



The ROYAL COLLEGE *of*
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS MINUTES OF THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 35th AGM of The Royal College of Ophthalmologists was held on Tuesday, 23 May 2023 at the International Conference Centre (ICC).

The meeting requires 40 members present to be quorate, there were 53 people in the auditorium at the start of the meeting and more joined as the meeting progressed.

The President, Bernie Chang, welcomed members to the meeting.

1) To receive the 2022 Trustees' Report

This is on the College website: www.rcophth.ac.uk.

A link was sent to all members in Eye Mail on 30 April and it was referenced in the April 2023 issue of College News

2) To receive a report from the President

Professor Chang read the 2022 President's report.

It is in Appendix 1.

3) College Officers to receive questions on the work of the College

Professor Chang invited members to raise any questions about the work of the College.

Mr Christopher Tallents noted that the delegate fees for Congress did not have a separate category for retired members. He suggested that retired members should be able to attend future meetings without charge.

Mrs Evans was invited to respond. She observed that the College needed to find a balance of recognising the contributions of earlier generations and recognising that the cost of any benefit given to this group is borne by current members and that cost should be proportionate. She suggested that this matter should be considered by the College Officers and the senior management team in post after the AGM.

<p><u>Post meeting note.</u></p>
<p>Mr Tallents submitted the following proposal at the 2017 AGM Tuesday, 23 May 2017 at 4.00 p.m. at the Arena and Convention Centre, Liverpool.</p>

" From 2018, and for the years ahead, all College members who have at least 30 years uninterrupted membership, and who are fully retired from medical practice, will be offered Delegate status, at every Annual Conference, free of charge".

On 19 December 2017 Mr Tallents was informed that the matter had been discussed at the College's Finance Committee meeting, at Council and by the Trustee Board. It was agreed that the Annual Congress is primarily aimed at Health Care Professionals in practice and that it is not equitable to give fully retired Consultants free entry to the event.

No further questions were asked.

Members with any subsequent questions were invited to email president@rcophth.ac.uk

4) To receive the Financial Statements for 2022

These are on the College website: www.rcophth.ac.uk.

The Honorary Treasurer, Christopher Liu, thanked the interim Head of Finance and Operations, Anne Frater, for her hard work and expertise and thanked Anthony Carey, a Lay Trustee, who provided invaluable support.

The key issue to note is that on a turnover of £5.5m, the College has posted a loss close to £90,000 before an unrealised loss on investments. The investments have substantially bounced back since the year end. Efficiency savings are made where possible and additional income streams to support the work of the RCOphth are being investigated.

The Trustee Board has scrutinised the financial statements and commend them to the membership. Professor Liu called for a proposer and seconder.

Proposed by Mike Burdon
Andrew Jacks seconded the proposal

5) To re-appoint Sayer Vincent LLP as auditors to the College for the coming year.

Professor Liu stated that the Trustee Board is content with the service offered by Sayer Vincent and recommend that they continue as the College auditors. He called for a proposer and seconder.

Proposed by Rebecca Ford
John Sparrow seconded the proposal

6) To approve the proposed increases in annual subscription for 2024.

Professor Liu asked the members to support the Trustees recommendation to increase the subscription fees for 2024. For last year, 2022, members had been asked to agree an increase in subscriptions of 2.5%, a reasonable plan given the conditions prevailing at the 2021 AGM. However, in the 12 months to December 2022 the Consumer Price Index actually rose by 10.5%.

This year we are asking for an increase in consultant subscriptions of 6.2%. This means that there will still be a gap between inflationary pressures and the increase in subscriptions. We understand that this is a tough ask in the midst of a cost of living crisis but this below-inflation increase will enable the College to continue to serve our members and demonstrate our value and purpose.

The proposed increases are in-line with other Royal Colleges and subscriptions remain a tax-deductible expense.

The proposal requires a vote, a simple majority determines the result.

The proposed subscriptions were approved by 20 votes in favour, 4 votes against.

7) To receive the results of the appointment of College Officers and Trustees

The Honorary Secretary, Manoj Parulekar, reported:

Ben Burton has been elected as the next President of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists and will take office at the end of Congress.

He thanked the other six candidates who also stood for election and thanked Beverley Russell, a College staff member, who organised the process.

One of the original Lay Trustees, Brian Smith, stepped down in December 2022 and Anthony Carey was appointed to succeed him in the same month.

8) To receive the results of the elections of Council members

Mr Parulekar, reported:

East Anglia

Ben Burton's election as President has created a vacancy on Council. Jignesh Patel has been elected to succeed Ben.

Trent Region

Pankaj Puri has served two terms. Ricardo De Sousa Peixoto has been elected to succeed him.

North West Thames

Graham Duguid has served two terms. Niten Vig has been elected to succeed him.

Scotland East

Aravind Reddy has been returned unopposed for a second and final term of three years.

Northern Ireland

Richard Best has served one term. Julie Silvestri, who has previously been on Council, has agreed to serve as regional rep for one year.

