

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at Burlington House on 18 June 2014

PRESENT: David Manning (*Chair*), Natalyn Ala (*Secretary, Professional Matters*), Mike Armitage, Nigel Cassidy, Jim Coppard, Jane Dottridge, Chris Eccles, Marie Edmonds, David Hopkins, David Jones, Adam Law (*Treasurer*), Alan Lord (*Secretary, External and Foreign Affairs*), Brian Marker, David Norbury, Colin North (*Secretary, Publications*), Keith Seymour, Lucy Slater and Michael Young

APOLOGIES: Neil Chapman, Angela Coe, David Cragg, Al Fraser (*Secretary, Science*) and Gary Nichols

In attendance: Edmund Nickless (Executive Secretary), Nic Bilham (Director of Policy & Communications), Neal Marriott (Director of Publishing, Library & Information Services) Jonathan Silk (Director of Finance & Operations) and Stephanie Jones (PA to Executive Secretary)

The new members of Council were welcomed: Nigel Cassidy, David Hopkins, David Norbury, Colin North and Keith Seymour

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies as above were noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

David Hopkins said that his son, Samuel David Hopkins, is on the list of Junior Candidates upgrading to Candidate Fellowship. There were no other declarations of interests.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

3. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2014

The minutes were agreed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 *Associated Society Status (CM/42/14)*

At its meeting in April 2014 Council agreed to establish the status of Associated Society to provide a consistent structure for existing relationships with other organisations and a friendlier mechanism for societies with which there is no existing relationship to enter into dialogue and to explore opportunities to work together. Council NOTED that the President will write to the list of societies and organisations with which there is an existing a memorandum of understanding or a mutual reciprocity agreement. Discussions are also taking place with geo-organisations in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand and Ukraine, as well as EGU and with AusIMM (item *CM/48/14*).

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5. PRESIDENT'S BUSINESS

5.1 *Membership of Committees, Panels and Boards (CM/43/14)*

Council AGREED the membership of the standing committees to Council and NOTED the membership of the other committees, panels and boards.

5.2 *Housekeeping (CM/44/14)*

Council NOTED the meeting dates for Council and standing committees for 2014-15 and the list of standing business brought to each meeting of Council. Council also NOTED the expenses policy.

5.3 *Standing List under Regulations R/RP/5 and R/FP/6 (CM/45/14)*

Under Regulation R/FP/5 (Appeals Procedures) and R/FP/6 (Disciplinary Procedures) Council is obliged to maintain “a *Standing List of at least 25 experienced and longstanding Fellows who are not members of Council and who are able to act on Panels established under these Procedures. At least two thirds of the List shall be Chartered Geologists or Chartered Scientists. Fellows may resign from the List at any time, and Council may appoint replacements at any time. The names on the List will not be available to Fellows.*” Matters dealt with under these Regulations include appeals relating to non-election as a Fellow, non-validation of a Fellow as a Chartered Geologist, investigation and resolution of complaints brought by five or more Fellows for removal of a Fellow on grounds of significant misinformation relating to application for Fellowship or validation as a Chartered Geologist, and complaints against the code of conduct.

Council AGREED the membership of the Standing List.

Council NOTED that the Standing List is not optimal in identifying Fellows with the breadth of experience to adjudicate in all cases. David Cragg and Bill Gaskarth, Chartership Officer, have identified a significant number of potential candidates and the office is in the process of asking them if they are willing to serve. Additional names will be notified to Council.

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5.4 *Society representation on outside bodies (CM/46/14)*

Council AGREED the list of representatives on outside bodies and recorded their thanks to those Fellows who undertake this role. Edmund Nickless asked Council to advise Nic Bilham if there were other organisations not listed where the Society has a representative. He also reminded representing members that they should submit an annual report on the activities of the Committees they sit on.

5.5 *Nominations for Honorary Fellowship (CM/47/14)*

See confidential annex.

5.6 *Letter of Intent: GSL/AusIMM (CM/48/14)*

At the Exploration, Resources & Mining Geology conference in Cardiff in October 2013, an informal approach was made to the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (with whom the Society jointly organised the conference) to continue and develop the relationship with the Society. Council NOTED that the President and Executive Secretary signed a letter of intent with them and a Memorandum of Understanding will be developed and brought to Council for approval.

