



DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 October 2020 held via Zoom

1. Attendance and Apologies

PRESENT:

Prof Emma Bunce (EB); President and Chair
Dr Nigel Berman (NB); Treasurer;
Dr Mandy Bailey (MB); A Secretary;
Prof Lyndsay Fletcher (LF); Senior Secretary;
Prof Mark Lester (ML); G Secretary;
Prof Steve Miller (SM); Vice President, G;
Dr Paul Daniels (PAD) Vice President, A;
Professor Mahesh Anand (MHA); Vice President (G)
Dr Megan Argo (MA); Vice President (A);
Dr Jane MacArthur (JM);
Dr Matt Middleton (MM);
Professor William Chaplin;
Prof Lorraine Hanlon (LH);
Dr Sheona Urquhart (SU);
Prof Phil Charles (PC);
Dr Hannah Dalglish (HD);
Dr Colin Snodgrass (CS);
Dr Arvind Parmar (AP).

APOLOGIES:

Dr Claire Foulon (CF) ;
Mr Martin Lunn (ML);
Mr Kevin Kilburn (KK).

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.

The President reminded Council members to return their Conflicts of Interest paperwork, if they have not already done so.

ACTION: Office to recirculate to those that haven't returned them yet.

The President reported that Martin Lunn is unwell and that best wishes should be sent on behalf of Council

ACTION: Office to arrange.

2. Minutes & Matters Arising

2.1 Minutes of 16 July 2020

The Minutes of 16 July 2020 were APPROVED by Council subject to the following amendments:

1. Amend the designation of Hannah Dalglish to Dr.

8.2 MB reported that the action should be amended to say that PAD would contact Mrs Tomkins in the event of having to award a joint prize.

Matters arising: Licensing Proposal

Richard Hollis joined the meeting at 10.15 to present to Council, following which there was a brief discussion on matters raised. EB suggested it would be useful to ask Mr Hollis for help with understanding what the next steps would entail, with specific reference to in particular, guidance on financial and staff overheads.

ACTION: PD to ask Richard Hollis for another report on next steps to take.

2.2 Action Status Report

The Action Status Report was received by Council.

3. President's Business

- The President remarked that everybody is getting used to the new way of working. In particular, she thanked the secretaries for their work organising the Specialist Discussion and Ordinary Meetings.
- The President thanked the RAS staff for engaging with the community for next year's NAM in Bath
- There were 300 entries to the poster competition
The President wrote to new students to encourage them to join the organisation, Aine O'Brien- chair of the Early Career Network Committee was asked to co-sign
- The President was invited to attend the National Space Centre, the Countess of Wessex was visiting.
- The President wished to record Council's congratulations to Sheila Kanani who won the Europlanet Prize for public engagement a prize.

PC remarked that the online SDMs are popular with the international community, and it would therefore be useful to retain online streaming alongside the physical meetings once we can return to Burlington House.

MLE replied that one was held just before the lockdown began and although it worked there were some difficulties. To do this properly, there would need to be investment in equipment.

PAD remarked that there was an outstanding action to upgrade the equipment

ACTION: PD to follow up with IT department.

4. Treasurer's Business

4.1 Statement of Accounts

The Statement of Accounts was received by Council.

The Treasurer reported a reduction in income from investments for next year, as a result of the pandemic.

5. Organisation and Structure

5.1. Director's update for information

The Executive Director updated Council on the following matters:

- A risk assessment for staff and visitors return to the building has been prepared. This includes a deep clean of Burlington House.
- He met with EB, NB and the Chief Executive of the Institute of Physics learn about their move from Portland Place to Kings Cross.

- He is completing the application to the Royal Society for grant funding towards the IAU membership subscription.
- The IAU issued a statement critical of the Nature Venus Phosphine paper press briefing. EB has written to the IAU President to express the Society's disappointment.

LF raised the question of whether or not you needed to be a member of the IAU in order to vote at the General Assembly. In addition, there is a need to clarify how often elections to the General Assembly are held.

ACTION: PD check the governance regarding voting rights.

- EB has been approached by the Chair of the BAA and other amateur associations, to meet.

ACTION: Office to arrange a meeting

- The bicentenary Timeline is nearly ready and will be released on Instagram to generate interest.
- The Awards Ceremony will take place online on Thursday 26 November. Most of the content is pre-recorded.
- NAM plans for the meeting to be held at the University of Bath in 2021 are in hand but there will need to be an early decision on whether this will be a physical or online meeting.

5.1b Awards Working group proposal for approval

Council received the Awards Working group paper and **APPROVED** the setting up of the group.

ACTION: Convene Working Group

5.2 Call for nominations letter **for approval**

MB noticed an error in the paperwork which needs to be rectified. The vacant position of Secretary was noted as a G rather than an A.

It was also suggested that the Secretary role description be amended to describe the level of responsibility the role holds.

ACTION: Officers to amend with assistance from office.

5.3 Code of Conduct review

This matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

SM asked if the new code is now to be used.

PD replied that he will check with the lawyers.

ACTION: PD to contact the lawyers to ask.

5.4 The Minutes of the Membership Committee meeting were received by Council.

ML reported that the Membership Committee needs another person from Council and asked for volunteers.

ACTION: PD to send the person specification and TOR to Council.

5.5 The CDAG Meeting Minutes were received by Council

5.6 The RAS 200 Meeting Minutes were received by Council

5.7 The Minutes of the Education and Outreach Committee were received by Council

5.8 The new member of the Membership Committee was **APPROVED** by Council.

5.9 The new member of the Education and Outreach Awards Committee was **APPROVED** by Council

6 Policy and Public engagement

6.1 Council received the Spending Review update (this includes the Science Council submission to the consultation which RAS helped shape)

6.2. Council received the Venus discovery press coverage paper.

EB thanked RM and staff for their work on the Venus project.

6.3. Council received an update on National Astronomy Week, 14-22 November.

7. Publications

7.1 New Journal; financial update from OUP will be available for the next meeting.

7.2 The Notes from Publications Council meeting were received by Council.

8. Other

8.1 Membership Officers Reports, candidates proposed for Fellowship were APPROVED

SM noted that Tudor Jones had retired from the RAS Fellowship due to ill health and suggested that he was sent best wishes on behalf of Council.

ACTION: Office to arrange a message

NB suggested that he is nominated for an Honorary Fellowship next year (confidential note)

8.2 The Grant status report was received by Council.

9. AOB

SM reported that the President of the IAU had agreed to join a working group to discuss the to discuss sites of cultural significance.

ACTION: PD to organize a meeting with IAU to discuss this, and then bring back to Council.

Council rose at 12.19

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Professor Emma Bunce

9 October 2020