

**Minutes of the 73rd Annual General Meeting of the
Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
held on 26 November 2025 in person and by webinar**

Attendees:

In the Chair **Irma Donaldson** - Chair of the Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees:

Ruth Crampton – Country Representative for Northern Ireland
Marian Brady – General Trustee (Research and Development)
Frances Johnstone – General Trustee
Helen Robinson – Trustee, Country Representative England North
Viki Baker – Trustee, Country Representative England South
Pauline Downie – Trustee, Country Representative Scotland

RCSLT staff who are members of RCSLT:

Glenn Carter – Head of Scotland Office
Pippa Cotterill – Head of Wales Office
Kathleen Graham – Senior Project Manager
Gemma Jones – Project Assistant
Jess Lane - Research & Outcomes Officer
Sarah Lambert – Research & Outcomes Officer
Kathryn Moyse – Outcomes & Informatics Manager
Ruth Sedgewick – Head of Northern Ireland Office

Other RCSLT Members present: 373 other RCSLT members with voting rights attended.

Apologies received from: None

Introduction

The Chair, Irma Donaldson, welcomed everyone to the 73rd Annual General Meeting and introduced the panel:

- Rebecca Sheeran – Chair of Finance & Resources Committee
- Steve Jamieson – Chief Executive Officer
- Karen Willis – Company Secretary

1. NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING

The Chair then read the Notice convening the meeting.

“Welcome to the 73rd Annual General Meeting of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists. For those of you who do not know me, I am Irma Donaldson, Chair of the Board of Trustees. The calling notice for this meeting, together with the Agenda, explanatory notes and proxy voting forms were circulated to all Members of the RCSLT in the e-newsletter of 16 October 2025 and by letter where necessary. All Full Members are eligible to vote at this meeting”.

When we come to vote, ordinary resolutions are passed by a simple majority of votes cast. Special resolutions require a majority of 75% eligible to vote and present in this meeting. We are going to have a test run of the online poll procedure in a moment.

The Chair noted that there were more than 20 members online or in person who were eligible to vote so the meeting was declared quorate.

Members were then given the following housekeeping tips:

- Use the Q&A function to ask questions to the panellists. We will answer questions about the special resolution when we come to that resolution. We have allowed time for questions about the trustees' annual report and the accounts at the end of the presentation.
- All voting will be done via poll – a practice poll was undertaken
- You may leave and re-enter the event at any time with the same link
- If you have any additional needs, please feel free to send a private chat to the Zoom administrator

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF AGM (9 October 2024)

The Minutes of the AGM held on 9 October 2024 had been circulated and were taken as read.

A motion to sign the Minutes as a correct record was proposed by Pippa Cotterill and seconded by Jess Carter.

A majority of members present and eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (72%) and the motion was carried.

The minutes will be signed by the Chair at the conclusion of the AGM.

3. PRESENTATION, CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (2024/25)

The Chair introduced the Trustees Annual Report 2024/25 which summarised the key achievements of the financial year ending 31 March 2025. This has been available on the RCSLT website since the beginning of October and was also sent in hard copy to those members who requested it.

The Chair presented highlights from the Trustees Annual Report for 2024/25 giving an overview of achievements in line with the eight focus areas set out in the Strategic Vision for 2022-2027.

The **first ordinary resolution**, to consider and adopt the Trustees Annual Report for 2024/25, was proposed by Pam Enderby and seconded by Helen Robinson.

A majority of members present and eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (74%) and the resolution was carried.

4. PRESENTATION, CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND AUDITORS REPORT (2024/25)

The Chair introduced Rebecca Sheeran, Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee, who gave a short presentation on the annual accounts and auditors report (2024/25). The text of her presentation follows.

Financial Objectives

As Trustees of the organisation, the Board is responsible for ensuring that the charity is solvent, well run and able to deliver its charitable objects. The overall aim of the RCSLT's financial strategy is to maintain long-term financial viability in order to achieve the objectives in the strategic plan. In order to measure performance against this overall objective, the Board has approved six financial objectives which are shown on the slide. Four of these objectives were met during the year ended 31 March 2025 while the board approved that two of these objectives could be waived in 2024/25. As part of the development of the new Five-Year Vision for 2022-2027 the Board has reviewed its financial objectives and regularly reviews its spending plans to ensure that its financial objectives will be met.

