

31 March 2025

To the Members of the RPS

Extraordinary General Meeting to vote on a Motion put forward by the Board of Trustees

On 5 March the Board held a Town Hall meeting to debate a Motion to amend our By Laws and re-elect me for a final term of two years as President. The Town Hall meeting was chaired by Mathew Lodge LRPS, formerly Deputy Chair of Trustees (recently co-opted to the Board).

The Motion was made with the unanimous support of the Board of Trustees and the RPS Nominations Committee, with the personal support of the Chief Executive Officer, and with the informal approval of the proposed By Law amendments by the Advisers to the Privy Council.

The Town Hall debate raised several important questions which will be covered in an updated FAQ document to be posted to the EGM webpage in advance of the EGM. This updated document is being prepared by Sophie Collins LRPS, Appointed Trustee.

There are, however, two questions that I would like to address personally.

The first of these is a question about **my willingness to continue in the role of President.**

I was fully expecting to end my six-year term as a Trustee at the AGM in September and to hand over the role to one of the new Trustees. It was only when none of the new Trustees was willing to stand as President that I agreed for the Motion to be put forward.

My willingness to continue in the role is predicated entirely on the need to ensure continuity of leadership at a time when the benefits of our efforts of the past few years are at last beginning to bear fruit. We now have almost 11,000 members - which means we are back to a pre-pandemic member base and this continues to grow month on month. Our operating budget is now getting closer to neutral which, in terms of long-term sustainability, is for the first time in over twenty years. Forcing new leadership as President when clearly no Trustee feels they are yet able to take on the role could never be considered to be in the best interest of the RPS.

Continuity of leadership is needed more now than ever before ... to ensure the long-term survival of the RPS we must keep going in the direction set by the Board in 2020-2021 and we must deal with existing challenges: we need to appoint and onboard a new senior Executive leader; to appoint a new Honorary Treasurer; to conclude the sale of RPS House and oversee the move into more appropriate and cost-effective premises; to develop and present the RPS Strategic Plan 2026-2030; and to deliver several strategically important initiatives including a new Framework for RPS Distinctions and a completely new website.

The second is a question about what I intend for **the Board to deliver over the next two years.**



In addition to being a registered charity and a body incorporated by Royal Charter, the RPS is also a membership organisation and this brings with it a whole raft of additional governance challenges. My priority, then, for the next two years - if the Motion is passed - is to ensure we have governance systems and processes in place to ensure on-going effective and sustainable leadership of the RPS long into the future. This will include:

- To consult with Members, Trustees, staff, and other stakeholders, on the draft five-year **Strategic Plan 2026-2030** that focuses entirely on our eight core programmes. This Plan is to be delivered under a robust financial framework that ensures a neutral operating budget, delivers enhanced member benefits, promotes greater member satisfaction, and ensures a higher level of member retention.
- To create effective leadership succession by **reinstating the office of President Elect** (before the AGM 2026) together with the design of a training programme (much like that from which I benefitted as President Elect in 2020) through which the Trustee elected to that office can become familiar with the demands and the complexities of the role of President. This would enable us to reverse the By Law change that is required by this Motion and thereafter rely on succession through the office of President Elect; the first holder of this reinstated office becoming President at the close of the AGM in 2027.
- As requested at the Town Hall, to explore the feasibility of **decoupling the roles of President and Chair of Trustees**, although this is something that I personally do not feel able to support because I believe it introduces an unnecessary additional tier of governance and a more complex leadership structure, when we have spent the past few years trying to simplify that structure and make it more agile and effective.
- To introduce **regular Town Hall meetings** where Members can question and debate with Trustees and the Executive Team on any topic of RPS governance or operations so that we can work together - as an inclusive membership organisation - to ensure long-term sustainability and encourage more member engagement.
- To **support the Executive team** and ensure we maintain the rigour and pace of operational improvements that Dan and his team have introduced to targets set by the Board in 2023 (viz. significant membership growth and financial sustainability).

The EGM at which Members will vote on this Motion will take place online on **Thursday 24 April**. I look forward to welcoming you to the meeting before I hand over to Mathew Lodge LRPS to oversee the vote. I sincerely hope you will take part in this important governance process and **vote in support of the Motion**. If you are unable to attend the EGM, please register your vote by email to proxy@rps.org quoting your name and membership number.

Thank you.

Simon Hill CPhot HonFRPS
President & Chair of Trustees