

Minutes of Assembly Induction Day held on 11th July 2023

Present: Claire Anderson (CA) - Chair, Andrew Carruthers (AC), Ciara Duffy (CD), Thorrun Govind (TG), Brendan Jiang (BJ), Alisdair Jones (AJ), Sorbi Khattak (SB), Geraldine McCaffrey (GMc), Gino Martini (GM) Tase Oputu (TO), Lynne Smith (LS), Audrey Thompson (AT)

In attendance: Paul Bennett (PB), Karen Baxter (KB), Neville Carter (NC), Avril Chester (ACh), Rick Russell (RR), James Davies (JD), Elen Jones (EJ), Alison Douglas (AD), Nicola Doyle (Firetail)

Observers: 3 Members registered to attend the meeting

Apologies: Ruth Edwards (RE), Cheryl Way (CW)

| Item | Paper | Notes and actions | Action by |
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| Item 1 Welcome & Apologies | | <p>CA welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular CD, BJ, SK and GM were welcomed as new members of Assembly.</p> <p>Nicola Doyle from Firetail was welcomed as an observer as part of the work being undertaken for the Constitution and Governance Review.</p> <p>Apologies were received from RE and CW.</p> <p>Members of the Assembly and Exec team introduced themselves.</p> | |
| Item 2 Election of President | | <p>PB took the chair for this item and confirmed that by the deadline of 12 noon on 30th June, two valid nominations for the post of President were received:</p> <p>Claire Anderson nominated by Alisdair Jones, seconded by Geraldine McCaffrey</p> | |

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| | | <p>Thorrund Govind nominated by Lynne Smith, seconded by Sorbi Khattak</p> <p>The addresses from both candidates were circulated to Assembly members on 4th July.</p> <p>Both candidates now confirmed they had nothing further to add to their declarations of interests as contained in the open business papers for the Assembly meeting tomorrow.</p> <p>An election was then held under the process set out in Appendix B of the Regulations. PB confirmed that he had received proxy votes from both RE and CW by the noon deadline of 10th July and would therefore be casting a vote on behalf of both these Assembly Members.</p> <p>Claire Anderson was elected on the first round of voting.</p> <p>CA thanked TG for standing in the election with her and Assembly Members for voting for her. A copy of her full Presidential address is included at Appendix A.</p> | |
| Item 3 Election for Treasurer | | <p>PB took the chair for this item and confirmed that by the deadline of 12 noon on 30th June, one valid nomination for the post of Treasurer was received:</p> <p>Alisdair Jones nominated by Sorbi Khattak, seconded by Tase Oputu</p> <p>The address from AJ was circulated to Assembly members on 4th July.</p> <p>AJ confirmed he had nothing further to add to his declaration of interests as contained in the open business papers for the Assembly meeting tomorrow.</p> <p>AC asked AJ if his role as Treasurer of the PDA Union had changed since last year when AJ had been considering standing for Treasurer but had decided not to. AJ replied that nothing had changed in this respect since last year but that he had spoken to this point in his address statement. He reminded members that no decision could be made within the Society unilaterally by the Treasurer. He didn't see his post at PDA as being a <i>conflict</i> of interest but rather was just <i>an</i> interest. He assured members that if there was any situation or vote where this was to become a conflict he would recuse himself from the decision.</p> <p>AC expressed concern that AJ did not see the two roles as a conflict, particularly as PDA had at times been quite hostile towards the RPS and, whilst not in any way doubting the skills AJ might bring to the role, he would not be able to support his appointment to this post. AT similarly added her concern at AJ holding both posts.</p> | |

