



The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies

Proceedings of the General Meeting held at 2pm on Saturday 12 December, 2015
Room 246, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU

The President, Professor Robert Fowler welcomed members. He introduced himself, Dr Margaret Mountford (SPHS Honorary Secretary) and Ms Richella Doyle (SPHS Executive Secretary). He also welcomed the Honorary Librarian, Professor Michael Crawford and the President and Officers of the Roman Society who were present (Professor Catharine Edwards, Dr Philip Kay, Mrs Elizabeth McKnight, Dr Fiona Haarer). The purpose of the meeting was to seek members' approval for certain agreements the two Societies wish to conclude in respect of the future operation and financing of the Combined Library.

Professor Fowler began by stating he would like to highlight some of the key points which had been addressed in the letter to Members dispatched with the Notice. He reported that the Combined Library is recognised as one of the great research libraries in the world. The Joint Library, a principal asset valued not only by SPHS members, but also by the University of London staff and students, and visitors from around the world. Since 1953 the joint arrangement with the University of London has been governed by a Memorandum of Understanding with increasingly shorter terms. Professor Fowler noted the unsatisfactory nature of this arrangement due to unpredictable rises in space costs. Professor Fowler reminded those present that there was no certainty that the present short term agreement, due to expire at the end of December 2015, would be renewed on its present terms. Indeed, when a renewal was first discussed, the University was looking for a substantial increase in space charges which meant that, over a long period, the total space charges could have slowly reduced the Societies to insolvency. In contrast, the University Agreement provides greater certainty as to the terms to govern the operation of the Combined Library for 25 years and shelters the two Societies from increasing space charges. In addition, the new arrangements will provide a better basis for fundraising, as the Societies will be seeking funds primarily to support salaries of library staff, which will be set by reference to pay scales reflecting wider market conditions, and which donors may therefore be expected to recognise to be a necessary cost of providing the services of the Combined Library. Conversely, raising funds for space charges and overheads would be extremely difficult if not impossible. In regard to fundraising and management, Professor Fowler reported that the two Societies have jointly established a company, called the Hellenic and Roman Library 'HARL'. The six present directors of HARL are the Presidents, the Honorary Treasurers and Honorary Secretaries of the two Societies. Under the University Agreement, the arrangements for the provision of books and other materials will continue as at present.

In closing Professor Fowler stated that the Council of each of the two Societies had recommended their members to vote in favour of the resolutions. The resolutions had been passed at the Roman Society General Meeting which had met earlier in the afternoon.

Professor Fowler then invited questions from members. The discussion which followed included: maintenance of the current footprint of space, staffing of the Library, the digitization of the collection, the branding of the Library and future fundraising initiatives.

Professor Fowler invited members to vote by a show of hands, indicating whether they supported or opposed the Resolution. The Resolution* was unanimously passed. There were no abstentions. Dr. David Thomas proposed a vote of thanks to the Presidents, the Honorary Librarian and the Officers of both societies.

The meeting was drawn to a close at 2.32pm.

* 'That

1. a committee of the Council of the Society, comprising the President, the Honorary Treasurer and the Honorary Secretary of the Society, be and is hereby authorised to settle the terms of the University Agreement and otherwise to give effect to the arrangements described in a letter to members dated 19th November 2015 from the President of the Society and the President of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, substantially on the terms described therein described, but subject to such amendments as the committee may judge necessary or appropriate; and

2. the Principal Officers of the Society (or any of them) and the Executive Secretary of the Society be and they are hereby authorised to execute the University Agreement on such terms as they shall so settle with the other parties thereto'.