
MINUTES OF THE 101st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
HELD ON 29 JULY 2020 AT 5PM (via Zoom)

Present:

Lord Jim O'Neill (Chairman)

John Berriman (Honorary Treasurer)

Dr Robin Niblett (Director)

Paul Curtin (Acting Secretary)

146 members

38 members of staff

The Chairman welcomed members and staff to the 101st Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (the 'institute') hereafter also referred to as 'Chatham House'.

I. PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman acknowledged that this year's AGM was taking place not only in the middle of the institute's centenary but also in the aftermath of the Covid-19 lockdown. He was pleased, however, that the tradition of the AGM was able to continue, albeit virtually, via Zoom, the web-based video platform that allows users to meet online.

He outlined to members the logistics of the Zoom meeting, including using the 'raise hands' function to ask questions and propose and second motions, and for the voting to be conducted by using Zoom's polling function.

The Chairman noted that the only time previously a Chatham House AGM had not taken place physically as planned was in 1939, at the outbreak of the Second World War. Instead, it was held at Baliol College, Oxford, where many of the institute's research staff had decamped for the duration of the war. He added that, although we are not at war today, it was no exaggeration to say the world faced its most sobering and challenging times since the 1940s.

The purpose of the meeting was to bring members up to date on the institute's response to the pandemic, provide an overview of the past year's work, and outline plans for the future as the institute began its Second Century. The Chairman referred members to the Annual Report and financial statements and the Honorary Treasurer's Report and financial headlines.

The Chairman reminded members that in his remarks at the 2019 AGM he had pledged to ensure Chatham House's future would be even better than in its illustrious past. Believing that one should never

let a crisis go to waste, he advised that difficult times often provided opportunities to think big with the chance to push forward new ideas to help build a more sustainable future.

The Chairman told members how Chatham House had been operating in a very different way since the Covid-19 lockdown in March. The closure of the building had been rapid and efficient, with staff immediately moving to work from home. A support helpline for members was quickly introduced to respond to queries on accessing events and resources, and Library staff provided login codes to enable members who had previously not accessed the e-Library to do so. In fact, the full range of online resources remained available to all members, as do *The World Today* and *International Affairs* publications, which continued to be sent to members.

Online events were up and running quickly, starting with a joint series with *The Atlantic* magazine. The Chairman noted it was now possible to attract speakers and participants to online events from across the globe in ways that would not have been possible under normal circumstances. All research projects remained live and the institute was working at full pace to fulfil its obligations to stakeholders and funders.

The Chairman outlined three areas of impact from the past year:

1) Chatham House's response to the pandemic

He acknowledged that COVID-19 had created immense health, economic and policy challenges, and for Chatham House this meant addressing two imperatives:

- 1) Finding new ways to operate, run events, and engage our members and stakeholders;
- 2) Ensuring that Chatham House contributed to policy responses even better through its analysis. At a time when informed policymaking was a life-and-death matter, the need for thoughtful, measured analysis, dialogue and ideas on the crisis was clear.

The Global Health Programme has been at the forefront of the institute's activities and had focused on helping people understand the facts around COVID-19, emphasizing both the importance of evidence-based risk communication and the perils of politicizing the crisis.

Distinguished Fellow Professor David Heymann, who also chaired the World Health Organization's (WHO) Strategic and Technical Advisory Group for Infectious Hazards, had led the institute's public engagement, including its weekly series of COVID-19 pandemic briefings.

Rob Yates, Director of the Global Health Programme, had played a key advisory role in South Africa's national universal health reforms and influenced last year's launch of President Kenyatta's universal free health care policy in Kenya. The Global Health team had also recently provided briefings on universal health reforms to heads of state in Ghana, Pakistan and Indonesia.

Other research colleagues had contributed analysis of the pandemic's wider-ranging impacts. The most-read research paper of 2020 thus far was *'Europe after Coronavirus'*, and the institute's 'Expert Comments' had explored how to fight the initial economic fallout from the pandemic, how to open up the global economy and finance the looming vast increase in public debt, and the impact on the plight of refugees.

In March the Chairman, with Dr Robin Niblett, Director and Chief Executive, and Creon Butler, Programme Director for Global Economy and Finance, had published a call to action in the *Financial Times* advocating major international political and economic coordination.

Chatham House and *The Lancet* were now launching a joint commission on how to improve the perilous state of the health of populations, post COVID-19. In addition, a high-level Chatham House panel on the global economic recovery was to be announced shortly, along with other activities for the autumn.

