

**LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE
COUNCIL
MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2025
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON 26 MARCH 2026**

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Date of meeting: Tuesday 25 November 2025, 10:00 to 13:30

Place of meeting: Hybrid via LSHTM Board Room (G05) and ZOOM Video Conference

Present: Don Robert (Chair), Liam Smeeth, Clare Chandler, Matt Lee, Hitesh Patel, Mike Turner, Naomi Stewart, Jocelyn Prudence, Nambusi Kyegombe (*virtual attendance*), Mark Poulton, James Hargreaves, Richard Calvert, Jo Price, Diana Layfield, Lindsay Northover (*up to agenda item 4.1.*), Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno, Alana Luckraft (*up to item 2.3*), Andrew Dyer (*up to item 4.6*), and Lee Rodwell (*for items 4.7. and 4.8*), Angela Darlington (*up to agenda item 4.11.*) and Mohamed Osman (*virtual attendance up to 4.11.*).

Apologies: Nazira Amra.

Minutes: Ayisha Govindasamy.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Welcome & Introduction

Noted:

1.1.1. The Chair welcomed the newly elected President of the Students' Representative Council, Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno, to their first meeting of LSHTM's Council.

1.2. Declarations of Interests:

Noted:

1.2.1. The following declarations of interests were noted in relation to agenda item 4.3:

1.2.2.

- Liam Smeeth (LSHTM Director) as a Director of Chariot Innovations Limited.
- Matt Lee (LSHTM Chief Operating Officer) as a Director of Chariot Innovations Limited, and Sustainable Climate Impact Fund Limited.
- Andrew Dyer (LSHTM Finance Director) as a Director of Chariot Innovations Limited, and Sustainable Climate Impact Fund Limited.

1.3. Minutes from the previous meeting

Resolved:

1.3.1. Council approved the minutes from the previous meeting held on 29 September 2025, subject to minor amendments.

1.4. Actions taken by the Chair

Noted:

1.4.1. The Chair established a Sustainable Climate Impact Fund (SCIF) Working Group consisting of Don Robert, Liam Smeeth, Mark Poulton, Diana Layfield and Angela Darlington.

1.4.2. The SCIF Working Group met recently, and made good progress on employment terms, structure for equity, and income targets. It was hoped that the SCIF Working Group would conclude in 2026.

2. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR

2.1. Director's Report

Noted:

2.1.1. The Director gave an overview of LSHTM's financial improvement plan.

2.1.2. The next 12 to 18 months would be critical, and LSHTM had recently launched a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme open to all staff.

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- 2.1.3. The Office for Students (OfS) have estimated that 50% of UK Universities would be operating a deficit budget in 2025/26.
- 2.1.4. LSHTM recently hosted a successful event on health misinformation.
- 2.1.5. The new Education Centre at TP1 was on track to be opened in January 2026.
- 2.1.6. LSHTM would be appointing a new University Secretary in March 2026, and the Director thanked the current interim Secretary to Council for all their support over the past three years.
- 2.1.7. The Director had been on trips to China and Hong Kong to visit universities and discuss better partnership working and fundraising opportunities. The Director had also been to the USA and Canada to attend alumni events and the annual American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene conference.
- 2.1.8. LSHTM has been awarded six prestigious Wellcome Discovery Awards.
- 2.1.9. Council queried whether there was anything more LSHTM could do to lobby the UK Government about the upcoming 6% levy on international student fees. It was noted that LSHTM and Universities across the UK have been lobbying but the UK Government have been consistent that this is their policy decision. Regrettably, the economic, societal, and academic benefits of international students to the UK have not been fully recognised.

2.2. Director's Strategic Priorities

Noted:

- 2.2.1. The Director gave an overview of LSHTM's strategic priorities around education, research and people & culture, alongside key performance indicators.
- 2.2.2. Council was presented with research cost recovery metrics which indicate LSHTM is recovering more costs from research than before. The shift to fewer but larger research projects that were better economically costed was credited.
- 2.2.3. LSHTM has stabilised its education numbers which, given the challenging external environment, was valued. Efforts would now focus on increasing education income figures and reducing the running costs of LSHTM's education activities.
- 2.2.4. Council questioned whether LSHTM has been impacted by the UK Government's restrictions on international students bringing dependents to the UK. It was explained that, historically, only very small numbers of MSc student had brought their dependents to the UK, so LSHTM has not been particularly affected.
- 2.2.5. Council queried whether the Executive Team were confident about LSHTM's financial sustainability targets, given the proposed increase in tuition fees and impact of the international student tuition fee levy could increase the risk of not meeting education income targets for 2026/27. The Director noted that while there were challenging circumstances, it was key for LSHTM to attract students and deliver high quality education in pursuit of its mission.
- 2.2.6. The international student tuition fee levy will likely be enforced in 2026/27 which gives LSHTM some time to prepare for the financial impact.
- 2.2.7. The proposed 5%-10% tuition fee increases were considered sensible, and the use of recruitment agents would hopefully help LSHTM meet its education income targets.
- 2.2.8. Council queried whether LSHTM was appropriately costing its programmes, and there were concerns that LSHTM was under charging for the quality of education it delivers. The Executive Team noted that while premium pricing will work for some programmes, for others the target market was different therefore taking a differential tuition fee approach tailored to each programme was preferred.

