

COUNCIL MINUTES - 31 MARCH 2021
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON 29 JUNE 2021

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Date of meeting: Wednesday 31 March 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, Sunil Sharma, Mishal Khan, Effua Usuf, Angela Darlington, Peter Piot, Anne Mills, Matt Lee and Jenny Jenkin.

Apologies: Precious Lunga and Oluwagbemileke Bolajoko

Minutes: Ayisha Govindasamy.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Actions taken by the Chair: Approval of the Financial Statements

1.2. Conflicts of Interest: None declared.

1.3. Minutes of the previous meeting:

Resolved:

1.4.1. Council approved the minutes of its previous meetings held on 11 November 2020 and 01 February 2021.

2. DIRECTOR PRESENTATION

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

3. FOCUS OF THE MEETING - EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

3.1. Diversity & Inclusion Committee - Independent Review

Noted:

- 3.1.1. Council had made a number of commitments to address racial inequality following the staff and student listening session in July 2020; one of which included the commissioning of an Independent Review to address discrimination and advance anti-racism and equality at LSHTM.
- 3.1.2. A draft scope for the independent review had been produced by a sub-group of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and had been shared with key stakeholders for feedback.
- 3.1.3. It was recognised that an independent reviewer needed to be procured in a reasonable timeframe to ensure confidence from the LSHTM community.
- 3.1.4. Currently, there were three groups being considered to undertake the review: Queen's Counsel, race equality professional/academic experts and/or consultant companies.
- 3.1.5. The Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee thanked all those who had been involved in developing and shaping the proposed scope.

Resolved:

3.1.6. Council approve the scope and delegated authority to Diversity & Inclusion Committee to undertake the process to recommend an external reviewer to Chair of Council.

3.2. SLT Race Equality Update Report

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

Noted:

3.2.1. Council was provided within an update on actions to address racial inequality. Updates included:

- Appointment of a Race Equality Advisor to support LSHTM's Race Equality Charter application.

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- Availability of Report and Support tool for staff and students since September 2021, and active monitoring of disclosures by SLT.
 - A listening session was set up for Management Board to hear staff views on their experiences of racism at LSHTM. Bystander and microaggressions training organised for Faculty Management Groups and Heads of Services.
 - Appointment of decolonising facilitators within faculties to help staff review their educational content. Integration of EDI questions within student evaluation and module organisers feedback forms.
 - Integration of EDI objectives within individual annual personal development reviews.
- 3.2.2. Given the numerous and broad range of initiatives regarding racial equality, Council felt the need for the LSHTM community to be regularly informed of progress and that a comprehensive EDI communication strategy be developed.
- 3.2.3. A general staff survey was not planned for this year but the value of a survey/feedback mechanisms to test the effectiveness of SLT's actions to address inequality was recognised.
- 3.2.4. It was agreed that it would be useful for future SLT updates on race equality to be provided as a written report to Council.

3.3. EDI Strategy

Clare Matysova (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager) joined for this item.

Noted:

- 3.3.1. The EDI Strategy had been developed following a combination of consultations, focus groups with staff and students, and relevant EDI related reports.
- 3.3.2. As part of the implementation of the EDI Strategy there would be an accompanying communications via the EDI internet/intranet pages and staff newsletters where the EDI Strategy Action plan was available and regularly updated.
- 3.3.3. Within the EDI Strategy, it acknowledged that resources to implement actions should not be held solely centrally by the EDI Team, and that these should be distributed to relevant groups/teams as appropriate.
- 3.3.4. Identifying a set of values that characterises LSHTM would be carried out with staff and students alongside the development of LSHTM's new strategy.
- 3.3.5. Council thanked the EDI Manager for their significant contribution in developing the EDI Strategy.

Noted:

- 3.3.6. Council approved the EDI Strategy and related Action Plan.

4. FUNDRAISING:

4.1. Healthy Planet Health People: Fundraising Campaign

Noted:

- 4.1.1. Council noted the proposed Healthy Planet, Health People fundraising campaign which would be further discussed at a joint meeting of Council and Court on 14 April 2021.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

5.1. Finance & Development Committee

Noted:

- 5.1.1. LSHTM's financial performance was much better than expected with a surplus of approximately £2million expected which is a significant achievement considering the circumstances of this year.
- 5.1.2. The Finance & Development Committee reviewed and were supportive of a proposal to set up a carbon offsetting entity which would help offset LSHTM's carbon. Set up costs would be funded by HEIF which provides funding for innovation within the higher education sector.

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Resolved:

5.1.3. Council approved the establishment of a Carbon Offsetting Entity and delegated authority to the Chair of Council, Audit & Risk Committee, and Finance & Development Committee to appoint the Board of Directors.

5.2. Audit & Risk Committee:

Noted:

5.2.1. The committee reviewed the Risk Management Policy and requested further work on risk appetite statements.

5.2.2. The lack of clarity around internal reporting, roles and responsibilities were a common theme within internal audit recommendations.

5.2.3. Good progress had been made on the internal audit plan for 2020/21 and no high-risk findings were found in the internal audit reports presented to the Audit & Risk Committee.

5.2.4. Cyber security remained at very high risk for LSHTM, and mitigating actions to reduce this risk would be explored in further detail at the annual committee away day.

Resolved:

5.2.5. Council approved the Public Interest Disclosure/Whistleblowing Policy, Anti-Fraud Policy & Response and Reportable Event Procedure.

5.3. Official Development Assistance Cuts

Noted:

5.3.1. LSHTM had been made aware of potential cuts to a number of its UKRI funded research grants. Currently 27 research projects were at risk and relevant Principle Investigators have been informed to identify how best to use the remaining funding.

5.3.2. The full financial exposure was unknown and there was a risk of staff redundancies, reduction in our research output and reputational damage where the cuts impact our research partners.

5.3.3. There were concerns over projects that may be cut where LSHTM has a strong ethical obligation to continue e.g., clinical trials and this had been raised with UKRI directly.

5.3.4. LSHTM would considered how to best lobby against these cuts and utilisation its unique position of being a specialised institution to ensure relevant stakeholders know the impact of any potential cuts to LSHTM's research.

5.4. Nominations Committee:

5.4.1. Appointments to Council and Committees:

Resolved:

5.4.1.1. Council approved the following appointments to Council and its Committee:

- Extraordinary extension of John O'Donnell as Independent Member of Council and Deputy Chair of Council
- Appointment of Angela Darlington as Chair of Finance & Development Committee for 2021/22.

5.5. People Committee

Noted

5.5.1. Council noted the meeting summary from People Committee held on 09 March 2021. The committee discussed 'new ways of working' post pandemic, the development of institutional values and the termly disclosures via Report and Support.

5.6. Remuneration Committee

Noted:

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5.6.1. Council noted the meeting summaries from two ad-hoc meetings of the committee held on 03 and 17 February 2021 which dealt with the remuneration package for the incoming LSHTM Director and an appeal following the outcomes from the previous Remuneration Committee held in September 2020.

5.7. Senate

Noted:

5.7.1. Council noted the meeting summary from Senate held on 25 November 2020 and 24 March 2021, and the following reports:

- Education Update and Teaching for Academic Year 2021/22
- Annual EDI Report
- Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers Report

6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION:

6.1. Office for Students - Consumer Protection Law Compliance

Noted:

6.1.1. Council noted the measures taken to ensure that LSHTM has complied with Office for Students condition of registration (C1) in relation to consumer protection law.

6.2. Use of LSHTM Seal

Noted:

6.2.1. Council noted the use of the LSHTM seal for contracts relating to capital projects works at Keppel Street and Tavistock Place.

7. Date of next meeting: 29 June 2021