

COUNCIL MINUTES – 29 JUNE 2021
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Date of meeting:

Tuesday 29 June 2021, 14:00 to 16:00

Place of meeting:

ZOOM Video Conference

Present: Don Robert, John O'Donnell, Una O'Brien, Diana Layfield, Hitesh Patel, Annalisa Jenkins, Mohamed Osman, Mike Turner, Nicholas Mays, Mishal Khan, Effua Usuf, Angela Darlington, Peter Piot, Anne Mills, Matt Lee, Jenny Jenkin, Precious Lunga and Liam Smeeth.

Apologies: Sunil Sharma and Oluwagbemileke Bolajoko.

Minutes: Ayisha Govindasamy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Liam Smeeth was welcomed to the Council meeting by the Chair as an observer in his role as incoming Director.

1.1. Actions taken by the Chair: Appointment of Nous to undertake the Independent Review to address discrimination and advance anti-racism and equality at LSHTM.

1.2. Conflicts of Interest: None declared.

1.3. Minutes of the previous meeting:

Resolved:

1.3.1. Council approved the minutes of its previous meetings held on 31 March 2021.

2. DIRECTOR PRESENTATION

Received: A presentation from the Director on recent research achievements, media highlights, impact of COVID-19, fundraising targets, current SLT priorities and farewell speech.

Post meeting note: A full transcript of the Directors' farewell speech has now been made available on Board Intelligence as part of the Council 29 June 2021 paperback.

2.1. SLT Race Equality Update Report

Kara Hanson (SLT co-focal point for addressing racial inequality) joined for this item.

Noted:

2.1.1. Race equality actions would be embedded into the EDI Strategy action plan along with associated communications. This would be owned by the new Director and be supported by the EDI Programme Board.

2.1.2. It was acknowledged that the outcome of the Independent review may mean the EDI Strategy and action plan will need to be updated.

2.1.3. Council emphasised the need for targeted communications that clearly outlined the desired change being sought, the associated actions and details of what metrics will be used to help understand whether those actions were successful.

2.1.4. A pulse survey to gauge staff and students' perceptions on the impact and effectiveness of actions taken by SLT to address racial equality would be useful in the future. It was noted that a staff survey was a requirement of the Race Equality Charter self-assessment process so this would be taken forward under that workstream.

3. FOCUS OF THE MEETING

3.1. Council engagement with the LSHTM community

Noted:

3.1.1. Council had a role to play in listening and engaging with the LSHTM community to help better inform their understanding of LSHTM's culture.

3.1.2. A number of engagement opportunities were suggested, these included:

- Breakfast meeting with Council members

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- Attendance at public lectures hosted by keynote speakers and research centres
- Observing/participating in all staff Q&A sessions and programme inductions
- Faculty and Unit insight sessions
- Additional staff/student listening sessions

Resolved:

- 3.1.3. It was agreed that a 'menu' of engagement opportunities would be developed for members to consider and a standing item would be added to the Council agenda for members to feedback.

4. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

4.1. Finance & Development Committee

4.1.1. Budget 2021/22:

Noted:

- 4.1.1.1. The budget set for 2020/21 was £239m, and the actual outturn is £254m. When the budget was set for 2020/21, there was an expectation of a £6.5m deficit but LSHTM has achieved a surplus of £5m which represents an extraordinary financial performance during a time of huge uncertainty.
- 4.1.1.2. An operating surplus of £2m (less than 1% of revenue) was proposed for 2021/22 which is prudent but takes into the account the impact of the ODA cuts and need to invest in education activities. LSHTM would need to work towards increasing its surplus in the future to 3-5% to provide better financial stability.

Resolved:

- 4.1.1.3. Council approved the budget set for 2021/22.

4.1.2. Estates Masterplan - Phase 3

Noted:

- 4.1.2.1. LSHTM was embarking on a significant Capital Estates Programme to help address infrastructure issues and improve social/collaboration space for both staff and students.
- 4.1.2.2. Phase 3 of works included:
- Consolidation of freezer and liquid nitrogen space (B08) and library mezzanine archive
 - BSF/ CL3/ Insectary facility on level 4/5/6
 - Refurbishment of labs on level 2 Malet Street and infrastructure
 - Social space
 - Fire windows and doors in Keppel Street

Resolved:

- 4.1.2.3. Council approved the commencement of phase 3 of the Estates Masterplan.