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- 2.2.9. At present, LSHTM was using recruitment agents for international student recruitment only. The commission structure was arranged so that the recruitment agency receives a percentage of the tuition fee only when a student completes their registration.
- 2.2.10. There would be an in-depth presentation on the Education Strategy at the Council meeting in March 2026.
- 2.2.11. The percentage of Racially Minoritised Ethnic (RME) staff has increased through both the Academic and Professional Services staff pipeline. While this is less pronounced at Professorial and Grade 9 levels, LSHTM is above others in Higher Education sector.
- 2.2.12. LSHTM was developing a new Employment Model to help address the 78% of Academic staff who are on fixed term contracts.
- 2.2.13. Council noted the Higher Education Sector Update which was appended to the Director's Report and Strategic Priorities.

3. STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (SRC) PRESIDENT REPORT TO COUNCIL

Noted:

- 3.1. Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno was elected as the Students' Representative Council (SRC) President.
- 3.2. The Students' Representative Council's focus for the academic year was to cultivate an inclusive student community that is safe for all students; encourage better student career development to set students up for both personal and professional success; and collaborate with education delivery teams to ensure authentic education is delivered in a non-burdensome way for all students.
- 3.3. The SRC President reflected on their student experience since joining LSHTM. They enrolled on the MSc Reproductive & Sexual Health programme and specifically chose to study at LSHTM due to its contribution to public health, particularly in lower to middle income countries. It was hoped that by studying at LSHTM they could specialise in their areas of interest re. reproductive and sexual health and be able to fully utilise the access to world class academics and alumni.

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OR APPROVAL

4.1. Strategic and Financial Report & Annual Financial Statements 2024/25

Noted:

- 4.1.1. Council was given an update on the Strategic and Financial Report & Annual Financial Statements 2024/25.
- 4.1.2. The current Going Concern and Financial Forecasts were provided in the Council Appendices Paper pack for information.

Resolved:

- 4.1.3. Council would reconvene to sign off the accounts when the Strategic and Financial Report & Annual Financial Statements 2024/25, Going Concern and Financial Forecasts were ready to be submitted to the Office for Students.
- 4.1.4. Financial sustainability would be a standing item on the Council agenda for the foreseeable future.

4.2. Remuneration Committee

Noted:

- 4.2.1. Council noted the Remuneration Committee Annual Report for 2024/25 which covered the performance review of senior office holders and remuneration arrangements.

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- 4.2.2. The committee took into account comparator data for each role, benchmark data, and LSHTM's performance against its strategic objectives.
- 4.2.3. The committee noted their appreciation to senior officer holders for their invaluable contribution to LSHTM's mission and navigating through challenging financial and external landscape pressures.
- 4.2.4. The Director's salary would be published with the financial statements on the LSHTM website.
- 4.2.5. Outcomes of the Remuneration Committee decisions would be circulated to Senior Staff Holders in early December 2025.

4.3. LSHTM Subsidiaries

Resolved:

- 4.3.1. Council approved the wind-down of Chariot Innovations Limited, and the Letter of Support for Sustainable Climate Impact Fund Limited.

4.4. Tuition Fees 2026/27

Noted:

- 4.4.1. In considering tuition fees for 2026/27, it was proposed that a differential approach be taken that considers programme level competitiveness.
- 4.4.2. Even with the differential approach, LSHTM's proposed tuition fees were reasonable in comparison with its sector competitors.
- 4.4.3. The Finance & Development Committee have challenged the Executive Team to further consider differential fee setting for tuition fees in the future.

Resolved:

- 4.4.4. Council approved the tuition fees for academic year 2026/27.

4.5. Financial Regulations

Noted:

- 4.5.1. The Financial Regulations had been updated as part of the regular review of financial policies and to align with the launch of the new finance system in early 2026.
- 4.5.2. It was clarified that the Financial Regulations apply to both the Units and LSHTM subsidiaries.