2) Chatham House's work on climate change

Although the world's attention was on the pandemic, climate change remained the biggest long-term risk to global prosperity and security, and Chatham House continued to offer some of the best analysis and ideas on this critical topic.

For example, the COP26 Diplomatic Briefing Series had brought together the UK Cabinet Office's Lead Climate Change negotiator and over 40 representatives from key London-based embassies, who would be supporting their respective countries' efforts at the COP26 summit, now scheduled for next year.

The institute was also working on an FCO-funded project to link China's climate change responses with broader international initiatives.

3) The work of Chatham House's regional programmes

Pointing to other examples of policy influence over the past year, the Chairman highlighted the work of several programmes. The Africa Programme had advised the Angolan government's 2019 decision to establish a \$60 million fund for landmine clearance in the country. The decision was announced at a Chatham House event last year in partnership with the HALO Trust, with a speech by the Duke of Sussex.

Amid rising US-China tensions, the Asia-Pacific and US and the Americas Programmes had collaborated to publish analysis on *US-China Strategic Competition*. Also, a joint project with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) had been launched to consider how the US and Europe can better respond to China's rise.

The Middle East and North Africa Programme had undertaken ground-breaking work to map the conflict economies in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen.

Chatham House convening and outreach

Chatham House had added to its already distinguished track record as a trusted and impartial convenor with an impressive list of speakers, including: the US Treasury Secretary and US Trade Representative; African presidents from Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire; Theresa May, in her last foreign policy speech as Prime Minister; and Sir David Attenborough and our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, to receive and present the Chatham House Prize, respectively.

The Chairman reminded members that the institute's aim was also to reach beyond policy circles and inform public debate on international affairs. He noted that there had been an 18% increase in website users and a 98% increase in views of Expert Comments in the first six months of the calendar year 2020 as compared with the first six months of 2019. Crucially, visitors to the website stayed online and

engaged with Chatham House for longer periods of time, which reflected a growing depth of interest in the institute's research.

The Chairman reiterated that his main priority as Chair was to ensure the institute worked more consistently and coherently towards its shared research objectives. To this end, a Research Committee of Council had been established, and the Director had also set up a new staff Research Committee to develop a cross-institute pipeline of projects that would ensure that the institute worked effectively towards the three major goals that it had set itself for the institute's second century:

- 1) Delivering sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- 2) Tackling geopolitical tensions to try to build more peaceful societies, and
- 3) Developing more accountable and inclusive governance systems.

Working towards these three goals would enable the institute to improve its profile and impact on policy, and the Chatham House research teams are already developing new projects around these themes.

The Chairman's second priority involved the institute's outreach. He believed that for Chatham House to be as effective in its second century as in its first, it needed to be an exciting place that attracted younger, more diverse and international audiences.

A new Council-led Next Generation Committee, chaired by Andrew Payne, would help drive more engagement with the next generation of members, drawing on their enthusiasm, energy and ideas.

New initiatives to engage younger audiences included:

- The Common Futures Conversations project, engaging young people from 13 countries across Africa and Europe to identify their shared concerns;
- A new Panel of Young Advisers, which would give the Panel of Senior Advisers, chaired by Sir John Major, a 'run for their money' and offer ideas to Chatham House on its strategy;
- Next generation workshops in Liverpool, Manchester and Edinburgh, in a new collaboration between our Queen Elizabeth II Academy for Leadership in International Affairs and *IntoUniversity*. The Chairman was pleased to have personally supported this initiative.
- The first online Chatham House Summer School, launched in August 2020 and involving 500 participants from 34 countries. The Chairman was inspired to see so many young people engaging with researchers with such thoughtful insights and perceptive questions.

Further next generation engagement will include:

- An arrangement with Exact Editions, the integrated content platform for magazines and publishers, to make *The World Today* magazine available free to schools
- Webinars and relevant reading list for students (and others) from the Chatham House journal *International Affairs*
- New editions of the annual essay competition jointly organised by *The World Today* and *Financial Times*.

The Chairman was very impressed with the progress made in this area in the past year.

The institute's centenary and other news

Chatham House was a unique idea copied by many, equalled by few. The Chairman reminded members about the Centenary and said Council and staff were privileged to be its custodians at this significant moment in the institute's history. He expressed the hope that there would be a return to the building in St James's Square in the not-to-distant future, where members would notice the completion of the renovation of the public space, including a wonderful new installation highlighting pivotal moments and speakers from the first 100 years. In the autumn a new website, incorporating the vibrant new Chatham House brand, would provide members with a more tailored and efficient service.