4.1.3. ODA Cuts

Noted:

- 4.1.3.1. Assessing the impact of ODA cuts on research grants was in flux but LSHTM had recently received confirmation from UKRI outlining the final settlement for the affected Global Challenged Research Fund (GCRF) and Newton Fund grants which included the complete reversal of the cuts for 21 grants and partial reversal for three grants.
- 4.1.3.2. LSHTM was not expecting to make any redundancies as a result of the ODA cuts. The Executive thanked the academic community for their support in helping to address the impact of these cuts and Council members for their lobbying efforts.

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4.2. Audit & Risk Committee

Noted:

- 4.2.1. Council noted the meeting summary from Audit & Risk Committee held on 22 June 2021 and the top risks from LSHTM's Strategic Risk Register.
- 4.2.2. The committee have raised concerns about the lack of formal governance and reporting structures between the Units and LSHTM. The incoming Director had been briefed on the risk this posed to LSHTM, and it was hoped that significant progress could be made to resolve concerns by the end of the calendar year.
- 4.2.3. The committee has scheduled an away day in September which would focus on high rated risks such as cyber security and data protection.
- 4.2.4. A key area of risk for the Executive was managing the return to the London buildings and putting in place measures that enable staff and students to feel safe upon their return. All incoming students for the upcoming academic year will be strongly encouraged to be vaccinated.
- 4.2.5. LSHTM was awaiting guidance from the Department of Education on the government's teaching expectations for higher education providers. Due to the level of uncertainty, it was difficult to provide concrete guidance to staff and students, but regular updates would be shared.

Resolved:

- 4.2.6. An update of LSHTM's return to the building plans would be shared with Council.

4.3. Senate

Noted:

- 4.3.1. An Academic Governance Review had taken place and the outcomes were provided to Council for information. The recommendations focused on reducing the administrative burden on systems/processes to enable enhancement of the student experience, education portfolio development and to assure academic standards.
- 4.3.2. LSHTM had successfully submitted its Research Excellence Framework (REF), and details of the submission would be made available on the LSHTM intranet for staff and students. The outcomes of the REF submission, and therefore the research funding allocation, would not be known for a year.
- 4.3.3. The Senate Terms of Reference had been reviewed and updated in order to make equity, diversity and inclusion considerations more explicit.

Resolved:

- 4.3.4. Council approved the revised Senate Terms of Reference.

4.4. Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Noted:

- 4.4.1. Council noted the meeting summaries from the Diversity & Inclusion Committee held on 10 May 2021 and 17 June 2021 and received an update on the progress on Independent Review to address discrimination and advance anti-racism and equality at LSHTM.

4.5. People Committee

Noted:

- 4.5.1. Council noted the meeting summary from People Committee held on 18 May 2021. The Committee received reports on the Gender & Ethnicity Pay Gap and Equal Pay Audit which would be made publicly available on LSHTM's internet.

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4.6. Nominations Committee

4.6.1. Appointments to Council & Committees:

Resolved:

4.6.1.1. Council approved the following appointments:

- Tim Hardy-Lenik as Independent Co-opted Member of Diversity & Inclusion Committee
- Genevieve Tennant as Independent Co-opted Member of Remuneration Committee
- Michael Stewart as Independent member of Court, subject to confirmation from PwC that this did not present a conflict as they were LSHTM's internal auditors.

4.6.2. Academic Staff Council Member Election Outcome

Noted:

4.6.2.1. Council noted the outcome of the recent Academic Staff Council Member election. Kevin Tetteh was the successful candidate and will serve an initial three-year term on Council from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2024.

4.6.2.2. It was agreed that further work was needed to effectively communicate and encourage both nominations to Staff Council positions, and voter turnout rates.

4.6.3. Committee Effectiveness Review

Noted:

4.6.3.1. Council noted the plans for an annual internal committee effectiveness review which would take place in the Autumn Term 2021, and the outcomes of findings will be presented to Council once conducted.

5. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

5.1. Office for Students (OfS) Compliance Mapping

Noted:

5.1.1. Council noted the measures taken to ensure that LSHTM was compliant with OfS conditions of registrations, and activities and policies that support OfS's statement of expectations for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noted:

6.1. Council thanked the following outgoing members of Council for their outstanding contributions:

- Oluwagbemileke Bolajoko, Student Representative Council President
- Nicholas Mays, Elected Academic Staff member of Council
- Peter Piot, Outgoing LSHTM Director

6.2. Council were invited to join the LSHTM Symposium to celebrate LSHTM's global partnerships and a symbolic handover from Professor Peter Piot to Professor Liam Smeeth as Director of LSHTM.

7. Date of next meeting: 22 September 2021