

AGM minutes

THE INSTITUTION OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERS

Minutes of the One Hundred and Third Annual General Meeting

The ONE HUNDRED AND THIRD Annual General Meeting of The Institution of Chemical Engineers was held as a fully virtual meeting on 10 June 2025.

PRESENT:

In addition to Mr M E Apsey (President) in the Chair, Professor R Ocone (Deputy President), Mr D E Edwards (Honorary Treasurer) and Ms Y Baker (Chief Executive), a further 37 Voting members of the Institution attended the meeting. Four non-members were also in attendance.

APOLOGIES:

Although no formal apologies for absence were received a further 32 members registered but did not join the meeting.

NOTICE:

The President welcomed all members to the One Hundred and Third Annual General Meeting, introduced those on the 'virtual' platform, declared a quorum present and the meeting formally open at 08:05. The Chief Executive then read the notice convening the meeting.

DEATHS:

Members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect for those members whose deaths had been recorded during the period 1 June 2024 and 31 May 2025.

MINUTES:

The motion was proposed by Professor Jonathan Seville that the minutes of the One Hundred and Second Annual General Meeting held on 11 June 2024 and published in the April 2025 issue of *The Chemical Engineer*, should be noted as a correct record of the meeting. This was seconded by Professor Eva Sorensen before being put to the vote. The motion was carried (22 votes in support; 0 against) and the President confirmed that the minutes were duly approved as a correct record.

ANNUAL REVIEW:

Reflecting the priority areas for the Institution identified in the 2024 Business Plan, significant progress had been achieved across all areas of the Institution during 2024; increasing the membership, building its profile with policy makers, and making IChemE more welcoming and inclusive to all those working in and contributing to chemical, biochemical and process engineering.

Membership had continued to grow at a sustainable rate with a 3.5% increase in overall numbers alongside a 1% improvement in member retention. While the significant number of new student members had been particularly pleasing, the challenge for the Institution would now be to keep them engaged and supported as they grow their careers.

The provision for graduates and those in the early stages of their careers was also strengthened. The President had had opportunity to meet many of the younger members and he reflected that around 35% of the IChemE membership was now under the age of 35 with a high proportion of those active in Institution life.

Targeted efforts to attract and retain members of all ages and career stages had continued, assisted by the strengthening of the member-facing teams in both the UK and Australia as they liaised with employers, universities, member groups and individuals.

To further improve the member experience, membership application processes had been streamlined, focusing on removing barriers, embedding diversity and inclusion, and ensuring our processes are welcoming to all while still maintaining standards.

As the Institution strives to build further its reputation as an important and influential voice with government, policy makers and other influencers in the UK, Australia and beyond, 2024 saw a number of highly successful engagements take place with government officials and Ministers, and a number of meaningful and sustainable links made with government committees and departments. This was especially highlighted through the series of round table discussions on key topics hosted by the Institution.

Recognising new and emerging talent is hugely important and 2024 saw the successful pilot of the Young Engineers Awards for Innovation and Sustainability (YEAIS), celebrating ideas and innovation emerging in the chemical engineering profession.

Our efforts to engage with young people and their influencers are now being seen to bear fruit with UK University data showing a 17% increase in applications to chemical and process engineering courses in the last 12 months, including a 25% increase in the number of girls applying.

Training courses and events continued to be popular in 2024, including Hazards 34 and the Global Awards. However, conscious of the pressures around training budgets and sponsorship as the world faces new economic challenges, the Institution needs to ensure that their offer remains relevant, competitive and compelling into the future.

IChemE exists to represent and support the profession. The President acknowledged that this would not be possible without the many volunteers who shared their expertise and contributed to the achievements of the Institution in a wide range of roles. In closing, he thanked all the volunteers around the world and encouraged members to get involved to help ensure that we continued to build an Institution ready for the future whilst still being rightly proud of its past.

TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mr Apsey then invited Mr Edwards to read the Auditor's Report and present the Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Mr Edwards confirmed that the accounts had been compiled in accordance with the UK Accounting Standards. The accounts and the internal controls in place had been scrutinised and verified by the Institution's independent external auditors, RSM UK Audit LLP, and had, once again, been given a clean bill of health with no audit or accounting issues identified.

2024 had been a strong year financially for the Institution generating net income of just over £1.2m in unrestricted funds.

IChemE

Overall, income had increased by 10% with the most significant increases coming from IChemE's training course and event activity, royalty fees on IChemE journals and subscriptions to IChemE's Safety Centre. Costs had increased in line with income and remained controlled.

As a result of the positive performance in 2024, the level of unrestricted general reserves funds held by the Institution at year end had increased to just over £9.1m, with the designated fund of £350,000 being carried forward to fund IT projects in 2025. Due to market movements impacting the assets and liabilities in the defined benefit pension scheme, together with the annual contributions into the scheme, the pension scheme deficit had reduced to around £1.8m.

