



*Advancing  
Astronomy and  
Geophysics*

## **ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

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### **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD DURING THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMY MEETING ST ANDREWS 5 JULY 2013**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

**PRESENT:** Professor David Southwood, Professor Mike Cruise, Professor Martin Barstow, Professor Ian Crawford, Dr Lyndsay Fletcher, Ms Mandy Bailey, Professor Richard Davis, Mr Charles Barclay, Dr Andrew Norton, Professor Donald Kurtz, Dr Sheila Peacock, Professor Yvonne Elsworth, Professor Steve Miller, Professor John Brown.

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

**APOLOGIES:** Dr Helen Fraser, Dr Geraint Jones, Dr Simon Mitton, Professor Barry Parsons, Professor Peter Coles, Professor Gillian Fougler, Professor Paul Murdin.

#### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013 were approved.

#### **3. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS**

The President advised that as this was a short Council meeting, in the interests of time, this item would be passed over and that he would make a full report in October.

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

The Treasurer advised that he had received the updated valuation of the staff pension schemes from the actuary. Council will be asked to discuss the issues arising at the Council meeting in October.

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

##### **5.1 Review of NAM 2013**

The President introduced this item by formally recording the Society's thanks to Professor Alan Hood and his team for arranging a successful and enjoyable NAM. Council discussed in some detail the arrangements for the RAS Community Session, including the RAS Awards session, and agreed that the points set out below should be incorporated into arrangements for future NAMs.

### **Lunchtime events**

- Important to ensure there is effective liaison and agreement between RAS and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) on arrangements for the Careers & Women's lunches.
- It was noted that the Women's lunch should in future be renamed the Equality & Diversity Lunch.

### **RAS Community Session**

- Judging by attendance and reaction, the RAS has been lax in not explaining to NAM attendees what constitutes the RAS Community Session, (in 2013 this included a presentation from STFC, a presentation from UKSA and the RAS Awards Ceremony.)
- The content of this session should be actively promoted including in advance in the NAM programme. In particular the Awards Ceremony needs to be promoted to encourage a better attendance (see separate note below)
- Conference attendees should be encouraged/challenged to come along, e.g. 'your chance to directly engage with the Research Council' e.g. *'Come and ask the Research Council why there is no more money? Ask them what they are doing about it.'*
- Consideration should be given to an alternative format for this session. Options include establishing a post doctorate select committee to ask questions of the funding bodies.
- It was noted that NERC as well as STFC could be asked to be present.
- Essential to encourage younger conference attendees to come along and so to ensure some aspect of the session is geared towards more junior fellows. In any case, LOC should arrange for an email to be sent to all the students that register telling them what happens at the community session and encouraging them to come along.

### **Awards Ceremony**

- It was agreed that this should be advertised in the NAM programme. LOC should arrange a photographer for the event, who should take additional pictures after the ceremony to show medals received (as medals are boxed so not visible on handover.)
- It was noted that pictures of the medals could be shown on the background screen whilst award being given.
- Awardees should be briefed in advance on what is expected of them on the day.
- The RAS Awards Committee is to agree a standard format for the citations (a couple of paragraphs, maximum 1/2 page) and to draft short citations for each award. (It was noted that this should include as the final line 'For these reasons [*INSERT NAME*] is awarded the [*INSERT NAME*] medal.'

- The LOC should source university students to read out the citations at the awards ceremony.

### **Liaison with MIST/SOLAR groups**

- Essential to ensure that Scientific Organising Committee (SOC) engage with MIST and Solar communities whilst planning programme.

### **Public lectures**

- Essential to ensure that public lectures are well advertised and that local schools and astronomy organisations are encouraged to attend.
- It was proposed that it may be better to arrange the public lectures on non-consecutive days.

### **Lecture facilities**

- Essential to ensure that blackout facilities are available in all lecture rooms.

### **Scientific programme**

- On a reciprocal basis, the Society hopes to be able to invite the equivalent of the Gold Medal winner from the American Astronomical Society (AAS) to give a talk at NAM. SOC should schedule a prominent session. AAS are to confirm whether this is possible for NAM 2014.
- Suggestion of not holding a plenary session the morning after the social event.

### **Accommodation**

- It was noted that finding accommodation had been challenging in St. Andrews (although this had been acknowledged and made clear to all very early on) and that some of the student accommodation was a distance from the conference facilities.
- LOC should consider arrange a shuttle bus between accommodation and conference facilities, if accommodation is as distant in future NAM's as at St Andrews.

### **Poster session**

- Essential that posters on display for whole period of conference, as was done at St Andrews.
- RAS to agree who will judge posters at the May Council mtg.
- Timing and arrangements for the presentation of best poster prizes to be agreed in advance and advertised in programme.

### **Give the student a voice (people's choice award)**

- Consideration should be given to developing a system that allows NAM student attendees to elect a "best plenary speaker".

## 5.2 Record of decisions taken at the RAS Strategic Planning Meeting

Council agreed that the Treasurer and Executive should work with the necessary RAS Committees and Subject Matter Experts over the summer to present a costed options paper to Council for approval in October 2013.

