

Minutes of the Meeting of the Institute of Physics Council
held at 9.15 a.m. on 29 February 2024 at Wills Hall Conference Centre, Bristol
and by videoconference

Trustees Present:

Keith Burnett	President and Chair of the Meeting
David Delpy	Honorary Treasurer
Alison McMillan	Honorary Secretary
John Bagshaw	Vice-President for Business
Elizabeth Cunningham	Vice-President for Membership
Lisa Jardine-Wright (by video)	Vice-President for Education and Skills
Tara Shears	Vice-President for Science & Innovation
Rosalie Benjamin	General Trustee
Philip Burrows	General Trustee
Jane Clark	General Trustee
John Dainton	General Trustee
Claudia Eberlein	General Trustee
Yvonne Kavanagh	Co-opted Trustee
Hana Krizek	General Trustee
Roy Sambles (by video)	General Trustee
Melissa Uchida (by video) (from item 2.2)	General Trustee
Jane Weir	General Trustee

Apologies

Michele Dougherty	President-elect
Peter Thompson	General Trustee

IOP/ IOP Publishing Attendees

Tom Grinyer	Group Chief Executive Officer
Sukhraj Dhadwar	Group Chief Financial Officer
Rachel Youngman	Deputy Chief Executive, IOP
Louis Barson	Director of Science, Innovation & Skills, IOP
Tony McBride	Director of Policy and Public Affairs, IOP
Antonia Seymour	Chief Executive, IOP Publishing
David Howitt	Head of Governance & Compliance, IOP

Attendees for Specific Matters

Sarah Bakewell (by video)	Head of EDI, IOP (Physics Inclusion Award paper)
Nicola Wilkin	Professor of Physics, University of Birmingham (Physics Inclusion Award paper)

1 Standing Items

1.1 Welcome, Apologies and General Updates

- 1.1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.
- 1.1.2 Apologies had been received from Michele Dougherty and from Peter Thompson.
- 1.1.3 It was noted that some trustees were joining by video (details above).
- 1.1.4 The President noted that the trustee visit to the IOP Publishing office the previous day had been very successful, covering many important issues, and that it was very good to see the great progress being made in the publishing business and to meet IOPP colleagues. Thanks were expressed to all involved in arranging the day. It was agreed that slides from the day would be added to the board portal for trustees to view.

1.2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no specific declarations of interest declared for this meeting.

1.3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2023 were approved, subject to two amendments.

1.4 Action Status Report

The Actions Status Report was reviewed and noted. It was noted that all actions were complete or had a future due date.

2 Matters for discussion

2.1 IOP Strategy Implementation

Council then discussed the implementation of the new IOP strategy. Tom Grinyer reported that the new strategy had been received very positively. 2024 would be a transitional year for the new strategy and the next stage would be to bring in a target operating model. As part of that, the Executive Team would look at the organisational structure and would develop a set of key performance indicators to sit under the strategy. Those key performance indicators would be taken to Council in due course to approve. Linked to all this, a zero-based budget would then be developed for 2025 which would involve a fresh look at all IOP expenditure and activities, including how the IOP and IOPP worked together and how IOP worked across the nations.

2.2 CEO Report and Executive Priority Updates

- 2.2.1 Tom Grinyer set out the new structure for Executive updates. Those would better reflect the new strategy and would focus on skills, science, society, members, a sustainable IOP, and publishing. He then updated the meeting on the Council elections for which nominations would open on 4 March and that the proposed date for the AGM was 18 September, the day before the September Council meeting. It was agreed to consider holding a broader member meeting on the same day as the AGM, to encourage attendance.
- 2.2.2 Louis Barson then set out an update on skills. He reported on influencing activities undertaken in each of the nations, on making the case for skills that drive physics powered sectors, and on tackling the physics teacher gap. The following matters were specifically reported or discussed.
 - (a) Early data on numbers of physics teacher trainees showed numbers up 141% on the previous year, in part driven by a significant increase in the number of international applicants.