9) Any other business

Professor Chang asked if there was any other business, there was none.

The President invited members to make any comments on the proceedings and repeated the invitation to ask questions of any of the College Officers. There were no comments from the floor.

He invited Kathy Evans, the out going CEO to say a few words. Mrs Evans thanked the President and the outgoing Council regional representatives and the Lay Trustees for all their contributions to the RCOphth.

She thanked the Vice President, Stephen Kaye, joint Honorary Secretaries: Manoj Parulekar and Mel Hingorani, the Honorary Treasurer, Christopher Liu for their guidance in turbulent times. She thanked the chairs: Rebecca Ford, Sarah Maling, Bill Newman, Garry Shuttleworth, Shoba Sivaprasad for their dedication.

This event is an excellent example of clinician and staff collaboration. Sobha Sivaprasad and the scientific committee have produced an exciting programme. Julie Hodgkinson has organised a wonderful congress. Members were encouraged to visit the College stand and speak to RCOphth staff about the positive developments ahead and the many projects soon to come to fruition.

The President thanked members for their attendance and declared that the AGM meeting had ended.

APPENDIX 1 - ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

The College has been working hard this year to raise the profile of Ophthalmology and promote standards of care.

The lifting of the final Covid restrictions this year brought new but equally daunting challenges. In particular, the backlog of patients who need our care has never been greater. Ophthalmology alone has over 600,000 patients waiting for treatment.

In England, we have continued working on the transformation of eyecare. I had the privilege of being on the panel that appointed the first National Clinical Director (NCD) for Eyecare in England. We would like to thank Louisa Wickham for taking on this demanding role. The RCOphth will be there to support our NCD with her vision and ongoing work.

This year we continued to push for improved collaboration between the NHS and the independent sector (IS) with regards to the provision of cataract surgery. Following the publication of a new NHS cataract specification, there is now an expectation that all NHS providers will offer cataract training and better access for patients. This includes those with more complex needs in the IS. Task and finish groups with representation from all sectors worked to further address some of the issues related to long term sustainability of eyecare services. This work concluded in December 2022 with further cataract contracting guidance aimed to address issues such as: non-contracted activity, conflicts of interest, ensuring patient choice is fully transparent and how to standardise the pathway and payment for post-operative care.

We have been active with our policy team in trying to engage the health minister and his shadow minister counterpart. The latter culminated in a useful meeting with the Labour health team which put us in good stead to build further relationships in the future.

Our work with 'The Eyes Have It' Group contributed to the All Parliamentary Party Group on Eye Health and Vision Impairment's call for more data and a national eye health strategy.

The RCOphth was acknowledged by the Welsh government for supporting the work of Andy Pyott who did a comprehensive review of the state of eyecare. This should lead to better investment in the workforce and infrastructure of eye departments. In Scotland, we are involved in the development of their cataract surgery standards. We are aiming to help their eye units achieve better efficiencies.

Within the College we are in the process of embedding our four values (Improvement, Inclusion, Innovation and Integrity) into all that we do. We will have a new CEO and President from May 2023. We hope that using these values will help guide the College through this period of change.

Our CEO, Kathy Evans announced her retirement this year. She has ably led our College for over 18 years and guided the RCOphth finances for 7 years before that and, on behalf of the College, I thank her for her excellent service.

A working group of clinicians and lay trustees have been set up to appoint a worthy successor to lead the RCOphth through a new phase of development.

I also want to take the opportunity to congratulate Ben Burton on his election as our next President. He can be assured that he will have a great team to support and guide him.

I want to thank the College staff, all committee and subcommittee chairs but most importantly you, our members here and overseas. The College can only function because of your continued support.

Finally, as this is my last annual report, I want to express my gratitude for everyone's support throughout my presidency. It has been an incredible honour to serve you.

APPENDIX 2 - MEMBERSHIP SUBS 2024 – RECOMMENDED BY THE TRUSTEE BOARD

CATEGORY	2023	2024 Proposal		%
	Fees	Fees	Increase	
UK Consultants	£581	£620	£39	6.2%
UK Fellows, Members, Diplomates, Affiliates (inc SAS doctors)	£445	£475	£30	6.2%
UK members with gross annual earnings up to £46,000 from medical sources	£368	£385	£17	4.3%
Trainee Affiliates and Trainee Fellows	£368	£385	£17	4.3%
UK Seniors (those retired from all medical practice)	£206	£210	£4	1.6%
Overseas Fellows, Members, Diplomates, Affiliates - Band A countries*	£327	£350	£23	6.5%
Overseas Fellows, Members, Diplomates, Affiliates - Band B, C and D countries*	£256	£275	£19	6.7%
Overseas Seniors (those retired from all medical practice)	£173	£185	£12	6.2%
Associate Member: UK and International Medical Students	£20	£25	Note 1	
Associate Member: UK and International Allied Health Care Professionals	£70	£80		

*The banding of countries is based on a World Bank classification. Band A countries include those such as Australia, Canada and the USA and are deemed richer than Band B countries as specified by the World Bank.