

COUNCIL MINUTES: 22 NOVEMBER 2021
APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON 30 MARCH 2022

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Date of meeting: Wednesday 22 November 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, Mohamed Osman, Mishal Khan, Effua Usuf, Angela Darlington, Anne Mills, Jenny Jenkin, Precious Lunga, Kevin Tetteh, Liam Smeeth, Diana Layfield, Mike Turner, Sunil Sharma and Fatma Shakarchi.

Apologies: Annalisa Jenkins and Matt Lee.

Minutes: Ayisha Govindasamy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed Fatma Shakarchi (newly elected Student Representative Council President) to Council.

1.1. Actions taken by the Chair:

Noted:

1.1.1. The Chair confirmed the Independent Review report (findings plus recommendations) was expected to be submitted this week (w/c 21 November 2021) and would be shared with Council in early December 2021.

1.2. Conflicts of Interest: None declared.

1.3. Minutes of the previous meeting and matter arising:

Resolved:

1.3.1. Council approved the minutes of its previous meeting on 22 September 2021.

2. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: *Alana Luckraft (Strategic Advisor to the Director) joined for this item.*

Noted:

2.1. Students were slowly returning back to the building for some face-to-face teaching. Likewise, staff were also starting to prepare to return to the building from January onwards.

2.2. The Director had recently visited The Gambia Unit and the newly opened molecular building. It was clear the high level of trust that people across the country have in the Unit and how integrated the Unit was in the local community.

2.3. The Director recently attended COP26, and there was a good LSHTM presence and interest in LSHTM from both a research and fundraising perspective.

2.4. Work was underway to develop School values and identify ways in which to put our values into practice.

2.5. The Director was in liaison with LSHTM's UCU branch in light of the planned industrial action on pensions and pay in December 2021. Planning was underway to help minimise the impact to students as much as possible.

2.6. Council were provided with a forward plan for its external and internal communications.

2.7. The focus for the Director over the next couple of months would be developing LSHTM's vision, and strategy, getting the balance between internal and external priorities of the director role and ensuring the LSHTM's underpinning infrastructure to support its objectives are fit for purpose.

3. INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Noted:

3.1. There has been a good level of engagement from the LSHTM community to help inform the findings of the independent review.

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- 3.2. The Diversity & Inclusion Committee have provided comments on the first draft of the report which did not include recommendations. The report with recommendations would be provided by Nous to the Chair of Council this week and the Executive would be invited to respond.
- 3.3. The findings of the report were hard to read but it was important for Council to help and support the implementation of the recommendations so that staff and students can feel safe to work and study at LSHTM.
- 3.4. Council emphasised the importance of ensuring that the subsequent action plan produced by management is robust and fully addressed the recommendations within the report.

Resolved:

- 3.5. A special meeting of Council would be scheduled to allow all members sufficient time to consider the report and recommendations in full.

4. SPOTLIGHT SESSION

4.1. The Gambia Unit: *Umberto D'Alessandro (Unit Director) joined for this item and gave an overview of Unit, how it operates, it's strengths, top risks and future challenges.*

Noted:

- 4.1.1. The Gambia Unit had a long history in medical research and would be celebrating its 75th anniversary in November 2022.
- 4.1.2. The Unit was a major employer in The Gambia and there was a strong sense of belonging amongst staff and the local community.
- 4.1.3. The Unit played a vital role in the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing COVID-19 genomic sequencing and general advice to the government to help inform policy making.
- 4.1.4. There has been significant investment in data science, clinical trials, and planetary health.
- 4.1.5. The Unit faces a number of challenges in terms of its core budget not expanding in line with its activities and logistical in country issues with electronic, water and fuel supply. Internal audit has highlighted areas that need improving around health and safety and key financial controls, but progress is being made in addressing these issues.
- 4.1.6. It was noted that one of the Unit's key strengths was its ability to retain samples as it supports genetic genomics, wet lab research, serology in its locality.
- 4.1.7. It was confirmed that the Unit wasn't significantly affected by the ODA cuts, and GCRF grants have been maintained.
- 4.1.8. While there have been good scientific links with LSHTM since the Units joined this has not expanded as much as originally anticipated.
- 4.1.9. The Gambia Units had recently had their QQ funding renewed and received a rating of 9/10 which was a huge achievement. This reflected on the excellent working relationships the Units maintained with the MRC, how the Unit was a centre of excellence in the region and cements its role in training and nurturing the next generation of scientists.