Income and Expenditure Account

The Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee reported on the Income and Expenditure Account for the financial year ended 31 March 2025.

Income totalled £6.1 million – this was £300,000 more than last year with growth in membership subscriptions and commercial trading activities. Expenditure increased by £500,000 to £6.7 million with increased spend on the development of professional guidance. This resulted in a deficit of £600,000 before investment gains. The net return on investments was a gain of £100,000.

Overall funds have decreased by £500,000.

Income

The majority of RCSLT's income is generated through membership fees, which account for 84% of total income.

A further 8% of income comes from commercial trading activities, which include the sale of advertising space and royalties earned on subscriptions to the International Journal. RCSLT also receives smaller amounts of income from other sources such as events and conferences, investments, grants, and legacies and donations.

Expenditure

Our members are at the heart of everything we do.

With 84% of our income coming directly from membership fees, we make sure every pound delivers real value — strengthening your practice, your profession, and your community.

Quality Practice – 48%

We invest in the evidence, skills and partnerships that help members deliver the best possible care — supporting research, professional growth and co-production with service users and families.

Being an Innovative Organisation – 16%

We're building a forward-looking, member-led organisation — creating opportunities for members to lead the profession and ensuring RCSLT remains effective, ambitious and proud to represent you.

Active Influencing – 30%

We amplify the profession's voice — championing the impact of speech and language therapy, promoting equality and belonging, and making sure members' expertise shapes policy and practice across the UK.

Every membership fee makes a difference — powering a stronger, fairer, and more confident voice for speech and language therapy.

Balance Sheet

I would now like to talk to you about the balance sheet for RCSLT. Overall we have a healthy balance sheet with net assets of £8,000,000. This includes fixed assets of £3,400,000 including the building at White Hart Yard and IT equipment. We also have £4,000,000 of investments managed by external fund managers. Overall Net Assets have decreased by £500,000. RCSLT has chosen to run a small deficit budget in recent years balancing the use of reserves against increasing membership fees. It is important to note that our reserves levels are being reduced, but this is part of an agreed plan of expenditure to help us fulfil our strategic aims. More details of this spend will be given later. In common with many charities RCSLT has a number of measures of financial stability including how much free reserves we hold. Free reserves is a measure of how much spare funds the organisation has and the Board has set a target range of 6-10 months' worth of operating costs. RCSLT remains in a very sound financial position with free reserves at 31 March 2025 of 6.6 months.

Audit

Under company law the trustees of RCSLT are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs. In preparing the financial statements the trustees are also responsible for assessing the RCSLT's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees have concluded that RCSLT is in sound financial health and the auditors have no concerns to report. With respect to the 2024/25 Accounts, our auditors, HaysMac LLP, have concluded that: the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of RCSLT's finances as at 31 March 2025 and they have given us an unqualified audit report.

Key Projects

Each year the Trustees review how much they plan to spend on projects to support members and service users either directly or indirectly. We are planning to spend £606,000 in 2025/26 on projects. We still hold £486,000 in the Innovation Fund to support future projects for the benefit of members in line with the Five-Year Vision. A

Draft AGM 2025 minutes to go on website for members' advance information, but subject to formal acceptance at 2026 AGM

Fixed Asset Fund of £1,100,000 has also been established and this represents amounts already invested in fixed assets used in the charity's work. The table here highlights the bigger planned projects. A full table is in the published accounts on our website.

Looking at some of the bigger projects, we will continue to invest in professional guidance for members with £36,000 set aside in 2025/26. Research and development continues to be an area of investment with £32,000 set aside. £48,000 is planned to be spent on projects relating to the collection and use of data to support workforce planning.

£66,000 is set aside to support projects relating to outcome measures and health informatics, including the further development of the RCSLT Online Outcome Tool, better known as ROOT. Finally, we continue to invest in our digital development, with £216,000 planned to be spent in 2025/26, including a major redevelopment of the CPD Diary.

Membership Fees

Membership fees are the single largest long-term source of income we have. They accounted for 84% of total income in 2024/25. Looking forward, RCSLT aims to maintain the ongoing level of services offered to members but recognises the challenges of inflation. The RPI for the twelve months up to September 2025 was 4.5%.

