
ROYAL STATISTICAL SOCIETY

The one hundred and eighty-seventh Annual General Meeting of the Society

Wednesday 8th September 2021, 12:50pm-1.30pm

RSS International Conference

Manchester Central Convention Complex, Windmill St, Manchester M2 3GX

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
3. Presentation on the Society's work
4. Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2020
5. Subscriptions - to consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolution:

'That, as from 1 January 2022:

- *The basic member subscription, as defined in Bylaw 1(c), shall be held at £142 per annum for a standard member;*
- *the additional CStat fee shall be held at £46;*
- *the additional GradStat fee shall be held at £10 per annum;*
- *the Data Analyst fee shall be held at £142 in line with the basic member subscription; any changes to Data Analyst subscriptions will reflect that of the standard membership;*
- *the additional journal subscription rate will remain at £42 per journal;*
- *the direct debit discount for those paying the full subscription rate, shall be reduced from £10 to £5; and*
- *the concessionary subscription rate for members in economically developing area countries or on a career break, and who do not pay by direct debit, shall be reduced by £5.'*

6. Election of the auditor for 2022:

- *Members are asked to re-appoint Sayer Vincent of Invicta House 108-114 Golden Lane London, EC1Y 0TL as the Society's auditors, to hold office until the conclusion of the next AGM.*

7. Close of meeting

Royal Statistical Society

Minutes of the 187th Annual General Meeting held on
Wednesday 8th September 2021, 12:50pm-1.30pm
RSS International Conference
Manchester Central Convention Complex, Windmill St, Manchester M2 3GX

Present: Professor Sylvia Richardson (RSS President, in the Chair), Fellows of the Society and guests.

In attendance: Stian Westlake, Chief Executive; Nicola Emmerson, Director of Membership and Professional Affairs; Jo Fishwell, Governance and Committees Officer.

Attending Remotely: Kevin Barnes, Honorary Treasurer.

Apologies: Jon Forster, Vice President for Academic Affairs.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The President, Sylvia Richardson, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that resolutions would only be passed by this meeting where the majority of attendees voted in favour of them. The voting process was explained, and attendees were reminded that only members of the Society were eligible to vote.

2. MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S MEETING

The President asked members to review the minutes from last year's AGM, which was held online on Wednesday 16th September 2020.

RESOLUTION: The 186th Annual General Meeting minutes (available in hard-copy at the meeting and electronically via the RSS website) were taken as read.

3. PRESENTATION ON THE SOCIETY'S WORK

The President and Stian Westlake, the Chief Executive of the Society, gave an overview of the Society's work over the past twelve months. Some of the key points included:

- Covid-19: in 2020, the RSS established a Covid-19 Taskforce. This group has provided detailed and high-profile advice to the UK government on Covid-19, and played an active role in the media debate.
- Data Science: in 2021, the Society convened a Data Science Task Force of international experts to drive forward our work in this area - details of this can be found on the RSS website.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI): the RSS has developed a new trustee role, Honorary Officer for EDI, to provide high level support for this work.
- Accreditation: the RSS has -

- Launched a new professional membership title - Data Analyst - to recognise good statistical knowledge at a modular level.
- Developed a competency-based route to our GradStat title, for eligible career-young statisticians.
- Introduced the RSS Quality Mark, an accreditation route for individual degree modules and data skills training from other education providers.

4. 2020 ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The President welcomed Kevin Barnes, RSS Treasurer, to the meeting. Kevin presented the Society's 2020 financial year-end accounts.

Kevin drew members' attention to how well the RSS had performed despite the challenges posed by Covid-19. He noted that whilst the Society's income had been affected, there was a significant reduction in expenses which meant that the net shortfall was lower than predicted. Kevin advised that the reduction in income had been driven by the RSS not running any in person events for most of the year, moving the annual conference online and generating less activity through the trading subsidiary. However, the reduction in face to face meetings had also led to substantial savings, and management costs had reduced. Overall, a loss of £85,000 was incurred during 2020.

Kevin went on to provide an update on the deficit in the Society's (closed) defined benefit pension scheme, which increased by £1.1m in 2020 to nearly £1.4m. Kevin confirmed that the Society has a recovery plan in place, and is in discussions about how the deficit might need to be adjusted. Members should expect a further update at the 2022 AGM.

Kevin advised that despite the disruption of the last year and the pension deficit, reserves remain healthy at £2.5m, of which nearly £2m is unrestricted.

In closing, Kevin said that when considering the approval of the accounts, members could take assurance from the rigour of the external audit, including the auditor's review of the Society's going concern status, and the diligent work of the RSS Audit and Risk Committee.

RESOLUTION: The AGM approved the Annual report and audited accounts for 2020 as an accurate and fair report on the normal financial activities of the Society in the year ending 31 December 2020.

5. MEMBER SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Stian explained that each year Council proposes a small inflationary increase to member subscription rates. However, he advised that this year Council recommended an overall freeze on rates, in view of the financial pressure Covid-19 has put on many people.

Stian went on to explain that Council had provisionally recommended that, from 2023, the RSS should return to an incremental increase in subscription rates. He noted that Council would discuss this matter again next year, and their final recommendation would be brought to the 2022 AGM.

During the Q&A part of this item, Stian clarified the meaning of the concessionary subscription rate for members in economically developed area counties.

RESOLUTION: Members agreed that, as from 1 January 2022:

- The basic member subscription, as defined in Bylaw 1(c), shall be held at £142 per annum for a standard member;
- the additional CStat fee shall be held at £46;
- the additional GradStat fee shall be held at £10 per annum;
- the Data Analyst fee shall be held at £142 in line with the basic member subscription; any changes to Data Analyst subscriptions will reflect that of the standard membership;
- the additional journal subscription rate will remain at £42 per journal;
- the direct debit discount for those paying the full subscription rate, shall be reduced from £10 to £5; and
- the concessionary subscription rate for members in economically developing area countries or on a career break, and who do not pay by direct debit, shall be reduced by £5.

6. ELECTION OF THE AUDITOR

The President invited Kevin Barnes to speak to this item.

Kevin advised that Sayer Vincent have been the Society's auditors for a number of years. In 2019, there was a re-tendering process, and bids were invited from other firms. Following this competitive process, Sayer Vincent were reappointed. In addition, Kevin explained that a new audit partner – Joanna Pitman – was appointed in 2019 to ensure independence.

Both Kevin and Stian noted the high-quality, professional service that the Society has received from Sayer Vincent.

RESOLUTION: Members agreed to appoint Sayer Vincent of Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TL as the Society's auditors, to hold the office until the next Annual General Meeting concludes.

Prepared by:

Signature of RSS President: