

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024**  
**Minutes of the AGM**  
**held in the Hidcote Suite at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Stratford Upon Avon**  
**CV37 6YR on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024, at 6pm**

**In the Chair**

Professor Nira Chamberlain – President

**Present**

Dr Ems Lord – Chair of Council

Dr Paul Harris – Honorary Secretary

Mr Sudeep Gokarakonda – Treasurer

**Staff in attendance**

Sandi Atkinson – Chief Executive Officer

Alice Hall – Membership & Challenges Officer

Lucy Watson – Membership Administrator

**Members of the Association (45).** There were sufficient members present and by proxy to be quorate. Those present were reminded that only current members of the Association were permitted to vote and that if they had already voted by proxy then their votes have been counted and they would not be permitted to vote again.

**1. Welcome by the President, Professor Nira Chamberlain**

1.1. The President welcomed everyone to the 2024 Annual General Meeting and thanked all those for their continuing work on behalf of The Mathematical Association.

**2. The AGM received the report of the Council from its Chair, Dr Ems Lord.**

2.1 Prof. Chamberlain invited Dr Ems Lord as Chair of Council to present her report to the meeting.

2.2 Dr Lord began by thanking everyone involved in the relocation of HQ, having visited the team she was very happy to report that their new home is situated on a vibrant campus with many other businesses and access to quality facilities. The proceeds of the sale of the original building now means that the MA is on a much surer footing financially as will be discussed in more detail later by the Treasurer.

2.3 With the move came changes to the team. After 29 years of service Linda Medhurst took voluntary redundancy in order to spend more time with family, the MA is very grateful for her loyal service. New members of the team have joined since the move, Lucy Watson (in attendance) and Jennifer Moore both joined in September and are already proving to be great assets to the association.

2.4 Market research and survey, thanks to those who completed it and encouraged others to do so. This piece of work is so important to the future of our association and any potential merged association. We reached out not only to our members but the wider maths education

network to find out how we are viewed, what we do well and what we do not so well. We have been delighted by the broadly positive results and responses from both members and non-members in the sector.

- 2.5 From our members we were keen to find out what you value most from the MA and that is the journals, publications and the challenges. There is always room for improvement though and in order to allow us to build on the success of these offerings we need to be able to work more efficiently and be constantly evolving. To do this Trustees have agreed to invest some of the proceeds from the sale of HQ in new technology. Work will shortly begin to seek a digital partner to work with us to implement a new website and customer relationship management (CRM) system.
- 2.6 The First Mathematics and Primary Mathematics Challenges are going from strength to strength with almost 100,000 pupils taking part in 2023. The implementation of new technology will really help with improving efficiency of delivery of the challenges and also allow us to continue to grow.
- 2.7 We introduced a new member magazine, 'Mathematical Angles' bringing together all of the best elements of the former MA News, SymmetryPlus and Mathematical PiE and we hope to develop more news and interesting content in the three issues per year.
- 2.8 Two new publications were added to our bookshop in 2023, 'If I Could Tell You Another Thing' edited by David Miles and the sequel to 'If I Could Tell You One Thing' and 'Focus on the Visual' from Chris Pritchard. Members were invited to visit the MA book stall during the conference where they could purchase copies of these and many others at a 30% discount.
- 2.9 Dr Lord highlighted the incredibly valuable resource that is the MA library. Housed and cared for within the University of Leicester's David Wilson Library. Dr Lord spoke of a recent presentation she had attended where she heard from two researchers who had made use of and highly praised the quality and depth of the resources available within the MA library.
- 2.10 Dr Lord will now be working alongside our CEO Sandi Atkinson and other colleagues to look at ways we can make the library more accessible to members and to promote and develop the collection. This work will also extend to our valuable archives, making sure members are aware of what is in them and how to access them should they wish to. Part of this work will include reaching out to members for their help and time, if they are able to give it, and would be interested in getting involved.
- 2.11 These incredible resources are in such impeccable shape thanks to two very special volunteers who after more than 20 years each in their respective roles decided to step down at the end of 2023. Mike Price, MA Librarian and Mary Walmsley, MA Archivist both joined Council at their recent face to face meeting at the new Loughborough HQ where they were honoured and thanked for their immense work over the course of their association with the MA.