- (b) The number of teachers who were members of IOP was still low and options were being considered for how to encourage more physics teachers to become members. It was noted that membership bodies for other sciences were experiencing similar issues. It was suggested that it was important to consult with teachers to understand what they would need from membership and to think about partnership approaches with other organisations teachers naturally gravitate towards such as the Association for Science Education (ASE).
- (c) IOP was evolving its skills focus beyond specific technical pathways towards understanding and addressing the skills needs of physics powered sectors. The recent work on apprenticeships had showed the importance of the regional dimension for certain sectoral skills and it was reported that the regionally based networks enabled these differences to be discussed.
- (d) It was commented that there is strong overlap between physics and engineering content in the new T Levels. It was noted that this was being considered, including through the Quantum Skills Task Force.
- (e) Planet Possibility had made positive progress, with increased visits to its website. It was coming to the end of its IOP funding period and so work was ongoing with the Consortium to support its thinking on long-term funding options to enable it to continue to deliver.
- (f) It was noted that there had been good joint working between the Learning and Skills and national teams and that that had allowed effective input into high-level reviews progressing across the various nations.

2.2.3 Tony McBride then set out an update on the science focus. The following matters were reported or discussed.

- (a) Key headlines of different ways in which the science theme was being delivered in the new strategy were championing diversity in research and innovation, advocating for and supporting physics innovation and research and development, and building international collaboration. Examples of those were set out in the paper presented to the meeting and were discussed.
- (b) Funding for the Africa-UK Physics Partnerships Programme was expected to be announced in the coming weeks.
- (c) In the context of a planned impact project on Space during 2024, it was noted that an effective coordinated approach across IOP would be important. Space was an area which was inspiring to the public, and Space-based technologies increasingly acted as enablers for a range of traditional business sectors. It was agreed that there were many opportunities here and it was reported that work was already ongoing looking across the IOP to identify and leverage these opportunities. It was noted that a new Space-focused IOP group had recently been established.

2.2.4 Rachel Youngman then set out an update on the society focus of the strategy. The following matters were reported or discussed.

- (a) There had been much work undertaken in the last five years in reaching public audiences. This included the Looking Glass podcast series, 'Community Conversations' with physicists working with local community groups, and member led public engagement at festivals and

other events, often stemming from the work of National Committees and regional Branches in England.

- (b) In transitioning to the new strategy of 'Physics for the Future', it was noted that member led public engagement supported by the national and regional teams would remain core, and consideration would also be given to how to keep public audiences engaged with physics after an initial experience.
- (c) It was recognised that having appropriate resources to develop and maintain the proposed programmes was key.

2.2.5 Rachel Youngman also set out an update on the member focus element of the strategy. The following matters were reported or discussed.

- (a) Membership numbers as of 1 February 2024 were 20,977. The retention rate was 80%, but that was expected to increase as members were still renewing. The target was 90%.
- (b) There would be a review of the Chartered Physicist accreditation to ensure that it remained relevant and valued. It was noted that CPhys was greatly valued in industry but did not have the same value for academics. The review would commence with CPhys but would then also potentially look at other registrations for which the IOP held licences to award from the Engineering Council and the Science Council, including CEng. This would involve discussion with the relevant regulatory bodies.
- (c) The 2023 Member Survey results had been reviewed and themes had been aligned to the new strategy. Four broad areas of membership work were emerging. Those are focussed on careers and professional development, events and networking, supporting university physics students and early career physicists, and improving member services and growing the membership base.
- (d) Planning was ongoing for the Summer Festival on 5 June 2024 at Silverstone. Trustees were invited to register for the event and also to consider and provide suggestions of automotive or industrial contacts and/or university research groups that are working on green technologies and would like to participate at the festival.
- (e) Vice-President visits were planned for John Bagshaw to visit Glasgow in June and for Elizabeth Cunningham to attend Photon 2024 in Swansea in September.

2.2.6 Sukhraj Dhadwar then presented updates on a Sustainable IOP.

- (a) Financial Model to 2030. He outlined the financial model to the end of 2030, updated for the actual results of 2023. After due discussion, Council noted:
 - (i) the updated results of the IOP financial model to 2030;
 - (ii) that the base case had been reviewed, commented upon and noted by the Finance & Investment Committee.