It is essential that RCSLT retains a robust financial position and continues to meet its financial objectives and KPIs.

The Board of Trustees has therefore approved an average increase in membership fees of 4% for the year 2025/26.

For Practising Members, the increase equates to an additional £13 per year. Membership fees for all categories will be published in Bulletin in January 2026.

In summary, the RCSLT is in sound financial health and we continue to prepare for and respond to the challenges presented by the less benign and uncertain economic times we face, meaning that we can continue working together to provide a voice for the profession and improve lives of service users."

The **second ordinary resolution**, to consider and adopt the annual accounts and auditors report for 2024/25, was proposed by Rachel Barton and seconded by Kate Hughes.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (78%) and the resolution was carried.

5. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS AND FIXING OF REMUNERATION FOR 2024/25

The **third ordinary resolution**, to appoint HaysMac LLP as RCSLT's auditors for 2025/26 and for the Board to fix their remuneration, was proposed by Frances Johnstone and seconded by Ruth Crampton.

The majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (78%) and the resolution was carried.

6. RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD

The Chair summarised the work undertaken by the Nominations Committee in selecting new Board members. In July, the Board approved the recommendations made by the Nominations Committee and members in this general meeting were asked to ratify the appointment of the two new Trustees. The biographies of these Trustees were posted on the website along with the papers for the AGM.

Each ratification was taken as a separate resolution.

The **fourth ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Sandra Robinson as General Trustee, was proposed by Pamela Enderby and was seconded by Alex John.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (81%) and the resolution was carried.

The **fifth ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Laura Mizzi as General Trustee, was proposed by Ruth Sedgwick and seconded by Marian Brady.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (79%) and the resolution was carried.

The **sixth ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Deanne Rennie as General Trustee, was proposed by Mary Heritage and seconded by Marian Brady.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (80%) and the resolution was carried.

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The **seventh ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Cara Bethell as Country Representative for England South, was proposed by Ruth Crampton and seconded by Jan Baerselman.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (80%) and the resolution was carried.

The **eighth ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Marian Brady as General Trustee (Research), was proposed by Kate Powell and seconded by Pam Enderby.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (82%) and the resolution was carried.

The **ninth ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Helen Robinson as Country Representative for England North, was proposed by Laura Pring and seconded by Louisa Reeves.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (78%) and the resolution was carried.

The **tenth ordinary resolution**, to ratify the appointment of Fiona Gardiner as Country Representative for Scotland, was proposed by Pippa Cotterill and seconded by Lucy Rochfort.

A majority of members eligible to vote at the meeting or by proxy were in favour (76%) and the resolution was carried.

7. REPORT OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR 2024/25

The Chair presented a series of slides showing the composition of the Board for the period 2025/26:

Chair – Irma Donaldson

Deputy Chair – Eve Baird

Lay Trustee (Digital) – Sundeep Sidhu

Lay Trustee (and Chair of FRC) – Rebecca Sheeran

Lay Trustee (HR/Organisational Development) – Anna Costello

Country Representative for England North – Helen Robinson

Country Representative for England South – Cara Bethell

Country Representative for Northern Ireland – Ruth Crampton

Country Representative for Scotland – Fiona Gardiner

Country Representative for Wales – Lauren Edwards
General Trustee for Research and Development – Professor Marian Brady
General Trustee – Deanne Rennie
General Trustee – Sandra Robinson
General Trustee – Laura Mizzi
General Trustee – Jemma Haines

The Chair reported that the following trustees will be finishing their term of office at the end of the AGM:

- Angela Shimada
- Frances Johnstone
- Vicki Baker
- Pauline Downie

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no further business.

9. Q&A

Steve Jamieson responded to one question regarding any merchandise remaining from the RCSLT's 80th anniversary event.

10. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair thanked members for attending the meeting.

The meeting was closed at 13:24.

Appendix:

RCSLT Staff in attendance:

Steve Jamieson – Chief Executive Officer

Derek Munn – Director of Policy & Public Affairs

Cara McDonagh – Director of Engagement & Communications

Karen Willis – Director of Finance & Resources/Company Secretary

Niall Larkin – Head of Governance & Strategy (minutes)

Jazmin Padhiar – Events & Engagement Manager

Justyna Szeller – Events & Engagement Officer

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