The Chairman's third priority was to ensure Council has the optimal structure to handle the increasingly intense operational and financial pressures on all charitable institutions. The Chairman thanked his colleagues on Council for their support and, in particular, Catherine Brown, Jawad Iqbal, Lapo Pistelli and Mark Spelman, who were stepping down from Council this year after a combined total of 14 years' service. They and all Council members had taken a far more engaged role in overseeing the institute this past year, through an enhanced series of Council Committees as well as the regular Council meetings, which had helped strengthen the executive management of the institute and improve its overall resilience.

The Chairman paid tribute to Professor Rosemary Hollis, who had died suddenly earlier in the month. Professor Hollis had been a long-standing contributor to Chatham House as well as Head of the Middle East programme (1995-2008) and Director of Studies in her last three years at the institute.

The Chairman also acknowledged the recent, shocking assassination in Iraq of Hisham al-Hashimi, a close colleague and friend of the Middle East and North Africa programme.

The Chairman thanked Robin Niblett, his executive team, the senior managers and all the staff for their dedication and hard work over this past year, especially the way they transitioned so smoothly to delivering a high-quality online service since lockdown. He said he and Council members looked forward to working closely with them during the exciting and undoubtedly challenging year ahead.

In closing, the Chairman reminded members that our Patron, The Queen, once said that Chatham House was a meeting place for ideas. In the troubled 1920s, Chatham House was able to rise to the challenges of those times with the ideas needed for change. With members' continued support, Chatham House can do so again in the 2020s, albeit in a very different context, with the same bold, innovative and forward-leaning spirit of the institute's founders.

The Chairman then opened the floor to questions and comments on the Annual Report and Annual Review.

Comments and questions from members

David Tereshchuk, member, said it was very good to hear about the Summer School, and asked about the make-up of the 134 participants: how many were from developed countries, and how many from emerging countries? Keith Burnet, Managing Director, Communications and Publishing, had not seen the exact breakdown but thought the largest group was from the UK, followed by the US, India, Malaysia and Europe. The gender balance was between 60/40 to 70/30, girls to boys, with 50% from state schools and 25% from international schools. Exact data would be collated and shared with the Next Generation Committee, Council, and members.

Andres Rozental, member, and member of the institute's Panel of Senior Advisers, drew attention to the institute's new Latin America Initiative, which had not been mentioned in the Chairman's summary. This new initiative would be interesting for members to know more about. He asked the Director to include a reference in the Minutes and said he hoped Latin American issues would continue to grow as a topic for the institute. The Chairman said this was noted.

[The Initiative is aimed at evaluating the demographic, economic and political shifts in Latin America and their impact both in the region and for the rest of the world, particularly where the possibility of increased integration across the area holds out new opportunities for those economies to grow regional trade and investment. The Initiative has three objectives: firstly, to analyse the political, economic and cultural changes taking place across Latin America and explain those to international stakeholders, especially in the UK and across Europe; secondly, to evaluate Latin America's role in global trade, financial flows, investment and migration; and thirdly, to work with Latin American public and private sector actors in developing effective responses to global challenges of sustainable growth, resource usage and other areas of international governance.]

Mahesha Kotecha, member, complimented Chatham House on the depth and breadth of coverage in the webinars these last months. He asked about the future charted for Chatham House and whether there were any specific objectives in order to have a more international orientation in terms of membership breakdown relative to what we have currently? The Chairman responded that part of Chatham House's future was going to remain online, and that it this would offer additional and new opportunities to reach out to international audiences. Also, it enabled the institute to reach out to young people who could not easily get to St James's Square. Different options for membership were being explored going forward.

Caroline Usher, Managing Director, External Relations, added that through the upcoming upgrade to the website Chatham House would be able to improve the way it connected with people and kept them engaged with their personal interests. Through its webcasts, Chatham House could take people 'on a bit of a journey' and get them more deeply involved with the topics. She said the doors were very much open 'virtually' and that Chatham House had been fortunate to continue to welcome new members from across the world during this strange time.

William Crawley, member, referred to the Chairman's comment about raising the profile of *International Affairs* as part of the institute's activity, and very much welcomed it. He asked if the themed issues could provide an opportunity for an online discussion with the editors of those issues, to meet and ask questions along with other participants? The Director replied that he would take the idea on board. He pointed out that Andrew Dorman, the *International Affairs* editor, and his team were very active online and producing more regular outputs, and not just waiting for the release of each publication. Keith Burnet, Director of Communications and Publishing, added that the *International Affairs* team already run a number of members events with contributors from Chatham House and, under normal circumstances, held a number of 'meet the editor' type events.