2.2.7 Antonia Seymour then gave an update on IOP Publishing. The following matters were reported or discussed.

- (a) The provisional net profit for 2023 had exceeded the budgeted profit, but this was in part because of the lack of investment money having been spent. In the short term, profits were expected to be maintained, but these were expected to reduce in the medium and longer term. A revised budget for 2024 was to be submitted to the IOP Publishing Board on 8 March.
- (b) The number of Transformative Agreements continued to increase, making it easier for authors to publish open access at no charge to them.
- (c) 2023 had seen the delivery of the first of several major investments into improving processes, data and technologies in support of a business model transition. This included the delivery of the first phase of the Vantage programme.
- (d) Innovation in peer review had continued, with IOPP winning the ALPSP Impact Award and one of the team winning the Digital Science Award for Innovation in Scholarly Communication. The IOPP Head of Peer Review and Research Integrity had been named as one of the eight 'People of Publishing' by the Publishers Association.
- (e) Registered users of Physics World had increased and over 1,500 members had linked their accounts to the new Physics World digital magazine.
- (f) There had been a very positive employee survey, with improved results on almost all questions.

2.3 ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) Framework

2.3.1 Rachel Youngman set out details of the proposed ESG framework. She reported that this had been developed in consultation with a small working group of trustees. At this stage, only agreement in principle was being sought, with the proposal being that it should then be submitted to the Audit & Risk Committee to develop appropriate key performance indicators and for it to then be resubmitted to Council.

2.3.2 After due discussion, Council:

- (a) approved the ESG Framework in principle; and
- (b) agreed that the ESG Framework should be sent to the Audit & Risk Committee to finalise and to define a small set of key performance indicators (KPIs) that they would wish to see in compliance reporting, with the framework to then be submitted to the next meeting of Council and for Council to then receive reporting based on the agreed KPIs.

2.4 Financial Report – IOP Year End Update

2.4.1 Sukhraj Dhadwar outlined the unaudited year end results to 31 December 2023 for the IOP. He reported that, in 2023, the IOP had generated a surplus, after depreciation, of £0.3 million (compared to £5 million in 2022). Council noted that the Finance & Investment Committee had received an extensive paper and commented on the detailed results, noting also the detailed management accounts to the end of 2023.

- 2.4.2 Council then discussed detailed provisions in the results. Noting that they had previously been reviewed and commented on by the Finance & Investment Committee, Council noted the unaudited year end results for 2023 and that these results would be used in the preparation of the Annual Report and Accounts.

The meeting then adjourned for an extended lunch when a number of members from the University of Bristol Physics and Engineering Departments joined for a wide-ranging discussion on topics of mutual interest including financial sustainability for physics departments, the focus on skills-based teaching, widening participation on physics courses, and the relationship of physics and critical technologies.

2.5 Physics Inclusion Award

- 2.5.1 Professor Nicola Wilkin and Sarah Bakewell then joined the meeting to provide an update on the criteria and assessment framework for the Physics Inclusion Award and its alignment with the Athena Swan award.
- 2.5.2 Council noted that the new award was a progression from the Juno award which was gender focussed and that, whilst the new award addressed gender, it also looked at a number of other characteristics.
- 2.5.3 Helen Gleeson noted the support of all the universities which had been involved in the pilot project and which had given valuable feedback. A letter of thanks had been sent to all universities involved.
- 2.5.4 It was noted that work was continuing with Athena Swan to maintain a strong link between the two awards.
- 2.5.5 After due discussion, Council:
- (a) approved the Physics Inclusion Award criteria and assessment framework; and
 - (b) noted the progress with the Athena Swan Award alignment.
- 2.5.6 Council thanked Nicola Wilkin and Sarah Bakewell for all their work in developing the new award to its formal launch in April.

