

Chair's report for the AGM

This is my fifth and final report as Chair of Council for the AGM and since it will be read due to the current coronavirus situation, it will be brief. I wish to start by thanking all those who teach, or have taught, our young people mathematics. At times it is not an easy job, presenting many challenges, but it is varied, interesting and has a massive positive impact on people's lives, though they don't always see it at the time. These past few months we have seen examinations being cancelled and materials being put on line for pupils and students to access at home, not to mention the dedicated teachers who are still in school with the young people who need to attend. Thank you for all you do.

It has been a busy year but one which I have enjoyed immensely and I treasure the support of my colleagues, without whom The Mathematical Association would not flourish.

Council met four times since the last AGM, in June, September, December and March. In between those times Standing Committee met three times to deal with any unexpected business, or items that Council delegated to them.

The MA continues to work with the other classroom facing organisations. Currently we still don't know what the future holds. Our joint conference with NANAMIC this year at Wyboston Lakes, Bedfordshire on Exploration and Insights in Mathematical Education has had to be cancelled due to the national lockdown on all gatherings. This is why we cannot hold our AGM physically. The Government has issued guidelines, which gives us the flexibility to hold a vote electronically. Since our staff are currently working from home, a postal vote cannot be offered and I do not wish to postpone the AGM for an undetermined time as I do not think we would get the necessary quorum of people physically present at a different location on a specific day just to hold an AGM. We need to vote in all our officers and some new Members without Office, else we would not have a functioning Council when the existing officers' terms of office finish.

The various committees are a vital part of the MA. Reports on their activities can be found in the Annual Report which will be on the website later this year. At the end of 2018 we introduced monthly direct debits for subscriptions so that members don't have to pay their subscription in one lump in January. This has proved popular with many.

We had no suggestions last year for anyone to become an Honorary Member. At the March 2016 Council meeting it was agreed that we have a procedure for appointing Honorary Members and so once again I have great pleasure in asking members for written proposals that include a case made for their suggestion, to be received by 15th May so that Council can consider and make its decision at the June Council meeting. An "Honorary Member" is 'any person who has made a distinguished contribution to mathematical education or who have provided outstanding service to the Association'. So, suggestions are welcomed at any time, but will be considered each June.

There are a few changes to Council this year. Five members are stepping down at the AGM: myself as Chair, Jim Simons as Chair of Teaching Committee, Cordelia Myers and Owen Toller as Members without Office (MwO) and Mike Askew. Mike Askew leaves us as his three-year term as President Designate, President and Immediate Past President are now complete. Julia Brown (Chair of Membership and Council member with responsibility for HQ) resigned at the end of December to move overseas. We are most grateful for all they have done. At December Council we appointed Bobby Seagull as MwO to replace a vacancy left by a resigning MwO. Tom Roper takes on the role of Chair. Ems Lord becomes our Immediate past President and is succeeded as President by Hannah Fry. We welcome Chris Pritchard as our President Designate, Paul Harris as Secretary, Drew Foster as

Chair of Teaching Committee and Nick Wilson, Stella Dudzic and Steve Abbott (a Past President) as MwOs.

We had celebrations for two of our long-serving staff this year. Linda Medhurst (Finance Officer) was presented with an engraved vase at a lunch at HQ to mark her 25 years of service. Our Senior Administrator, Marcia Murray, retired at the end of December after serving our Association faithfully for over 20 years. We honoured her with a celebratory lunch after December Council and wish her well in her retirement.

Finally, I have now completed my term of office as Chair. It is a great privilege and honour to work with all the MA members and mathematics teachers in one way or another. It was time consuming but has been both enjoyable and, at times, challenging. My sincere thanks to all members of Council as well as members of all the committees and subcommittees who give up a great deal of their own time preparing for, travelling to and attending meetings and generally furthering the aims of the Association. I should also like to thank Sandi Atkinson, who became our Executive Officer in January when Marcia Murray retired and her staff at HQ for all their support and hard work behind the scenes. Our membership owes them a great debt of gratitude. I wish my successor and friend Tom Roper all the very best as he takes on the role of Chair of Council. The force ($F = MA$) is strong in him and you all.

Peter Ransom MBE FIMA
Chair of Council, The Mathematical Association