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| | | <p>AJ recognised that some people might see holding both posts as a conflict but he stressed that there was no real overlap between the work of PDA Union and that of the RPS. He felt they were not in direct competition for members etc and would have seen holding both posts as more of a problem if they were – rather he believed that success for one would be of benefit for the other organisation.</p> <p>He was not sure what else he might say that could further re-assure Assembly Members or allay any doubts but added that as Treasurer he would not have any greater influence in matters that would affect the Society than he had had over the last two years as an Assembly Member and member of the Finance & Risk Committee.</p> <p>TG asked what the procedure might be should Assembly not confirm AJ in the post and asked what those who would be working with him as Treasurer might think.</p> <p>PB didn't feel it would be appropriate to ask any individual members of staff to comment on this matter. He explained that if Assembly Members were not to confirm AJ as Treasurer the formal nomination process for the role would need to be undertaken again.</p> <p>GM noted that AJ had clearly declared his position at PDA and added that many members of RPS were also members of PDA and he would therefore be supportive of his appointment.</p> <p>CA noted that she had observed AJ at FIC meetings and had never known a real conflict of interest to arise.</p> <p>LS asked AC if his concern was the conflict of interest per se or the perception of this conflict by members and others. AC replied that it was the perception of the conflict. He noted that within NHS Scotland individuals must declare anything that might be perceived to be a conflict and he would therefore personally not put himself in this position.</p> <p>AJ felt that all Assembly Members might be subject to 'perceived' conflicts of interest and, whilst this was not unimportant, asked where AMs would draw the line. He believed there was sufficient transparency in his declarations and in the processes of the Society to deal with the day to day realities of handling any conflicts should they arise. He noted that, should Assembly choose not to confirm him in the post the organisation would need to address the perception of this with members etc.</p> <p>PB confirmed that as any decision to not confirm AJ would be available in the public domain via the minutes published on the website and to members via the video recording.</p> | |
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| | | <p>TG asked whether anyone else would stand should AJ not be confirmed and what might happen in the interim. PB confirmed that the President would act in the role until Assembly were able to appoint a new Treasurer.</p> <p>PB then formally asked Assembly Members to confirm that AJ be elected as Treasurer. He explained Appendix B of the Regulations set out that the confirmation process be that as per the process for confirming the second year of a term of office outlined under 5.1.1. of the Regulations which is that <i>'Confirmation... shall be automatic unless a vote of no confidence in the President is passed by the Assembly'</i>.</p> <p>He noted that the process for a vote of no confidence as set out in Reg 5.4 was as follows: <i>'the Chief Executive...shall call for a vote of Assembly members present to express no confidence in the Officer. The vote will be by a show of hands and will be recorded in the minutes. Only those Assembly members present at the meeting shall be eligible to vote...a vote shall not be passed unless at least 8 Assembly members present at the meeting at which the vote takes place vote to express no confidence in the Officer'</i>.</p> <p>AC was therefore asked if he formally wished to call a vote of no confidence and confirmed that he did. PB asked those members who wished to express no confidence in AJ as Treasurer to raise their hands – AC and AT were the only members of Assembly to vote in this way and the vote therefore did not pass. AJ was therefore confirmed as Treasurer of the Society for a term of two years. A copy of his full Treasurer address is included at Appendix B.</p> <p>AJ thanked members for their support and stated that he would endeavour to overcome the concerns that had been expressed. He added that if the holding of both posts were ever to become a real issue he would take action to step down from the role.</p> | |
| Item 04 Academic Member | | <p>CA returned to the chair for this item and asked Assembly Members to confirm the second year of Ruth Edwards' term of office as the Academic Member – AGREED.</p> <p>The open business of the Induction Day was then concluded.</p> | |

APPENDIX A – CLAIRE ANDERSON PRESIDENT ADDRESS

Championing Excellence Through a Changing Environment

It has been an honour to be president of RPS. This is a time of unprecedented change and I have decided to stand as president for a second term to offer much needed continuity. These changes include:

- the transformation of pharmacy education
- the increase in the number of prescribers
- the implementation of the recommendations of the independent commission
- changes to supervision
- the workforce crises
- the upcoming RPS constitutional and governance review

As I have travelled around Britain, I have encountered exemplary and innovative practice. I will continue driving further these changes strengthening the profession's reputation and standing with all members from students (whom I'm well placed to influence engagement) through to our retired members. The work of the commission has encouraged even greater collaboration and a need to share what we are doing more widely.

Sustainability through collaboration

I believe that together we can achieve more. During my two years as president, I have built solid and fruitful relationships across the pharmacy professions and organisations and with government, other Royal Colleges and healthcare organisations. I have begun to restore our international reputation by leading us to re-join FIP and am leveraging the benefits to maximise publishing income, conference participation and international membership. I have ensured that issues of planetary health and sustainability are on the agenda, including changes in our investment portfolio and operations. I commissioned an independent review of member participation and communication which has led to changes in member engagement and more open decision making.

Proactive, adaptive, progressive and relevant

I am not afraid of leading the profession through the tough decisions that we will inevitably face. If elected, I will continue working with the Assembly, the National Boards, and RPS staff and members, to lead the profession proactively. We will not just react to a changing policy and professional landscape, but share our successes and collaborations more widely. We will be adaptive and agile, never afraid to innovate. We will expand our scope of influence while capitalising on our strong brand values, to ensure that the RPS is seen as essential, not only to pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical science, but also to everyone who develops, prescribes, administers and takes medicines.