Resolved:

- 4.5.3. Council approved the updated Financial Regulations.

4.6. Finance & Development Committee

Noted:

- 4.6.1. Council noted the summaries from Finance & Development Committee meetings held on 09 October 2025 and 03 November 2025.

4.7. Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy

Noted:

- 4.7.1. The LSHTM Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy has been updated to reflect correct terminology, job titles, and groups, and to define acceptable and unacceptable sources of funding.
- 4.7.2. There were concerns over the exclusions detailed in 5.3.1 of the policy and whether that would significantly prohibit LSHTM from accepting funds from a broad spectrum of donors and/or organisations.

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- 4.7.3. It was noted that, in practice and with the exclusions in the current Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy, LSHTM had rarely had to turn down donations. A key consideration would be whether the prescribed exclusions made up a majority of activity/source of wealth. All rejected donations were reported to the LSHTM Director and Chief Operating Officer and could be reported in the standing fundraising reports received by Council and Finance & Development Committee.
- 4.7.4. The exclusions proposed were also scrutinised by the student and student community and other organisations which could have unintended consequences to things like LSHTM's ranking in the People and Planet League table.

Resolved:

- 4.7.5. Council recommended that the phrasing around exclusions (5.3.1) in the updated Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy be further explored by a small group convened by the Chair to ensure LSHTM was not creating unnecessary bureaucracy.

4.8. External Audit Tender

Noted:

- 4.8.1. Three firms had been shortlisted to present to a sub-group of the Audit & Risk Committee.
- 4.8.2. All three firms were appointable, and two were significantly more experienced within the Higher Education sector.
- 4.8.3. The sub-group of the Audit & Risk Committee recommended the appointment of BDO as LSHTM's external auditors due to strong credibility in the Higher Education Sector, preparedness in transitioning of new accounting standards, and their willingness to reduce their fees further. The risk of changing audit provider whilst LSHTM was undergoing a significant period of internal change and transitioning to a new financial system was also a factor in this recommendation.

Resolved:

- 4.8.4. Council appointed BDO as LSHTM's external auditors.

4.9. Prevent Duty

Noted:

- 4.9.1. LSHTM was required to submit an annual return to the Office for Students (OfS) confirming how it meets its regulatory obligations in relation to the Prevent Duty.
- 4.9.2. LSHTM has a Prevent Working Group, an event approval process, and delivers Prevent training to relevant staff.
- 4.9.3. LSHTM remains a low-risk institution due to its size and postgraduate nature, in comparison to other UK Higher Education Institutions.

Resolved:

- 4.9.4. Council agreed that the Prevent Annual Report, risk assessment and action plan be submitted to the Office for Students (OfS).

4.10. LSHTM Estates Masterplan – Phase 4 Capital Project Business Case

Noted:

- 4.10.1. It was proposed that Phase 4 of the Estates Masterplan prioritise the refurbishment of the laboratories in Level 3 Keppel Street, and to deprioritise the refurbishment of the Keppel Street elevation office space to a later phase.

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- 4.10.2. Approval was sought for the enabling works to proceed, which included asbestos removal and design work for the laboratory refurbishment. Further approvals for Phase 4 would be sought at a later date so that LSHTM can consider its financial position.
- 4.10.3. Council queried whether the laboratories investment would recover its costs in the future. It was explained that it was unlikely that the investment would be fully recovered but all efforts would be made to maximise cost recovery. Investing in LSHTM's laboratories was vital to LSHTM's mission and ability to attract high quality academic and technical staff.

Resolved:

- 4.10.4. Council approved the LSHTM Estates Masterplan – Phase 4 Capital Project Business Case

4.11. Names & Naming Policy and Procedure

Noted:

- 4.11.1. A Names and Naming Policy and Procedure had been developed to provide a framework for naming and de-naming entities at LSHTM.
- 4.11.2. The Library and Archives Team would be supporting the work to review existing names associated with prizes, rooms, medals and lectures at LSHTM.
- 4.11.3. Council commended the balanced and considered approach proposed to Names and Naming at LSHTM.

Resolved:

- 4.11.4. Council approved the Names & Naming Policy and Procedure.

4.12. Chair of Council Recruitment

Noted:

- 4.12.1. Council members were thanked for their contributions to the process for seeking a successor to the Chair of Council. A number of candidates were being actively pursued.
- 4.12.2. Council commented on the challenges in securing an appropriate Chair of Council successor. It was noted that the time commitment required for an unremunerated role may be deterring some candidates.
- 4.12.3. The Special Nominations & Governance Committee would meet shortly to discuss progress and next steps.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

5.1. Audit & Risk Committee

Received: Council received the Audit & Risk Committee's Annual Report which included the following reports as appendices, Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Data Return Report, and Annual Value for Money Report.

