SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

**COUNCIL**
**Thursday, 12 October 2023**
**1.30 pm**
**In Burlington House and via Zoom**

Dr Elizabeth Hallam Smith, Vice President, in the Chair

Present: Prof. Martin Millett, President
Dr Carol Bell, Treasurer
Dr John Cooper, Director
Dr Heather Sebire, Hon. Secretary
Dr Bob Bewley (from 2.00 pm)
Dr Emily Cole
Dr Ann MacSween
Ms Victoria Bryant
Dr Tim Schroder
Prof. Simon Kaner
Dr Tom Williams
Ms Shahina Farid

In attendance: Ms Memoria Lewis, General Secretary
Mr Lance Stewart, Head of Finance and Resources
Ms Dunia Garcia-Ontiveros, Head of Library and Museum Collections
Dr Linda Grant, Governance Manager
Mr Dominic Wallis, Head of Development

Apologies: Rosemary Sweet, Gavin Williams

40/23 Apologies and Declarations of Conflicts of Interest
The President apologised for being unable to attend in person owing to rail problems. He had asked Dr Hallam Smith to take the chair as a Vice President.
Lance Stewart was introduced as Interim Head of Finance. Apologies were noted.
There were no declared conflicts of interest.

41/23 Minutes and matters arising
i) The minutes of the Council Meeting of 27 June 2023, were approved and signed.
ii) Under matters arising:
[28/23vii] The proposal, previously circulated, for the insertion of 'honesty' and 'integrity' into the values statement was approved.

42/23 Treasurer's Report
i) Papers having been previously circulated, the Treasurer reported that the audit has not yet been completed and that a full report would come to Council at the next meeting. She reassured Council that the accounts would still be filed on time. The auditors were not expecting any material changes to the figures.
ii) Accounts for Lampada and Lucerna, having been previously circulated, were received by Council.
iii) Q1 accounts and commentary, having been previously circulated, were received by Council. LS drew attention to a projected deficit of £762k for the full year which was

being funded via drawdowns from the investment portfolio. The actual deficit might be higher depending on the BH lease negotiations.

iv) The Treasurer reported that the valuation of the investment portfolio that day was £13.4m, and reiterated that a deficit reduction plan and the move to a sustainable business model was her priority. She would be conducting a mini 'spending review' to identify where integrated systems can improve productivity, to understand how each part of the business was functioning financially, and to identify where to invest.

v) LS reported on cashflow and reported that he would be using the overdraft facility as well as a drawdown of £300k for the next two months.

vi) Following a proposal from Finance Committee, Council approved, after some debate, a Fellowship subscription increase to £205 for direct debit and £220 for other one-off payment methods. Council noted that a move to monthly direct debit payments would help to spread the cost – this was being investigated. It was also requested that any negative feedback from Fellows be reported to Council, and statistics kept of resignations as a result of the cost increase. It was agreed that the communication to Fellows be sensitive to this increase and Council noted that while inflation had risen, salaries in the sector had not kept pace.

vii) The strategic risk register having been previously circulated, it was reported that it had been reviewed by Finance Committee. Any comments were requested to be sent to the President.

43/23 BH Lease - Strictly Confidential

i) The President gave a verbal update on the lease situation and asked that this be kept strictly confidential and unminuted.

ii) It was noted that whether or not the Society was successful in lease negotiations, it would be necessary to raise substantial capital sums to provide and maintain premises in London. The President and Head of Development were in the process of discussing these needs with potential donors.

[The Treasurer and HoF left the meeting at 2.50 pm]

44/23 Update on General Secretary appointment process

The President reported that the search committee was working towards an imminent launch of the search, with a timetable to follow. A result is expected by Christmas/early New Year.

**ACTION: The President to circulate a draft of the job specification to trustees.**

45/23 Q2 Strategic delivery report and EDI update

i) The Gen. Sec. gave a presentation outlining Q2 activities of the staff team. It would be circulated to trustees after the meeting [done]. Following a request for a fuller briefing on activities being undertaken, the Gen. Sec. offered information sessions for trustees and committee members.

ii) TS/SF gave an update on the activities of the EDI Steering Group.

iii) The Director noted that the Society needs to develop and articulate an 'intellectual vision' encompassing the future of the Society as a global Learned Society.

46/23 Transparency in Governance and Royal Fellows

i) A paper having been previously circulated, Council approved the open recruitment of committee and Council members. A pilot would be set up for one committee.

**ACTION: ML**

[redacted]

47/23 KM Update

In the absence of GW, the Gen. Sec. reported verbally on KM. Council requested that their thanks and congratulations be passed to the KM team.

48/23 Collection Loan requests

i) A summary loan and offers paper having been previously circulated, Council approved all of the recommendations of Library/Collections Committee.

ii) A report of mould in the Library, having been previously circulated, which had affected c.200-300 books, the HoL&MC had no updates to offer. SF asked about lessons learned and it was reported that this issue has now been documented for current and future staff.

iii) The HoL&MC reported that accreditation documents that require Council approval would be circulated and requested any comments by 27 October 2023.

[15.30 Bob Bewley left the meeting]

49/23 Safeguarding

The Gen. Sec. reported that a safeguarding training session would take place on 21 November 2023 and invited all trustees to attend. A separate online only event would also be held, details to follow.

50/23 Nominations for Council Officers and Trustees

i) The President reminded Council that they, as a board, can make nominations for Officers and Council members. This would be discussed at the December meeting.

ii) A draft of the nominations letter to Fellows, having been previously circulated, was received with a request that trustees review the criteria and requested skills for the next round.

iii) Following the drawing of lots at the start of the meeting, it was decided that the three trustees to stand down at the Anniversary Meeting in April 2024 would be Bob Bewley, Roey Sweet and Emily Cole. Victoria Bryant and Tim Schroder would stay in service until the Anniversary Meeting in 2025. **ACTION: LG**
**Post Meeting note**: Victoria Bryant had indicated that she did not wish to continue on Council beyond the Anniversary Meeting 2024, so lots were drawn between Bob Bewley, Roey Sweet and Emily Cole with the result that Bob Bewley will be continuing on Council for a further year,

51/23 Nominations, resignations, amovals and deaths of Fellows

i) The Gov. Mgr. reported that since the last Council of 27 June 2023, there had been 9 resignations, 10 deaths, 0 amovals. 29 Fellows had been newly elected in ballots in July, August and September; 18 candidates were in forthcoming ballots in November and December. It was noted that the change to the balloting process has not yet resulted in more nominations coming through.

ii) Total number of Fellows was 3,097.

iii) Total number of Affiliates was 440.

52/23 Health & Safety

Nothing to report.

53/23 Ethical Conduct Board
Nothing to report.

54/23 AOB
None.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.40 pm.

Martin Millett, President
Elizabeth Hallam Smith, Vice President
Linda Grant, Governance Manager

October 2023