## 6. POLICY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### 6.1 House of Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry into Scientific infrastructure: Response from the RAS (Deputy Exec. Sec)

Council noted the paper.

### 6.2 House of Commons Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee: inquiry into the implications of Scottish independence (Deputy Exec. Sec.)

Council noted the paper.

### 6.3 Science and Technology Select Committee: inquiry into Women in STEM careers (Deputy Exec. Sec.)

The House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee have launched an inquiry into women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers in both industry and academia. MPs are particularly interested in the 'leaky pipeline', whereby the proportion of women in these occupations declines with age and seniority.

The terms of reference for the inquiry are online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/women-in-stem-careers/>

Council were invited to provide comments to the Deputy Executive Secretary by 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013. The Deputy Executive Secretary will coordinate comments received and work with the Diversity Committee to produce a draft response that will be circulated to Council. The deadline for submissions is 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013.

Council were reminded that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills are seeking evidence in support of a review of the balance of powers between the UK and EU in the fields of research, development, technology and space. The deadline for evidence submission is Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

## 7. PUBLICATIONS

### 7.1 Membership of the GJI Editorial Board

Council noted the following changes to the membership of the GJI Editorial Board:

- Dr Oliver Ritter will step down from the Editorial Board of GJI after 7 years.
- Two new editors have agreed to join the Board:

- Dr Ute Weckmann, from the GeoForschungsZentrum Potsdam will replace Oliver Ritter, covering all aspects of EM methodology.
- Prof. Sang-Heon Shim (Dan) from Arizona State University. His interest areas are Mineral Physics and Earth and planetary interiors.

## 8. OTHER

### 8.1 Officers Reports

Council approved the following members for Fellowship:

<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Town/ University</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
Aindow	Joe	Dorchester	Membership Committee
Astley	Jane	Chorley	Robert W Dale
Avdellidou	Chrysoula	Canterbury	M.J. Burchell
Bale	Stuart	University of California	Hugh S. Hudson
Bieber	Dirk	Newport	Tomas James
D'Eugenio	Francesco	Oxford	Boris Haeussler
Dixon	Tim	Gloucestershire	Membership Committee
Ghosh	Alaka Nanda	M.P. Birla Planetarium	Mr R. Subramanian
Greiss	Sandra	University of Warwick	T.R. Marsh
Jha	Rahul	Trinity College, Cambridge	Mark Hurn
Matula	Leonard S.	Temple City, CA	David John Stickland
Melvin	Thomas	Brighton	Karen Masters
Mishra	Bhupendra Prakash	Copernicus Astronomical Center	Krzysztof Suberlak
Parkin	Howard	Isle of Man	Christopher Stott
Sheppard	Alice	Ilford	C.J. Lintott
Smith	Duncan	University of Bristol	Andrew Young

Valleri	Martina	Oxford	Ryan Houghton
Ziolkowski	Anton	The University of Edinburgh	K.A. Whaler
Bailey	Kevin	Swindon	Dr Richard McKim
Cheikha	Ahmad	Doha, Qatar	Timothy James Clark
Clarke	Elizabeth	Barnsley	Kevin Read
Del Zanna	Giulio	University of Cambridge	Dr H.E. Mason
Dixon	Natalie	Liverpool	Andrew J. Norton
Few	Christopher	University of Exeter	Caroline Alexander
Fox	Lyndsey	University of Leeds	Sandra Karl
Hall	Thomas	Bourne	P.W. Burton
John	Navin	Bhopal, India	Membership Committee
Judd	Richard	Waterlooville	Ninian G. Boyle
Maclean	John	Exeter	D.G. Strange
Martin	David	Poole	Membership Committee
Piasek	Andrzej	Cuddington	Prof. M.F. Bode
Robinson	Malcolm	Harrow	Stanley Dermott
Smith	Mark	Milford Haven	Membership Committee
Timmermans	Hubert	Heerlen, Netherlands	Membership Committee
Webb	Karl	South Croydon	Membership Committee
Wood	Alan	Nottingham Trent University	Dr William G. Wood
Wride	Emma	Porth, Mid Glamorgan	Prof. Paul Roche

## 8.2 Minutes of the A&G meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

Council approved the minutes.

There was some discussion on the level of attendance at these meetings.

### Summary of attendance over the past two years

Date	Total
October 2011	Approximately 100
November 2011	Approximately 100
December 2011	Approximately 100
January 2012	Approximately 100
February 2012	Approximately 100
March 2012	Approximately 100
May 2012	Approximately 100
October 2012	77
November 2012	76
December 2012	73
January 2013	56
February 2013	48
March 2013	68
April 2013	39
May 2013	61

## 9. AOB

Professor Ian Crawford thanked Council colleagues for volunteering to present as part of the public lecture series.

Council rose at 13 20

### POST COUNCIL NOTES:

- The Society will take a stand at the European Space Planetary Conference to be held on the 8 – 13 September, 2013.
- Council papers will continue to be provided in pdf format. The Executive will endeavour to provide a version that allows ease of movement between agenda items

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D. J. Southwood  
President

11 October 2013