As president, I will:

- inspire us to fulfil our mission and strategic direction.
- oversee delivery and implementation of the constitutional governance review
- continue to extend the profile and influence of pharmacy as a profession by building and strengthening relationships with all the other pharmacy leadership bodies and organisations
- ensure we are invited to the table whenever medicines and public health are discussed by continuing to invest in strategic relationships beyond pharmacy
- ensure the best option for members regarding the new council arising from the independent commission
- support the profession to embrace a more clinical future, including prescribing
- champion a profession wide culture of training, education and research
- advocate to government, the health-systems and employees to advance the RPS's important role in education and credentialling
- oversee the further development of our membership proposition prioritising the development of local and special interest networks
- ensure resources are used effectively and efficiently to deliver value for members
- deliver evidence about pharmacy's important role in the pandemic to the Covid Inquiry
- strengthen our international reputation as a leadership body and major publisher
- work closely with board chairs and the press team to ensure our continuing media presence
- maximise the skill set of board members

Hard decisions will be made about many issues including financial stability, investments, property, income streams, the constitutional and governance review, the recommendations of the independent commission, and new membership categories. I am confident that I can continue to lead us through these important decisions.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The RPS cultural values '*be inspiring, be empathic, be relevant*' remain vital; we must continue to foster them within the profession. Our work on EDI has progressed well, and more can be achieved. I will continue to work with board chairs on this journey, providing inclusive and authentic leadership that is not afraid to challenge barriers. I will ensure everyone knows the part they are playing, and that they are empowered to contribute to the best of their ability and to excel, be they staff or a board member.

A leader of global standing

With a career in pharmacy spanning five decades and six continents, I bring gravitas, credibility, and authenticity to the position of RPS President.

Academic leadership: As professor in a leading school of pharmacy with strong national international connections across and beyond the profession, I am a global leader in pharmacy practice. I have made a significant national and international contribution to the development of evidence, including developing and evaluating new professional roles for pharmacists. I also have an international reputation in research on pharmacy education and workforce development. My university is fully supportive and has given me all the time I need to fulfil my role as president.

Managerial leadership: I have broad networks and management experience, not just in the RPS, but also world class university and FIP committees. I am a trustee of the CPA. I have management experience as head of division and director of a cross disciplinary research centre. I am a systems leader, and a strategic critical thinker. While collegiate in my approach, I am not afraid to stand up for what I believe in and am not afraid to challenge performance and behaviour where necessary.

RPS leadership: As president over the last turbulent two years, I have insight into the challenges ahead. I will harness the combined expertise of the boards and advisory groups to increase the portfolio and reach of the RPS. While I have excellent working relationships with the executive and staff, I am not afraid to challenge them. I am passionate about our profession and committed to making the RPS and our members even more successful. As a confident speaker and media presenter I will also continue to be a dedicated ambassador and advocate for the profession nationally and internationally.

APPENDIX B – ALISDAIR JONES TREASURER ADDRESS

Dear colleagues,

As most of you are aware, much of my time on Assembly has also been as a member of FIC. This has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the current financial opportunities and challenges that the RPS faces, equipping me with the necessary skills to ensure prudent financial management. These include:

- Exploring investment opportunities through PhP, such as Dosium.
- Monitoring the performance and allocation of investment funds.
- Overseeing financial exposure to large-scale projects, such as Salesforce.
- Ensuring financial viability in light of declining membership numbers.
- Planning for future project investments, including constitution review and potential charter changes.

The upcoming years will undoubtedly present financial challenges. In the short term, we may observe a less favourable balance sheet. However, the most significant risk lies in taking no action at all. We must strategically invest our resources to ensure the continued viability of our organisation. Surrounding ourselves with expertise and making sound financial judgments are crucial in making informed decisions for our future. I aspire to continue working with FIC in a manner that empowers Assembly to make these crucial determinations.

I would like to express my gratitude to the outgoing Treasurer, as well as the finance team and other members of FIC who have contributed to the management of the RPS finances over the past year. Handling the finances of our organisation is a collaborative effort. It is with this understanding that I perceive the role of Treasurer as that of a 'custodian,' entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding the funds of our members. Rather than engaging in micro-management or relying solely on personal financial expertise, our primary objective should be to instil confidence in our members by assuring them that the broader finance team is diligently working to secure the financial future of our organisation.

Finally, let me address the elephant in the room. Many of you will be aware that I also hold the position of Treasurer at the PDA Union. I acknowledge the potential concerns regarding conflicts of interest that may arise from this dual role. Let me emphasize that I am fully committed to transparency and open decision-making. Decisions are never made solely by the Treasurer, and I want to assure the members of Assembly that if any situation arises where there is a perceived or actual conflict, I will take necessary measures to minimise such conflicts. However, it is important to note that no conflicts have arisen during my tenure on FIC. I firmly believe that success for one organisation is tantamount to success for both.

Thank you for your careful consideration.

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