Notice of Extraordinary General Meeting

Wednesday 16 October 2019 – 10:45–11:15
College Court Conference Centre and Hotel, Knighton, Leicester, LE2 3UF

An Extraordinary General Meeting of The British Psychological Society (the Society) is to be held on 16 October 2019 at College Court Conference Centre and Hotel, Knighton, Leicester, LE2 3UF commencing at 10.45am for the purpose of considering and, if the members think fit, passing the resolutions as set out in the following Notice of Resolutions. All members are invited to attend.

As you will see from the Resolutions set out in the Notice, the Society is seeking members’ consent to make changes to the Rules of the Society, which will enable the Society to offer more flexibility in respect of methods of payment of subscriptions and to provide for a simplification of the current complex system of subscription rates.

We are also taking the opportunity to update the Rules in line with best practice to delete reference to gender and we are expressly incorporating a provision enabling members to receive notices and information and accompanying documents and information in electronic form and via our website. This is a long overdue change and will enable the Society to contact members quickly, safely and in the most cost efficient manner.

Yours faithfully

Carole Allan
Honorary General Secretary
Notice of Extraordinary General Meeting

Notice is hereby given of an Extraordinary General Meeting of The British Psychological Society to be held:

On 16 October 2019 commencing at 10.45am
At College Court Conference Centre and Hotel, Knighton, Leicester, LE2 3UF
For the purpose of considering and, if the members think fit, passing the following resolutions relating to the Rules of the Society as set out below.

The current Rules of the Society are set out on the Society’s website www.bps.org.uk/societyrules

Resolutions

RESOLUTION 1

The Rules shall be amended throughout to ensure that they are gender neutral in language.

RESOLUTION 2

Rule 2. The definition of ‘Schedule of Subscriptions’ to be amended and to be re-defined as:

Schedule of Subscriptions shall mean the annual schedule which details the subscription rates payable by members at the rates prevailing as of the first of January of each year, and published on the Society’s website.

RESOLUTION 3

Rules 12, 13 and 14 shall be deleted and replaced by the following Rules:

Rule 12. Notices to members or any other person entitled to receive such notice may be given by email, post or by means of the Society’s website (provided, in the latter case, that all relevant persons are alerted to the fact that, in a particular case or cases, notice will be given by this means) and may be included with, or be part of, a publication of the Society.

Rule 13: Where any document or information is sent by or to the Society:

a) By email, it is deemed to have been received on the same day that it was sent;

b) By means of a website, it is deemed to have been received when the material was first made available on the website;

c) By post, it is deemed to have been received 48 hours (including Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays) after it was posted.

RESOLUTION 4

Rule 14. Every member shall from time to time notify the Society of their email address and postal address. Notices of general meetings need not be sent to a member who does not register an email address with the Society.

RESOLUTION 5

Rule 15. The existing Rule 15, 15.1 and 15.2 to be deleted and replaced with the following:

Each Member shall pay an annual subscription in accordance with the rates approved by the Trustees, adopting a method of payment approved by the Society as available to members (which shall include the opportunity to pay by instalments) PROVIDED THAT* no annual increase in core subscription fees may exceed the increase in the Retail Prices Index (as determined on 1 September of the year prior to the subscription year) plus 3% without a membership ballot.

RESOLUTION 6

Rule 17. The existing Rule 17 to be deleted in its entirety.

RESOLUTION 7

Rule 18. The existing Rule 18 to be deleted in its entirety.

RESOLUTION 8

Rule 71. The existing Rule 71 to be deleted in its entirety.

By order of the board of trustees

Carole Allan, Honorary General Secretary
Dated 29 July 2019

* The proviso reflects the Resolution approved by the members in 2012.
Rationale for the changes

The Society has been reviewing feedback from its members and recent leavers’ surveys, along with an internal review of systems and processes relating to the Society Rules. Within those rules, particularly the existing section on Subscriptions (i.e. items 15.0 to 19.0) there are a number of operational requirements that are hindering the Society in making progress in improving the member experience while also ensuring Society membership is more accessible and affordable for all.

The current rules place operational restraints on the Society and act as a barrier to members by stating payment methods, payment terms, payment methods and minimum amounts of direct debits, all of which are outdated and do not reflect the way many of our members live their lives. Added to this is a restraint on the Society in terms of managing subscription cycles to particular times and dates, which put unnecessary burdens on all members to pay in a particular way at a particular time.

The resolutions presented today focus on delivering a more flexible, agile and transparent way of managing member subscriptions with a view to creating a positive and up-to-date member experience. Key principles behind the changes include:

- Improving the member experience;
- Improved accessibility for those who meet the member criteria;
- Affordability – i.e. the opportunity to pay monthly rather than annually or quarterly;
- Agility – a faster and smoother application process;
- Transparency – i.e. clear and transparent payment/fee structure based on the member’s anniversary.

We believe the following benefits will be experienced by members as a result of the subscriptions changes:

- The Society will no longer impose a full subscription payment up front at the point of joining – the Society will be moving to offer Direct Debit options from day one of joining the Society, thus removing the barrier of paying a full 12 months’ subscriptions up front. This is currently a barrier to Student Members and Graduate Members in particular. This change is in line with standard practice in other professional bodies.

- The Society will remove the requirement for partial year payment for those joining in the second part of the year. As above this removes a barrier and financial burden to new members in particular, particularly those joining from July onwards. This also avoids a requirement for a partial fee followed almost immediately by a full subscription for the following year. It also means those joining in October are not subject to six months’ fees for three months of membership.

- Simplification of subscriptions – members will be able to join at a time of their choosing and their renewal will run on the anniversary of their joining as opposed to the Society’s own required date in line with the existing subscriptions process. This will avoid overly complex subscriptions requirements of partial payments in one year to another, which are currently confusing and also operationally difficult to maintain.

- No administration fee for Direct Debit Payments.

- Graduate Membership – There are some rules that currently disadvantage Graduate Members which the Society wishes to remove to create a fairer access and to be more affordable.

For the Society this approach offers the opportunity to incentivise membership recruitment and retention.

All other rules relating to subscriptions remain unchanged.