- 2.12 Moving on Dr Lord gave an update of the current situation with regards to the joining together of the five mathematics subject associations. Referring to the complexities involved when just trying to merge two, trying to bring together five associations we are learning is an altogether more gargantuan task.
- 2.13 Some of the challenges needed to be carefully considered are around our assets, staff, contractual obligations etc. and we recognise that you, our members, will also have questions around your member benefits and the things you care about.
- 2.14 Further to the update circulated prior to the meeting Dr Lord stressed the importance of taking our time to ensure that trustees understood fully the potential implications for the MA so that if and when the time comes to make the recommendation to the membership to merge it is fully in the knowledge that it is the right thing to do for our association. So, we are taking stock, taking our time and have invited a charity merger specialist to guide us through the complex due diligence process and governance issues.
- 2.15 At this point Dr Lord asked if there were any questions from the floor. There were no questions, but two points were raised as concerns with regards to lack of progress around merger. One issue was the perceived lack of communication to members, the other was the potential for further delays to the process.
- 2.16 Dr Lord agreed that communication could definitely be better and apologised that it has not been as good as it could be. This is something that has been discussed with the charity merger project manager who has the communications expertise that has been lacking so far and so we fully expect members to see a difference going forwards.
- 2.17 Addressing the point around the process, we think that by being proactive in appointing a charity merger specialist with the relevant skills and experience we are showing our commitment to moving forwards in a timely manner.
- 2.18 Another point of concern was raised at this point around what would happen to assets such as the library and archives as well as the proceeds of the sale of HQ in the event of a merger. Dr Lord reassured those present that the library and archives are hugely valued not just by the MA but also by colleagues from the other four associations who are excited by the possibility that merger would open up access to many more people. For further discussion around the proceeds of the sale of HQ she deferred to the Treasurer who would be delivering his report later in the agenda.
- 2.19 There were no further questions, Prof. Chamberlain offered his thanks to Dr Lord on behalf of Council and the membership for her report and invited Sudeep Gokarakonda, MA Treasurer to give his report.

### **3 The report of the Treasurer, Sudeep Gokarakonda.**

3.1 The 2023 independent examination report and financial statements had been made available to MA members via email and on the website prior to the meeting.

3.1.1 Main points highlighted by the Treasurer in his report were;

3.1.1.1 Income has declined slightly compared to the previous year.

3.1.1.2 We do not anticipate this being a trend. Two issues contributed to this decline, the enforced closure by the Allied Irish Bank of our account with them which required a significant number of members having to reregister their direct debits with us. 50% of those affected did not renew their membership despite regular communication.

3.1.1.3 The other being the investment in the market research project which has proved extremely valuable in providing the insight needed to know where to concentrate our efforts going forwards.

3.1.1.4 Positive trends we are seeing with regards to income is the continued growth of the challenges and the consistency of the Gazette.

3.1.1.5 Expenditure was significantly higher than in 2022 due mainly to the costs associated with the relocation of HQ.

3.1.1.6 Looking ahead there are plans to invest some of the proceeds of the sale in new technology, as reported by Dr Lord we will be looking to replace our existing website and CRM with a more efficient and fit for purpose system.

3.1.1.7 Overall given the challenges we are facing at this time of significantly rising costs we have done well to keep expenditure predominantly under control and look forward to a continuing trend towards an operating surplus in the future.

3.1.1.8 Cash generated from the sale of HQ has been invested across a range of high interest accounts through Insignis Cash Platform. Weighted average interest across the eight accounts is 5.1%.

3.1.1.9 This will give us an income of around £30,000 per year which will cover the costs associated with the rent and service charge of the new HQ.

3.1.2 Mr Gokarakonda then invited questions from those present.

3.1.2.1 A question was raised as to whether there was any concern that when interest rates go down that the income generated will no longer be sufficient to cover the rental costs. Mr Gokarakonda agreed that that is certainly an issue to be considered for the future, currently the size of our investment in the cash platform gives us access to the best rates on the market and we are able to monitor them closely and actively manage which accounts we deposit cash into to ensure the best rates.

3.1.2.2 He also referred to the previously discussed plans to invest in our future and growth so that longer term we are not reliant on this income to pay our bills.