The Trustees continued to review the level of reserves held and the reserves policy and they remained satisfied that the level of reserves held were sufficient to protect the Institution from risk of insolvency or serious disruption to its work.

In closing, the Treasurer confirmed that the Institution remained in a healthy position financially and was well placed to deliver against its strategy.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS:

The motion was proposed by Mrs Helen Ramsay that RSM UK should be re-appointed as the Institution's auditors for the next session, and also that the Board of Trustees should be authorised to determine the Auditor's remuneration for the year ended 31 December 2025. This was seconded by Mr Nigel Hirst before being put to the vote. The motion was carried (27 for; 0 against) and the President confirmed that RSM UK Audit LLP would be duly appointed as the Institution's auditors for the next session and that the Board of Trustees were authorised to determine the Auditor's remuneration.

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND RESULTS OF TRUSTEE ELECTIONS:

The Chief Executive reported that four vacancies had been announced in the call for nominations: the roles of Deputy President, Treasurer, Vice President (Qualifications), and Regional/Ordinary Member (UK seat).

Only one eligible nomination had been received for each of the roles of Deputy President and Treasurer.

As multiple nominations had been received for the remaining roles, a ballot of Voting Members had been held. Turnout in the election had been 5.2% with Alan Harper (Vice President (Qualifications)) and Tom Whatley (Regional/Ordinary Member (UK seat)) being elected.

The Chief Executive then announced the confirmed Trustee appointments for the 2025/2026 year.

PRESIDENT: Professor R Ocone; DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Dr O Folayan; TREASURER: Mrs E Hallifax; PAST PRESIDENT: Mr M E Apsey; ORDINARY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: Mr P McLaughlin; Mrs H V M Ramsay; Ms A Vargas-Colwill; VICE PRESIDENTS: Professor A Harper (Vice President – Qualifications); Professor J Cordiner (Vice President – Learned Society); Mrs A Hosey (Vice President – Member Engagement); REGIONAL MEMBERS: Mr T Muchatuta (RoW); Mr T Whatley (UK).

Finally, the Chief Executive announced that elections had not been necessary for any of the Congress vacancies.

ANNUAL REPORT OF ICHEME CONGRESS:

The President invited the Chair of Congress, Mr R Peeling, to introduce the annual report of Congress activities.

Mr Peeling reported that Congress had held two online sessions during the previous year, when they had considered a wide range of topics. In a joint session with the Board of Trustees they had discussed the question of what key chemical engineering knowledge is and whether it would change in the future. Congress had also reviewed the new Climate Change Briefing prior to its release in time for COP29. Other discussions centred around motivations

for becoming Chartered, the importance of continuing professional development (CPD) and what members expect from IChemE.

In order to better reflect the type and geographical distribution of IChemE members, Congress took an important step to restructure its membership and the transition to this new structure began in the 2025 elections. This year's elections had seen one Congress member re-elected as well as nine new members welcomed, which brought the total membership to 27 from 41 available seats.

Part of the role of Congress was to assess and report on the Institution's business strategy and accounts, and Congress members have observed and approve of the continuing progress towards developing the Institution to serve both its members and society. Congress commended the work of the Trustees and the management in this continuing achievement, noting the desire to keep focus on future needs.

Finally, Mr Peeling remarked that Congress could not function without the support of the IChemE staff at Rugby, and specifically acknowledged the support of the Chief Executive, Yvonne Baker, and other members of staff who had helped Congress over the past 12 months. As this would be his last report to the AGM as he stood down from the role of Chair of Congress, Mr Peeling reported that he had enjoyed the experience and believed the contribution of Congress to the Institution was highly beneficial.

QUESTIONS ARISING FROM THE ANNUAL REVIEW, FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OR CONGRESS REPORT:

No members' questions arising from the Annual Review, financial statements or report of Congress were received.

FORMAL HANDOVER:

Mr Apsey thanked all IChemE members for their support throughout his term in office. It had been an honour to serve as President and he wished Professor Ocone well as she took over the role of leading the Institution. Professor Ocone then received the Chain of Office and Mr Apsey congratulated her on becoming IChemE's 84th President.

Professor Ocone presented Mr Apsey with the Past President's Medal as a mark of appreciation for his outstanding contribution to the Institution.

VOTE OF THANKS:

Professor Stephen Richardson proposed a vote of thanks to the Past President, Honorary Officers, retiring members of the Board of Trustees and retiring members of Congress.

On behalf of IChemE's members, he expressed sincere gratitude for the hard work and dedication of the Past President, Honorary Officers, and retiring members of both the Board of Trustees and Congress.

In concluding, Professor Richardson emphasised the generosity with which Trustees and members of Congress, all of whom were volunteers, gave of their time and effort to make the Institution what it was. He wished all those retiring from office every success in the future.

CLOSURE:

The President, Professor R Ocone, declared the meeting closed at 08:29.