SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

COUNCIL
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
Thursday, 30 January 2025
1.30pm, online

Prof. Martin Millett, President, in the chair (MM)

Present: Dr Carol Bell, Treasurer (CB)
Prof. John Cooper, Director (JC)
Ms Shahina Farid, Hon. Secretary (SF)
Dr Bob Bewley, Vice President (BB)
Dr Elizabeth Hallam Smith, Vice President (EHS)
Dr Stewart Bryant (SB)
Dr Anthony Musson (AM)
Dr Tim Schroder (TS)
Dr Tom Williams (TW)
Prof. Simon Kaner (SK)

In attendance: Ms Natasha McEnroe, General Secretary (NM)
Ms Dunia Garcia-Ontiveros, Head of Library & Museum Collections (DGO)
Dr Anouska Lester, Interim Governance Manager (AL)
Mr Dominic Wallis, Head of Development (DW)
Ms Katy Drake, Head of Finance and Resources (KD)

Apologies: Prof. Jenny Alexander, Dr Ann MacSween

The President opened the Extraordinary meeting noting that Minutes of the December meeting would be approved at the next ordinary meeting of Council in March. He noted that the meeting had been convened to review the Annual Accounts for 2023-24 and a limited number of other items of urgent business.

01/25 Apologies and declarations of conflicts of interest

Apologies were noted. No conflicts of interest were declared.

02/25 Finance update and Treasurer's report

The Treasurer reported that the Audit of the accounts for 2023-24 had been further delayed due to staff sickness and the availability of the Auditors. Consequently, the

Society would miss the 31 January 2025 Charity Commission deadline for their submission. It was reported that:

i) The Treasurer, Gen. Sec., and staff were working closely together to remedy the situation. The HoF&R was commended for her hard work.
ii) The delay had arisen due to inadequate interim cover during the HoF&R's sabbatical in 2023/2024, which had necessitated a major checking exercise ahead of the audit.
iii) There would be no fine for late filing, [Redacted].
iv) A full brief had been produced for Finance Committee (23 January 2025) and was available to view on request.
v) It was expected that audited accounts would be ready for the next meeting of Council. [Following the meeting and further consultation with the Auditors it was noted that they would not be available in time for Council on 13 March and an Extraordinary meeting of Council to sign off audited accounts meeting had subsequently been scheduled for 1 May 1.30pm.]
vi) A 'Lessons Learned' document would be produced for Council. **Action: NM**
vii) The President added that a new deadline of 31 March 2025 had been agreed for the Company Accounts of Lucerna and Lampada, the Society's two subsidiary companies.
(Tom Williams and Tim Schroder joined the meeting at 1.40pm)
viii) The Gen. Sec. reported on two separate systems concerns, regarding the migration from Sage to NetSuite, and additional issues regarding the payment system for collecting subscriptions via VeryConnect.
ix) The Treasurer reported that the investment portfolio was performing as expected. The portfolio value as of 30 January 2025 was £13.7 million.
x) The HoD reported that the Society had received £1,221,383.35 in the current Burlington House fundraising campaign.
(Katy Drake left the meeting at 1.55pm)

03/25 <u>Recruitment and HR</u>

The Gen. Sec. reported the following staff changes:

i) The Governance Manager (Linda Grant) had left and would be replaced by Josie Mills on 18 February 2025 in the role of Governance and Grants Officer.
ii) Katy Drake had indicated her intention to resign as Head of Finance and Resources in summer 2025.
iii) Dunia Garcia-Ontiveros had expressed her intention to resign as Head of Library and Museum Collections in the near future.

04/25 <u>Flood in Archives Stores</u>

The HoL&MC reported on sewage leaks in rooms owned by the Society, located in the basement of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

i) The first leak was identified on 12 December 2024 and salvage with Harwell Restoration commenced on 13 December 2024.
ii) Further leaks followed on 17 and 21 January 2025.
iii) 100 crates of material have been salvaged and are being decontaminated with Harwell and remaining items have been marked for disposal.
(Anthony Musson left the meeting at 2pm)
iv) The Gen.Sec. reported that current costs stand at £22k, which does not meet the insurance excess of £25k. [Redacted].
v) The Gen.Sec. reported that discussions were ongoing regarding future use of the rooms and the Society's off-site storage. If the rooms were to continue being used for collections storage, this would impact the Society's insurance.

05/25 Kelmscott Tapestry Room

[Redacted]

i) [Redacted]
ii) [Redacted]
iii) It is hoped that conservators can be appointed to work on the Kelmscott Tapestry project soon.

06/25 Society Medals

i) Confidential: Council unanimously approved the President's proposal that Stephen Papworth be awarded a medal for his long-standing work as the Society's Security Manager. **Action: MM/NM**

07/25 Honorary Fellows

A vote having taken place:

i) The President proposed that the top three candidates be approached for Honorary Fellowship: [Redacted], David Olusoga, [Redacted]. This was approved. **Action: MM/NM**
ii) [Redacted]
iii) There was discussion about the purpose of Honorary Fellows, and EHS expressed concerns, supported by TW, about the reputational risks associated with this exercise. BB suggested further conversations about how appointment of Honorary Fellows might connect with fundraising objectives.
(Tim Schroder left the meeting at 2.20pm)
iv) It was agreed that this matter would be returned to in future Council meetings. **Action: MM/AL**

08/25 Any Other Business

The President expressed thanks to the Gen.Sec., HoF&R, HoL&C, and their teams for their extraordinarily difficult work over the last few months.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2.30pm.

Martin Millett, President
Anouska Lester, Interim Governance Manager February 2025