

RMA Council Meeting Report

2:30pm, Saturday 2 May 2020

Acting on the feedback given through our membership engagement survey earlier this year, the RMA have decided to compile a brief bulletin on the proceedings and decisions made in Council meetings. In each Council Meeting, the various chairs and members of Committees report to Council. We've outlined these below, along with notes about the various reports made by Chairs and Officers. Our meeting on 2 May was also a special occasion, as it was the first remote Council Meeting, with members joining via Zoom from across the UK.

The meeting opened with a welcome from President Simon McVeigh. Council observed a moment of silence in memory of two long-standing members: Nicholas Temperley; and Hilary Bracefield, founder and convenor of the Irish Chapter in 1987–2002 and Vice-President, 2004–11. Their passing was noted in the [May 2020 Bulletin](#).

In each Council Meeting, we discuss *Matters Arising*: on-going projects that require long-term planning. In this, ideas for the RMA's 150th anniversary celebrations in 2024 were discussed, as well as possible models of an early-career mentoring scheme.

Following *Matters Arising*, the President and the various committees report on recent activities and matters for debate and decision. We have summarised these reports briefly here:

President's report. [Simon McVeigh](#) introduced a long discussion on the RMA's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and what possible support could be offered to members. Arrangements for timing and format of Council and Committee meetings were debated. We discussed the possibilities and benefits – including personal, financial and environmental – for holding meetings online. With the upcoming REF submission deadline, Council members expressed a diversity of views on the proposed Research Excellence Framework timetable. The President raised notes from the membership who had submitted responses to him regarding REF.

Other Initiatives. It was agreed that Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (led by [Laudan Nooshin](#)) and the Music Education Initiative ([Deborah Mawer](#)) should be standing items on the agenda. [Barbara Kelly](#) updated Council on the development of further European links. It was decided that the RMA website would be updated to include individual pages on these initiatives.

Finance and Membership Committee. [Sarah Hibberd](#), Jeffrey Dean and Valerie James presented a draft of the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2019. Membership numbers are holding up well. The work of Michael Bye and Ellen Falconer on the new website was lauded.

Events Committee. [Natasha Loges](#) introduced discussion about the effect of the current situation on RMA events, in particular the Annual Conference. She noted that the decision had been made to hold the 2020 Annual Conference online.

Search Committee. [Pauline Fairclough](#) presented the list of candidates for Vice-President and Ordinary Member, for Council approval. The question of Council representation and diversity was discussed at length.

Awards Committee. [Elaine Kelly](#) raised issues about application deadlines for Small Research Grants, and the timeframe for the Roche Prize and Tippett Medal. Council approved the award of the Dent Medal for 2020 to Eric Drott.

Publications Committee. [Rebecca Herissone](#) called attention to discussion of future directions for *JRMA* and *RMARC*, the publications questionnaire, and issues around Open Access.

Student Committee. [Patrick Huang](#) outlined online opportunities for students during the pandemic, and [Núria Bonet](#) summarised a number of events she was planning to run for students online during this period.

Council will next meet in September as part of the Annual Conference. If you have any questions about the proceedings of Council, or want to be involved with any of the initiatives mentioned, please email the relevant Council Member by clicking on their name.

[Ellen Falconer](#)

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