3 **Matters for Approval**

3.1 Annual Health and Safety Report 2023

- 3.1.1 Tom Grinyer presented the annual Health and Safety Report for 2023. He reported that the Annual Health & Safety Report was to provide assurance to Council that the IOP was fulfilling its legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and that reasonable steps were being taken to protect people from harm. Whilst the IOP was a relatively low-risk organisation, it was still necessary to ensure that risk was managed and controlled appropriately.
- 3.1.2 He reported that an identified risk on health and safety was activities and events outside the office environment. Work was therefore on-going with the Events Team to address risks outside the office environment and to work more closely with volunteers.
- 3.1.3 Council approved the annual Health and Safety Report for 2023, which it was noted included the signed Health and Safety Statement of Intent and a chart of health and safety roles and responsibilities.

3.2 Modern Slavery Statement

Council reviewed the draft modern slavery statement as presented to it and:

- 3.2.1 approved the IOP Group Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the Financial Year Ending 31 December 2023, noting that this has been endorsed by the IOP Executive Board and the IOP Publishing Limited Executive Board;
- 3.2.2 authorised signature of the Statement by the President, Sir Keith Burnett, and the Group Chief Executive Officer, Tom Grinyer; and
- 3.2.3 noted that, once approved and signed, the Statement would be published on the IOP website, linked to from IOPP's website, and added to the Home Office's Modern Slavery Statement Registry.

3.3 Audit & Risk Committee Chair

Council noted that, following the expiry of James McKenzie's term as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, an exercise had been undertaken to appoint a new Chair. The candidate recommended both by the interview panel and by the Nominations Committee was Clare Minchington, a copy of whose CV had been circulated to Council. Council:

- 3.3.1 approved the appointment of Clare Minchington as the new Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee for a term of four years, with the option to renew for a further term; and
- 3.3.2 delegated to each of the Group Chief Executive Officer and Group Chief Financial Officer authority to agree the terms of the appointment and to sign the appointment letter on behalf of the IOP.

3.4 Trustee Social Media Policy

Council reviewed a draft Trustee Social Media Policy, noting that it followed the format and content recommended in the Charity Commission's September 2023 Guidance on Social Media and also reflected, and was based upon, the Social Media Policy applicable to all IOP staff. Subject to minor agreed amendments, Council approved the Trustee Social Media Policy.

3.5 Scheme of Delegation

It was reported that, following a decision to utilise an existing company, IOP Enterprises Limited, to undertake trading activities including the hiring out of space in 37 Caledonian Road, and potential other activities, it was necessary to extend the financial delegations in the Scheme of Delegation to IOP Enterprises. This was proposed to be achieved by applying the same financial delegations which applied to IOP to also apply to IOP Enterprises. After due consideration, and noting that it was recommended by the Executive Board, Council approved the updated Scheme of Delegation.

3.6 IOP's Activities in the Republic of Ireland

- 3.6.1 An update was then provided to the meeting on progress made since the December Council meeting with the application for registration as a charity in the Republic of Ireland.

4 Matters for Note

4.1 Subsidiary Board Appointments

Council noted that Antonia Seymour had been appointed as a director of IOP Educational Publishing Limited with effect from 19 December 2023 and that Oliver Callaghan had resigned as a director of IOP Publishing Limited, IOP Educational Publishing Limited and Turpion Limited, all with effect from 4 January 2024.

4.2 Programme Reports

Council noted the corporate dashboard and the programme activity narrative, setting out updates on IOP Publishing and the Productivity, Limit Less, Ecosystem and Transformation Programmes as well as other ongoing matters.

4.3 Committee Reports

Council noted the reports from the meetings of the Inclusion & Diversity Committee, Professional Development and Accreditation Committee, Nominations, Finance & Investment and Audit & Risk Committees.

4.4 Policy Updates

Council noted updates on a number of key policy developments and IOP policy activities for the period from November 2023 to February 2024.

5 Dates of Next Meetings

It was noted that the dates for the next meetings were 20 June 2024 (virtual), 19 September 2024 (with the AGM the day before) and 5 December 2024.

6 Close of Meeting

There was no further business and so the Chair declared the meeting closed.