Ian Fry, member, thought the multi-think tank online event during the centenary week celebration was excellent. He asked if Chatham House could gather a working group of all major think tanks around the world and establish a permanent think tank to look at the issues facing them all? The Chairman responded that it would be quite a tough challenge for us to commit ourselves to that and it may be a distraction if Chatham House were to pursue it persistently rather than opportunistically. The Director agreed and advised that there were groups such as the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) specifically dedicated to bringing think tanks together, with UPenn hosting an annual gathering plus a series of

regional meetings. Chatham House's sister organisation, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), also hosted an annual gathering of think tank heads. He said Chatham House would continue to focus on targeted opportunities like the one that was done for the centenary.

Brunello Rosa, member, asked what projects the Global Economics and Finance Programme (GEF) would be undertaking in the next few months. Creon Butler, Director of GEF, highlighted three specific areas of work by the programme:

- 1) Climate change and macroeconomics - how will climate acceleration impact the way foreign exchange markets trade, for example
- 2) The global investment framework, and the impact of greater economic nationalism and the response to COVID-19 on the future of global investment flows
- 3) Corporate purpose and responsibility - what it means in practice for companies to put a real emphasis on their ESG commitments and not just on profit maximisation.

The Chairman remarked that in his view corporate purpose and responsibility would now be an accelerated focus for the business community as a direct consequence of the challenges raised by the Covid crisis.

Martin Plant, member, asked if it was time to undertake a major study of South Africa given the difficulties the country was now facing, and having to turn to the IMF, World Bank and others. The Director responded that South Africa, Nigeria and Angola were the three countries that the institute's Africa Programme focused on most closely. It is also a focus for Rob Yates and his global health team. He was not aware of any particular projects under way but agreed that it deserved extra focus right now. He would come back to the member with an update.

The Chairman thanked members for their many interesting questions. He then asked for a motion to adopt the Annual Report.

Amitav Banerji proposed and Pasquale Urselli seconded.

The Chairman then asked members to vote on the motion.

The motion to adopt the Annual Report was passed unanimously.

II. PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

The Chairman asked the Honorary Treasurer, John Berriman, to present the Accounts.

Financial Presentation

The Treasurer was delighted to be able to provide a full set of financial statements at the date of the AGM against the background of COVID-19. He paid tribute to management, the house, the Finance team and, in particular, to Stephen Martin, who took over from Paul Curtin as Finance Director at the end of December and almost immediately found himself in lockdown. He greatly appreciated the hard work of the Finance team during this challenging period.

The institute had performed very well in the financial year 2019-20 up until March, the last month of the financial year. Then, in common with all organisations, the impact of the COVID-19 national lockdown was felt both operationally and financially. Conference income, in particular, was negatively affected, as well as the value of the Chatham House investment portfolio.

The Treasurer presented the key features of the institute's financial performance and explained the financial plans in place for the future.

At the start of the financial year, the institute had planned to achieve a step change in its financial position. The research pipeline was healthy and specific measures were instituted to further increase the level of discretionary revenues. These initiatives paid off in the year and, together with the generous donation received from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Chatham House was largely able to deliver on its strategic intent.

Operational revenues for 2019/20 stood at £18.8m, 15% above the level achieved in 2018/19. Research income returned strong growth of 20%, having experienced a short period consolidation in the previous year. Membership income rose 6%, reflecting an increase in both corporate and individual membership. Chatham House continued to focus on providing strong value to its members.

Unrestricted donations, including major donor fundraising, rose by 45%, from just under £1m to £1.4m, after a concerted effort to highlight the benefits that the institute brings through its objective analysis and insight into an increasingly uncertain world. Publications returned a healthy 14% increase in income and investment income rose 2%. Against these positive performances, the cancellation of several high profile events in March led to a decline in event income by £0.3m.

Total operational expenditures for the year were £19.1m, up 10% from the previous year. This was significantly lower than the 15% increase in operational revenues. Research costs increased 13%, which was well below the related 20% increase in research income.

Expenditure on membership, meetings, the library, communications and publications rose by 14%, largely because of further significant investment in the website and other digital and online resources. Net support costs fell 3%, reflecting a tight control of costs.

The overall deficit incurred for the year was £226k, after taking Second Century income of £129k and after incurring investment losses of £900k. In the previous year, Chatham House incurred an equivalent overall deficit of £800k.