5.7 *GSL role in the geological disposal facility siting process (CM/49/14)*

See confidential annex.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (CM/50/14)

Council NOTED that a member of the Library staff fell going down the stairs on 12 June. There was no obvious reason why. She sustained a sore ankle but no medical treatment was required. Otherwise, there were no incidents since the last meeting of Council. Council also NOTED that all the Courtyard Societies participated in a timed fire drill on 21 May. The Society's premises were cleared in two minutes and the landlord's agents deemed the practice very successful.

7. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

7.1 *UBS Signatories (CM/51/14)*

The Society's investment managers are UBS. Changes were required to the management and administration of the account following the departure of the interim Finance Director and the arrival of Jonathan Silk. Council APPROVED this resolution by email on 1 May and the matter is now formally minuted.

7.2 *Report of the Finance and Planning Committee (CM/52/14)*

The Finance & Planning Committee met on 5 June when the main items of discussion were:

- An update on the Fellowship Fees proposal submitted to the previous meeting of Council.
- Consideration of the difficulties in obtaining updates from several committees on the status of strategic projects.
- Review of the April Management Accounts, which included more detailed analysis than previous months: (a) to form the basis of the annual budget review; and (b) to begin to obtain assurance on the likely outturn for 2014.
- Review of the Audit Management Letter actions (standing item).
- Introduction of the 2014 budget review / 2015 budget drafting exercise.
- Updates on: the recruitment of the Financial Controller; the database replacement project; and the planned review of Society auditors (all standing items).

Nic Bilham said that changes made to the Strategic Projects Plan since the last meeting of Council include identification of new project champions as a result of changes in Council membership. Associated Society status has also been added. Two items have been removed from the list of strategic projects:

- Library Plan: the reductions in net cost set out in the Library Review have been achieved and a new Library Strategy was agreed at April Council; and;
- Geofacets-GSL Millennium Edition: successfully launched in January 2014

The mechanism for reporting on the Strategic Projects Plan is being revised and a draft will be taken to the September meeting of the Finance & Planning Committee. It is important that the Council champions take ownership of their projects and are proactive in reporting progress.

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Council NOTED the report of the Finance and Planning Committee.

7.3 *April Management Accounts (CM/53/14)*

Council NOTED the April management accounts which showed a surplus for the month of just over £62k. Jonathan Silk gave an overview of the accounts and the process. Colin North drew attention to the rapidly changing world of publishing and the effect that this may have on the Society's income. Edmund Nickless said that one of the focuses of the September residential will be to look at the Society's financial strategy over the next three to five years.

7.4 *Overdraft Permission (CM/54/14)*

The Bye-laws state that the Society cannot borrow money without the unanimous approval of Council. It has therefore become customary to ask each new Council for permission to seek an overdraft facility, should the need arise over the summer months when income is low. An overdraft facility avoids having to realise investments should the market be unfavourable. All members of Council present AGREED that the Treasurer could seek an overdraft of up to £250k should the need arise and it was noted that if the facility is taken up the Treasurer will write advising Council. Those members of Council not present will also be asked to give approval. *[Post meeting note: all members of Council not present in person at the meeting have given their approval.]*

SLJ

7.5 *Bank mandate and cheque signatories (CM/55/14)*

The present level of authorisation on the Society's bank mandate is two members of staff where the payment is less than £40k. The members of staff are the Executive Secretary, Assistant Accountant, Editor *Geoscientist*, Fellowship Services Manager and Conference Manager. Payments over £40k require the signature of a trustee and any other cheque signatory. The former President (David Shilston), Treasurer, Secretary Foreign & External Affairs, Secretary Science and Brian Marker are already authorised and Council AGREED to remove David Shilston and add David Manning as well as two members of staff:- the Director of Finance & Operations and the Director of Policy & Communications.

JS

7.6 *Serious Incident Report (CM/56/14)*

Council NOTED that there were no serious incidents to report since the last meeting.

8. *REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE (CM/57/14)*

Council NOTED the reports of the Executive Secretary, Director of Publishing, Library & Information Services, Director of Policy & Communications and the Director of Finance & Operations.

9. *REMOVAL OF FELLOWS AND CANDIDATE FELLOWS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF THE 2014 SUBSCRIPTIONS (CM/58/14)*

Council AGREED to remove from Fellowship those Fellows who had not paid their 2014 subscription by 30 June 2013 unless they were in discussion about their subscription with the Fellowship Office. It was noted that the attrition rate is similar to previous years and the level of strike off is a worse case as some will have paid since the list was produced and others will be in the process of paying.