3.1.2.3 The CEO Sandi Atkinson added that we will be seeking professional advice to develop an investment policy to clearly define how we manage our investments going forwards.

3.1.3 There were no further questions, so Mr Gokarakonda proposed the motion to accept the 2023 independently examined accounts. The motion was seconded by Dr Andy Kemp and passed by majority vote.

### 3.2 Nomination of the Independent Examiners for 2023

- 3.2.1 Mr Gokarakonda then proposed the motion that we remain with Community Accounting Plus (CAPlus) as our Independent Examiners for 2024. They have proved to be efficient and cost effective.
- 3.2.2 This motion was seconded by David Miles and passed by majority vote.
- 3.2.3 Prof. Chamberlain thanked Mr Gokarakonda for his report.

## 4 Election of Officers and other Members of Council

### 4.1 The election of the President for 2023–2024

Prof. Chamberlain was pleased to confirm Charlie Stripp as the incoming President of the MA and passed on his congratulations.

### The election of the President for 2024–2025

Prof. Chamberlain also confirmed the new President Designate to be Prof. Paul Glaister who will become President in 2025–2026.

### 4.2 Re-elected to Council

Prof. Chamberlain handed over to Dr Paul Harris, Honorary Secretary to confirm the following members of Council who were re-elected. Dr Harris explained that with the exception of Chair of Challenges all positions were elected unopposed and so no vote was required.

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| <b>Chair of Council</b>                  | <b>Dr Ems Lord</b>                          |
| <b>Honorary Secretary</b>                | <b>Dr Paul Harris</b>                       |
| <b>Treasurer</b>                         | <b>Sudeep Gokarakonda</b>                   |
| <b>Chair of Branches</b>                 | <b>Lucinda Hamill</b>                       |
| <b>Chair of Challenges</b>               | <b>Dr Amanda Moon (co-opted by Council)</b> |
| <b>Chair of Conferences</b>              | <b>Dr Andrew Kemp</b>                       |
| <b>Chair of Membership</b>               | <b>Jemma Sherwood</b>                       |
| <b>Chair of Professional Development</b> | <b>Louise Pennington</b>                    |
| <b>Chair of Publications</b>             | <b>Jill Trinder</b>                         |
| <b>Chair of Teaching Committee</b>       | <b>Vacant</b>                               |
| <b>Editor in Chief</b>                   | <b>Edward Southall</b>                      |

Nominations for vacant and co-opted roles:

Dr Harris introduced the nominations for the vacant position of Chair of Teaching Committee and the previously co-opted position of Chair of Challenges.

Council had co-opted Dr Amanda Moon onto Council into the position of Chair of Challenges and was now seeking ratification of her formal nomination to the role. Both roles were elected unopposed, so no vote was required.

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|--|-----------------------|
| <b>Office of Chair of Challenges</b>               | <b>Dr Amanda Moon</b> |
| Nominated by Dr Paul Harris and Sudeep Gokarakonda |                       |

**Office of Chair of Teaching Committee Manina Tyler-Mort**

Nominated by David Miles and Dr Paul Harris

4.3 Members without Office

Dr Harris referred to the list of members without office on the agenda including details of time served and left to serve.

Stella Dudzic continues in her second term of 3 years, with 2 years left to serve.

Charlotte Hawthorne continues her first term of 3 years, with 2 years left to serve.

Joanne Morgan continues her first term of 3 years, with 2 years left to serve.

Cherri Moseley continues her first term of 3 years, with 1 year left to serve.

Dr Chris Pritchard continues his first term of 3 years, with 2 years left to serve.

William Richardson continues his first term of 3 years, with 1 year left to serve.

There was one Member without Office vacancy and one nomination received.

**David Miles**, nominated by Manina Tyler-Mort and Dr Ems Lord

5 **Matters arising from the Annual General Meeting 2023.**

Prof. Chamberlain confirmed there were no matters arising.

6 **Any other business.**

Prof. Chamberlain confirmed that none had been received.

With no further business to transact Prof. Nira Chamberlain, as his last act as President, declared the meeting closed.

The Chair of Council Dr Ems Lord thanked Prof. Chamberlain for chairing the meeting and thanked everyone for attending and wished them an enjoyable conference.

*The meeting closed at 6.40pm.*