4.2. Fundraising: *Joe McAleer (Head of Development and Alumni Relations Operations) and Holly Butcher (Fundraising Consultant) joined for this item.*

Noted:

- 4.2.1. The fundraising performance for the past year has been good; in Q1, £2m cash was raised in new funds and a fundraising income of £11-12 million was forecasted for this academic year. This demonstrates how effectively LSHTM's mission and academic champions are communicating and resonating with donors.
- 4.2.2. The compliance environment is being continually monitored to ensure LSHTM is complaint so it can continue to fundraise effectively.

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- 4.2.3. There were a number of fundraising campaigns ongoing such as the Sustainable Global Health Institute which would be supporting capital works, and the launch of the Centre for Planetary Health and Epidemic Preparedness.
- 4.2.4. There were some high value donations in the pipeline and should this come to fruition, Council would be provided with relevant due diligence and reputations risk analysis in line with the Fundraising Policy.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.1. Finance & Development Committee

Noted:

5.1.1. Financial Statements & Treasurer's Report

- 5.1.2. The report had been drafted in a structure that meets reporting requirements from the Office for Students. The aim of the report is to give a balanced view of LSHTM's financial activities in 2020/21 and includes narrative around performance against LSHTM's strategic objectives.
- 5.1.3. The financial performance shows LSHTM has just over a 3.5% surplus. The committee noted this was a huge achievement given the uncertainties of the past financial year and gave thanks to the Executive for their hard work to achieve this target.

5.1.4. Going Concern Statement

Resolved:

- 5.1.5. Council noted the range of 'stress' scenarios that provided assurance that LSHTM is considered a 'going concern' and this statement was approved.

5.1.6. Support of Chariot Innovations

Resolved:

- 5.1.7. Council approved the Deed of Support for Chariot Innovations Limited.

5.2. Audit & Risk Committee

Received: The Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report which included the following annexes: Committee Effectiveness Survey Results (Annex A), Internal Audit Annual Report (Annex B), External Audit Report (Annex C), Risk Management Policy (Annex D), Prevent Report (Annex E), Value for Money Report (Annex F), Data Quality Report (Annex G), and Research Governance and Scientific Misconduct Annual Report (Annex H).

Noted:

- 5.2.1. The financial accounts have been reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee and recommended to Council. It was confirmed that External Audit had not raised any major concerns.
- 5.2.2. The internal audit opinion for 2020/21 was 'generally satisfactory with some improvements required'. Areas of improvement included Health and Safety at the Units and Cyber security.
- 5.2.3. The committee has received regular reports from the Units on their top risks. Embedding the Units further into LSHTM's Schedule of Delegation and reporting structure has been raised with the LSHTM Director and an approach should be agreed upon by June 2022.
- 5.2.4. Significant improvements have been made to LSHTM's risk management procedures, including the developing of a new policy, risk appetite statements and risk management group, and regular deep dives into high rated risks such as cyber.
- 5.2.5. An additional fraud at The Gambia Unit had been reported and PwC would be carrying out a review into their payment processes.

Resolved:

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5.2.6. Council approved the Risk Management Policy and agreed that Prevent Annual Report be submitted to the Office for Students.

5.3. Remuneration Committee

Noted:

5.3.1. Council noted the Annual Remuneration Committee Report for senior staff holders at LSHTM. This report provides assurance that it's remuneration process and outcomes comply with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Senior Staff Remuneration Code.

5.4. People Committee

Noted:

5.4.1. Council noted the summary of People Committee meeting held on 02 November 2021.

5.5. Senate

Noted:

5.5.1. Council noted the summary of Senate from the meeting held on 27 October 2021 and received the Quality and Academic Standards Report for 2019-20 academic year. This report provided assurance to Council that LSHTM's taught and research postgraduate programmes meet sector requirements for academic standards, such as the conditions of registration with the OfS, which include the Quality and Standards or "B" conditions.

5.6. Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Noted:

5.6.1. Council noted the summary of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee meeting held on 11 November 2021.

6. OTHER REPORTS

Noted:

6.1. Council noted the following reports:

- Updated Anti-slavery & Human Trafficking Statement
- Use of LSHTM Seal
- Recipients for the Greenwood Africa Award 2022 and ratify the decision to award the Heath Clark lecturers to Dr Fredros Okumu (2021) and Professor Gavin Yamey (2022).

Resolved:

6.2. Council approved the updated Anti-slavery & Human Trafficking Statement

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 30 March 2022