Dr Justin Alsing - Bayesian analysis of weak lensing

Dr Antonia Bevan - Dust-Affected Models of Characteristic Line Emission in Supernovae

Dr Tom Louden - The composition and dynamics of exoplanet atmospheres

#### Keith Runcorn Thesis Prize 2016

**Dr Rishy Mistry** (Imperial) as the winner and **Dr Robert Green** (Cambridge) as the runner up

The respective thesis titles were:

Dr Rishi Mistry – Magnetic reconnection exhausts in the solar wind.

Dr Robert Green – The structure and seismicity of Icelandic rifts.

#### Patricia Tomkins Thesis Prize (Instrumentation)

Dr Kélig Aujogue at Coventry University - Little Earth Experiment: A Journey toward the Earth's Tangent Cylinder

#### 8.4 2017 Awards Committees membership

Council considered the proposed membership for the Awards Committees for 2018. There was significant discussion on the balance in terms of subject areas covered by the individuals proposed, particularly in the 'A' Committee Council asked the Chairs of the A &G awards committees to take on board the discussion at Council re representation of subject matters and to modify the membership accordingly. The Executive Director was asked to discuss this with Professor Yvonne Elsworth out of committee as she was not in attendance at this Council meeting.

#### 'A' Awards Committee 2018:

Professor Hiranya Peiris (Chair) Mr Charles Barclay ('A' VP) Dr Mandy Bailey (A Secretary) Professor Stephen Serjeant (Council Member, second time) Professor Carlos Frenk (new 'A' Awards Committee member Professor Haley Gomez (previous 'A' Awards Committee member, second time) Professor Isobel Hook (new 'A' Awards Committee member) Professor Richard Nelson (new 'A' Awards Committee member)

## 'G' Awards Committee 2018:

Professor Yvonne Elsworth (Chair) Professor Ian Crawford ('G' VP) Professor Mark Lester ('G' Secretary) Dr Sheila Peacock (Council Member, third time) Dr Andy Biggin (Previous 'G' Awards Committee member, second time) Dr Rob Fear (Previous 'G' Awards Committee member, third time) Professor Ineke de Moortel (new 'G' Awards Committee member) Professor Chris Scott (Previous 'G' Awards Committee member, second time)

Dr Mandy Bailey noted there had been an omission as Council had not been asked to approve the membership of the Education and Outreach awards panel. Council agreed that the chair of the EOC committee to be asked to prepare a paper for the approval of Council on the membership of the Education and Outreach awards panels.

### **9. AOB**

a) The President advised that he had been approached by staff at the commercial conference venue, the EXCEL centre, to determine if the UK were considering hosting IAU 2024 and if so whether they would consider using their facilities. Various members of Council had seen the calling notice from the IAU and it was noted that Glasgow University was considering putting forward a proposal. It was agreed that the President would circulate the IAU calling notice and discuss the matter with Professor John Brown from Glasgow University.

b) Dr Catriona Jackman advised that she is compiling statistics on RAS Research Fellows that will be circulated to Council out of committee by email.

c) Dr Paul Daniels advised that he will provide a paper on Pro-Am collaboration to the next Council meeting.

#### Council rose at 15:10

J. Jamet

Professor J. Zarnecki

5<sup>th</sup> July 2017