



Royal Society for Asian Affairs: Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 127 Piccadilly, London and online on 11 July 2023 at 17.30 BST

The Chairman, Sophie Ibbotson, opened the meeting and welcomed the Society's President, Professor Peter Frankopan. Eighty-six members were present in person and twenty online.

Reports of the Officers of the Society

The Chairman, Treasurer (Andrew Cartwright) and CEO (Michael Ryder) presented their reports for 2022. Full texts are available from the RSAA office on request.

Questions

One member asked if, in light of the recent fall in the value of the Society's investments, a greater proportion of the Society's financial assets should be held as cash. The Treasurer said that the RSAA's investment portfolio was important as a source of reliable income. It was managed on the Society's behalf by CCLA, whose performance had been excellent in very difficult circumstances. Income had remained steady despite significant market volatility. The Finance and Investment Committee reviewed the Society's investments quarterly and would continue to do so, making adjustments where necessary.

One member asked for clarification about the items sold at auction in 2015-16. Members had been told at the time that they were books of which duplicates existed. The CEO said that with only two exceptions the items sold were not books but manuscripts, collections of photographs and other unique items. As examples, the Chapman collection of photographs was extensively annotated by Chapman with details of the locations and context in which the photographs had been taken. A copy of the journal of Capt Shakespear, was extensively annotated by Douglas Carruthers from whom the Society had received it. The items that had been sold were not, in any meaningful sense, duplicates. Similar considerations applied to all of the auctioned items. What had been said to members on this point was not true.

A member asked if the Dinner Club and lunches would be reinstated. The CEO said that the Board had discontinued the Dinner Club in 2019 because it consistently lost money. There were no plans to revive it. Lunches depended on the lecture venues, and if facilities permitted lunches would be trialled again.

Adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts

It was proposed and agreed that the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022 be adopted.

Appointment of Independent Examiners

It was proposed and agreed that Prentis & Co of 115 Milton Road, Cambridge CB4 1XE be reappointed as Independent Examiners for 2023.

Election of trustees

Kerry Brown, Simon Hayes, Steve King, Andrew McKee, Lucy Spink and Eleanor Thorp were elected unopposed.

A vote of thanks to those trustees leaving the Board (Andrew Cartwright, Robin Lamb, Bijan Omrani and David Taylor) was proposed and agreed.

The meeting concluded at 18.00.