The Treasurer reminded members that early in the financial year two generous specific donations totalling £10m were received from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. The first enabled the institute to create the SNF Wing, allowing for a permanent expansion of the institute's research and providing a home for the Queen Elizabeth II Academy for Leadership in International Affairs. The second facilitated the investment of £2m into the 'Chatham House-SNF CoLab', an initiative to open institute's policy research to wider public audiences.

The institute's balance sheet remained sound and at the year-end, total net assets, excluding the value of Chatham House itself, were £25m compared with £16.1m as at the end of the previous year. This 55% increase in net assets primarily reflected the net investment in fixed assets of £9.9m, including the SNF Wing, some institute refurbishments and technology expenditure.

The institute continued, as before, to hold a considerable amount of its net assets in non-cash investments. These had a market value of £9.3m at 31 March 2020 compared with £8.9m the year before. This increase reflected additional sums invested in the year of £1.3m offset by book investment losses at the year-end of £0.9m.

Overall, there was a significant net cash outflow in the year of £1.6m, compared to an inflow of £2m last year. The outflow this year primarily reflected the net impact of the investment in both fixed assets and non-cash investments, offset by the SNF donations, together with other small net current asset movements.

Turning to the future, and in common with many organisations, the Treasurer noted how Chatham House had been taking a fundamental look at the way it worked and how it generated income and spent monies. The temporary closure of Chatham House had seen the institute experiment with technology and new ways of working thereby reducing expenditure levels for now. The global stock markets remained volatile but had improved significantly since the year-end, with the losses of last year having been recouped. The aim remained, as before, to return the institute to generating annual operating surpluses and to re-build the depleted reserves. This would now inevitably take longer than previously anticipated. A small but manageable deficit was expected to be incurred in this current year ending 31 March 2021. However, there was a strong asset base and adequate levels of cash and the support of the Chatham House bankers if there was a need to access cash funds.

The Chairman opened the floor to questions and comments on the Annual Accounts.

As there were no questions, the Chairman asked for a motion to adopt the Financial Statements.

Alin-Claudiu Luca proposed and David Nordell seconded.

The motion was passed unanimously.

III. ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COUNCIL

The Chairman reminded members that his predecessor, Stuart Popham, had instituted a review in early 2018 of the institute's governance and commissioned an independent organisation, New Philanthropy Capital, to undertake it. One of the recommendations from the report, supported by Council, was for a reduction in the size of Council to the Charity Commission's recommended maximum of 12 plus the Honorary Treasurer. Council had given itself until 2020 achieve this target. To meet this objective, it had been agreed that there would be just two vacancies for Council seats this year. This meant that a maximum of four eligible candidates could go through to the ballot of members.

The nomination process took place in late April/May. After several enquiries and discussions with potential candidates, four candidates submitted nomination forms for consideration by the Nominations Committee. Of these, one nomination form was unfortunately found to be invalid and another candidate subsequently withdrew because of changed personal circumstances. This left just two candidates and as a result, under Bye-law 19, both were automatically appointed to Council without the requirement for a ballot of members.

The two remaining candidates– Ann Cormack and Kate Gibbons – are current members of Council and are re-appointed for a second term of three years. The Chairman congratulated them both.

- **Ann Cormack** – re-elected to Council. Ann is currently Executive Head of Human Resources at the De Beers Group. She has been a substantial contributor to Council matters in her first term serving on a range of committees including Finance, Investment and the recently created Next Generation Committee. Ann’s aim for her second three-year term is to help transform the House’s attraction of support from business in its Second Century in terms of its content, channels and audiences, particularly post COVID-19, using the Institute’s convening power to ensure the ‘Chatham House Rule’ continues to resonate in gatherings globally.
- **Kate Gibbons** – re-elected to Council. Kate currently has global responsibility for knowledge at the international law firm of Clifford Chance, chairing its Thought Leadership Board and Knowledge Committee. She had been active in Chatham House’s work in connection with the W20 and already made a substantial contribution whilst serving on Council and a number of its committees, including Finance and Investment. In her next three years on Council, Kate is looking to help the Institute better understand the challenges and opportunities faced by the House going virtual in the new COVID-19 context. She would also be supporting moves towards a more effective engagement with members and to wider audiences, particularly the young. She is also a member of the Next Generation Committee.

IV. RE-ELECTION OF HONORARY TREASURER

The Chairman informed members that John Berriman had first been co-opted to Council in June 2016 for one year before formally taking up the role of Honorary Treasurer from Ed Smith, who had stepped down in 2017. John is a qualified chartered Accountant and a companion of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). He was a former UK board member and Chief Operating Officer of PriceWaterhouse Coopers UK (PwC). On retiring from PwC, John acted as an adviser to the global law firm Norton Rose Fulbright, and was their global chief operating officer from December 2016-March 2018. Since late 2003 John has chaired MacIntyre, a sector-leading national charity providing learning, support, education and care to over 1,100 children, young people and adults with learning disabilities, complex needs and autism, and their families across England and Wales.

John had served on Council with distinction over the past three years whilst also being a member of the Executive Committee and chairing the committees for both Finance and Investment.

The Chairman expressed appreciation from both himself and Council members for John’s wise advice on financial matters, and with the advent of COVID-19 and the on-going implications on the institute’s finances, deemed it essential that Council had someone with the necessary experience and knowledge to help guide the institute through the challenging times ahead.

Subject to the vote by members, John had agreed to take up the appointment for another three years and the Chairman and fellow Council members wholeheartedly recommended his re-election.

As there were no questions or comments regarding the extension, the Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder.

Dr Mary Malecka proposed and Sean Houlston seconded.

The motion was passed unanimously.

V. RE-ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT

The Chairman noted that one of the institute's three presidents, Sir John Major, was due to retire at this AGM. He reminded Members that they had approved an exceptional extension of Sir John's second term by one year in 2019, so that he could continue in his role as one of the three Presidents into the institute's centenary year. However, many of the institute's public centenary activities had been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council therefore recommended that members approve another extension of Sir John's second term by a further year so that he could contribute to the success of those events in the year to come.

As there were no questions or comments about the extension, the Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder.

Nikolaos Tzenios proposed and Tracey Byer seconded.

The motion was passed with 99% in favour and 1% against.

VI. RE-ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT

Another of the institute's three presidents, Baroness Eliza Manningham-Buller, was due to retire at this AGM. In accordance with Bye-law 27, she was eligible to serve one further five-year term and had indicated that she was willing to do so, if re-elected.

The Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder.

Dr Mary Malecka proposed and Nikolaos Tzenios seconded.

The motion was passed unanimously.

VII. ELECTION OF AUDITORS

In accordance with Bye-Law 63, the auditors were required to be elected annually by the members of the institute at the AGM. The Chairman reported that the Finance Committee of Council, chaired by the Honorary Treasurer, had recommended that Buzzacott should be re-elected as Auditors for the coming year.

As there were no questions or comments about the extension, the Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder.

Alin-Claudiu Luca proposed and Jaliyyah Ahmadu-Bello seconded.

The motion was passed unanimously.

VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman informed members that the formal items on the agenda were now complete, but before closing the meeting asked if there were any other questions.

Peter Schellinck, member, enquired about the size of the quorum required for the meeting.

The Acting Secretary, Paul Curtin, noted that a quorum for the meeting was 20, and confirmed that the number attending was well above that. He also explained to members that a successful application had been made to the Charity Commission for a Section 105 order, allowing the AGM to be held as a virtual meeting.

Dr Sarabajaya Kumar, member, asked what measures Chatham House was taking in respect of recent events including the Black Lives Matter movement in providing opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to work in international affairs at the Institute, including its governance / trusteeship.

The Director reported that Chatham House had held an all staff meeting shortly after the George Floyd killing in the United States to share thoughts and views. He had been very moved by the issues raised and the personal stories staff had shared at the meeting. He confirmed Chatham House was working to provide a pipeline of opportunities for people to engage with international affairs in a much more diverse way. A more formal Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Committee was being established to work through the processes, drawing on input from all staff members and also from external advisers, and the Committee's goals had been embedded in the institute's Strategic Plan. A more formal response would be provided at the next AGM.

The Chairman commented that Chatham House benefited from quite a diverse board, equally represented by both gender and through different backgrounds. He admitted that Chatham House could do better, however, and one of his goals was to explore how to further improve the diversity of the board beyond 20/21.

Dr Mary Malecka, member, queried whether it would be desirable to include some members on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The Director replied that this was a good idea and he would follow up.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman reminded members that the minutes of the meeting would be posted on the Chatham House website after approval was received from Council. He thanked members for joining the meeting and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to communicate them, albeit not in the usual style to which all were accustomed, and looked forward to meeting under more normal circumstances in the not too distant future.

The meeting adjourned at 6.30 pm.