Council was asked to encourage as soon as possible those Fellows known to

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them to pay their subscription and remain in Fellowship.

Edmund Nickless said that the Fellowship office will continue to make further strenuous efforts to secure late payments with an additional focus on those 80 Fellows with Chartered status.

10. CHARTERSHIP APPEALS (*CM/41/14 & CM/59/14*)

See confidential annex.

11. ELECTIONS

11.1 *Fellowship (CM/60/14)*

Council AGREED to recommend to the Fellowship that those candidates listed in CM/60/14 should be elected as Fellows at the OGM on 18 June 2014.

11.2 *Chartered Geologists (CM/61/14)*

The applications from Fellows to become Chartered Geologists listed in CM/61/14 had been approved by the Chartership Panel and were AGREED by Council.

11.3 *Candidate and Junior Candidate Fellowship (CM/62/14)*

Council AGREED to elect those applicants listed in CM/62/14 as Candidate Fellows and Junior Candidate Fellows.

11.4 *European Geologists (CM/63/14)*

Council NOTED the names elected as European Geologists at the EFG meeting on 9 May.

11.5 *Chartered Scientists (CM/64/14)*

Council AGREED that the persons named on paper CM/64/14 should be elected as Chartered Scientists.

STRATEGIC ITEM

12. SCIENCE COUNCIL DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION CHARTER (*CM/65/14*)

The draft text of the Science Council's Charter was discussed at their Annual General Meeting on 10 June. Edmund Nickless, who chaired a task group responsible for drafting the text, attended with Natalyn Ala, Secretary Professional Matters, who spoke in support.

No objection was raised about the proposed wording and many who spoke at the AGM undertook to take the text to their governing bodies. The only dissenting comment was the use of the word "Charter" which may cause confusion to some because of the Royal Charter held by the Science Council and similar bodies. An emerging alternative title is "declaration".

Further comments on the text are being collated before a final version for acceptance by member bodies is circulated. The agreed Charter and supporting documentation will be sent to the 41 Science Council bodies over the summer and it is anticipated that about half will sign up at the next general meeting in October and the remainder by October 2015.

At its meeting on 14 July the Science Council Board will consider both the Charter and work currently underway to set out a "road map" and guidance to member bodies on measuring progress.

Council will have an opportunity to discuss matters further at their Strategy meeting on 25 September and, if content, will then be asked to agree that the Society should be a Charter signatory. Tricia Henton, the Society's Diversity Champion, will be attending that meeting and an external speaker, Lisa Pinney, Head of Strategic Co-ordination at the Environment Agency.

Council was asked to give comments on the draft text to Edmund Nickless before 20 June.

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OTHER MATTERS

13. REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES NOT PREVIOUSLY ADVISED (CM/66/14)

The following reports were taken as read:

Professional Committee
Publications and Information Committee
Science and External Relations Committee

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 *Ethics of Rock Coring*

Prof Rob Butler, former member of Council and chair of the Geoconservation Committee, raised at the External Relations Committee in May the problem of inappropriate rock coring and sample collection. Council had a wide-ranging discussion. The Society's Code of Conduct will need wholesale revision if the Society signs up to the Science Council's Diversity Charter and it was agreed that there will be discussion at that time about this ethical matter.

14.2 *Accreditation of overseas courses*

Natalyn Ala reported on the recent discussion at the Accreditation Committee and the application of the Science Council's Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Charter to overseas organisations.

14.3 *Dining Club*

Adam Law reminded Council that they are all temporary members of the Club and are welcome to attend the dinners which generally take place on the evening of Council meetings.

14.4 *Northern Ireland Regional Group*

Council was pleased to note the formation of the Northern Ireland Regional Group. Michael Young invited Council members to attend.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is Thursday, 25 September at 2:15pm (lunch at 1:30pm).

Officers and the Elections Committee will meet late morning. There will be lunch at 1.30pm for all members of Council and the business meeting will be from 2.15 until a tea break at 3.30pm. The residential part of the meeting will start with a session on diversity for which we will be joined by Lisa Pinney and Tricia Henton, the Society's Diversity Champion. The OGM will be at the usual time of 5pm following which there will be a short break before a drinks reception and dinner in the Council Room. The Council residential will continue on Friday, 26

September from 9.00am to 4.30pm.

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