Noted:

- 5.1.1. Council noted the summaries from Audit & Risk Committee meetings held on 13 October 2025 and 23 November 2025, and the Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2024/25.
- 5.1.2. The committee had scrutinised LSHTM's top strategic risks, particularly financial sustainability, education income and cyber security.
- 5.1.3. The annual internal audit report showed that many internal audit reports in 2024/25 were rated as amber-green but LSHTM had made a concerted effort to direct the internal auditors to areas of known vulnerabilities.

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- 5.1.4. It was disappointing the Units had not fully implemented all the internal audit recommendations from the previous report and the committee expected the Units to address this as a matter of urgency.
- 5.1.5. The launch of the new Finance system has been postponed to February 2026, to ensure the required testing can be completed prior to implementation.
- 5.1.6. Following a review of the Gillies Report, the committee recommended that LSHTM's internal auditors review the information and data received by Council and its Committee to ensure this is fit for purpose. There was a particular emphasis on high quality, real time financial information whilst LSHTM was improving its financial sustainability.
- 5.1.7. While some reports had been made via the Whistleblowing procedure, these concerns did not meet the whistleblowing policy criteria and had therefore been re-directed through the appropriate complaint routes.
- 5.1.8. The committee encouraged the Executive Team to ensure key institutional policies are appropriately disseminated and complied with.

5.2. The Gambia Unit Committee

Noted:

- 5.2.1. The committee were working hard to ensure there was greater assurance and governance oversight of the Unit.
- 5.2.2. A new Unit Director would be in place in April 2026.
- 5.2.3. Council noted the summary from The Gambia Unit Committee meeting held on 16 October 2025.

5.3. Uganda Unit Committee

Noted:

- 5.3.1. The Unit were struggling to recruit a Head of Viral Pathogens, and alternative recruitment methods were being considered e.g. use of external search firm. Recruitment to the Head of Theme roles were vital for upcoming Quinquennial review and renewals.
- 5.3.2. Council noted the summary from the Uganda Unit Committee meeting held on 10 October 2025.

5.4. Nominations & Governance Committee

Noted:

- 5.4.1. Council noted the summary from Nominations & Governance Committee meeting held on 18 September 2025.

Resolved:

- 5.4.2. Council approved the following appointments:
 - Chioma Nwakanma-Akanno as elected Students' Representative Council President
 - Mike Turner, Independent Member of Council and Chair of The Gambia Unit Committee, for a third term.
 - Angela Darlington, Independent Member of Council and Chair of Finance & Development Committee, for a third term.
 - Mohamed Osman, Independent Member of Council, for a third term.
 - Ashley Wang, Independent co-opted Member of Audit & Risk Committee, for a second term.
 - Amish Nathwani, Independent co-opted Member of Audit & Risk Committee, for a third term.

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- Niamh Grogan, Independent co-opted Member of Audit & Risk Committee, for a third term.
- Paul Johnson, Independent co-opted Member of Remuneration Committee, for a second term.
- Nikki Severs, Independent co-opted Member of Remuneration Committee, for a second term.

5.5. Senate

Noted:

- 5.5.1. Council noted the summary from the Senate meetings held on 22 October 2025, and 19 November 2025.
- 5.5.2. Council also noted LSHTM's Academic Assurance Matrix, and LSHTM's action plan to meet the principles of the Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers.
- 5.5.3. There was a focused discussion on the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey. LSHTM's results were good and there had been improvements to the timeliness of assessments being returned to students. There was a need to improve the clarity and perceived fairness of the marking criteria, and a lower student satisfaction score for international students compared to home students which was out of kilter with the Higher Education sector.
- 5.5.4. Minor changes were proposed to the Senate Terms of Reference which aligned to the recommendations of the Academic Governance Task & Finish Group – phase 2.
- 5.5.5. Council suggested that additional time be allocated to the Academic Assurance Matrix when it was next considered.

Resolved:

- 5.5.6. Council approved the updated Senate Terms of Reference.

5.6. People, Equality Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Noted:

- 5.6.1. Council noted the summary from the People, Equality Diversity & Inclusion Committee meeting held on 11 November 2025.

6. OTHER REPORTS

6.1. Anti-Slavery and Trafficking Statement

Resolved:

- 6.1.1. Council approved the updated Anti-Slavery and Trafficking Statement.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 26 March 2026