

Minutes of QLS Annual General Meeting 2024

Date:	11 December 2024	Time: 5:03–5:26pm
Location:	Auditoriums 1-2, Level 2, Law Society House, 179 Ann St, Brisbane	
Ordinary Members Present:	President Rebecca Fogerty, Deputy President Genevieve Dee, Vice President Peter Jolly, Councillor Mia Behlau, Councillor Greg Chapman, Bruce Doyle (QLS President 2011), Luke Murphy (QLS President 2020), Dean Page, John Richards, Elizabeth Shearer (QLS President 2021), Anthony Photiadis and Councillor Sheetal Deo	
Online Members Present (Teams):	Councillor Phil Ware, Drew Castley, Mathew Verwater, Helen Driscoll (5:17pm) and Hong He (5:21pm)	
Apologies:	Immediate Past President Chloé Kopilović, Councillor Chris Kahler, Oliver Meehan, Tim Arkell, Eugene White (Associate Member)	
QLS Staff Present:	Mr Matt Dunn (CEO), Ms Louise Pennisi (Corp Sec), Mr Peter Lucas (A/CFO), Ms Libby Ellem, Ms Tess Lynch, Mr John Standen, Ms Rachel Young, Mr Akos Szakaly and Ms Lauren FitzGerald.	

1. AGM BUSINESS

5.03pm – OPENING:

President Rebecca Fogerty: I have pleasure in welcoming you all to the 96th Annual General Meeting of the Queensland Law Society. I will be the chair for today's meeting and thank you for your attendance whether in person or virtually.

I note that it is 5:03pm, due notice of the meeting has been given and a quorum of at least 15 members are present in person and by proxy in accordance with our Society Rules.

Acknowledgment of Country

In keeping with our commitments to cultural protocol it is important to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which this meeting is taking place here in Meanjin. We recognise the country, north and south of the Brisbane River home of the Turubul and Jagera nations.

2. RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

For the purpose of Rule 80 of the *Legal Profession (Society) Rules 2007*, I advise we will be both audio and video recording proceedings and the Minutes will be taken by the Society's Corporate Secretary, Louise Pennisi.

3. APOLOGIES

We have received apologies from:

- Immediate Past President Chloe Kopilovic
- Councillor Chris Kahler
- Eugene White (Associate Member)
- Oliver Meehan
- Tim Arkell

There are no other apologies to record.

4. PROXIES

For the record, I table a list of proxies as being proxies received by the Society for the meeting from members entitled to vote.

Proxies have been received from:

1. Oliver Meehan
2. Tim Arkell
3. Councillor Chris Kahler

As advised in the proxy form, I intend to vote all undirected proxies in favour of the motions.

I remind all present that only full members are entitled to vote so any Honorary, Student or Associate Members present, are not eligible to vote.

For everyone joining us online, we ask, to conserve bandwidth, that your video and microphone are switched off and muted.

5. MEETING PROCEDURES

I will now go through our meeting procedures.

Rule 68(1) of the *Legal Profession (Society) Rules 2007* provides that the Chairperson of a General Meeting is responsible for the general conduct of the meeting and for the procedures to be adopted.

I propose to conduct the meeting in accordance with the Agenda set out in the Notice dated 8 November 2024. The Agenda has been prepared in accordance with the *Legal Profession (Society) Rules*. Hard copies of the Notice are available for all attendees.

As this is our fifth AGM where we have members joining us both online and in person, to ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate, voting will be conducted by everyone in person and online using a QR code/hyperlink on your mobile, laptop or tablet device at the start of the relevant resolution.

For members in the room, if you wish to access QLS Wi-Fi, please use the login details on the screen. I will give everyone a minute to log on.

If at any time members are having difficulties accessing the voting link, please raise your hand or type "help" in the Teams Chat and one of our Event Organisers will assist you.

For the full members in the room having difficulty accessing the internet, we will have hard copy voting forms as well.

With respect to the resolutions and their consideration at the meeting, I will adopt the following general procedures:

- I will read and introduce, in turn, each resolution.
- Whilst not required by the Rule, for the sake of tradition I will ask for members to move and second the motion.
- I will then invite comments from the membership.
- I ask that if you wish to address the meeting to please raise your hand if you are in person OR if you are online, please use the raise hand function in Teams.
- I will then proceed to a vote utilising the QR code/hyperlink which will be available on the screen and in the Teams chat.
- To ensure that every full member's vote is captured, for each resolution you will be asked via your device to provide your full name, email address, how you are attending the meeting (i.e. in person or via Teams) and then confirmation that you are a full member. These are mandatory fields that need to be completed before you can cast your vote.

If you have any questions, please raise your hand.

The first order of business is confirmation of the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting.

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

5.08pm – The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 6 December 2023 are available on the website.

Are there any questions regarding the Minutes? [*None raised*]

Do I have a mover that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 6 December 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record?

Moved by: Deputy President Genevieve Dee

Seconded by: 2021 President Elizabeth Shearer

We will now move to a vote. Please open up the camera app on your phone and scan the QR code. If you are having difficulties accessing the link, please let us know. For everyone online, please click on the link in the chat box section. The link will ask you to insert your full name, email address, how you are attending the meeting and confirmation that you are a full member. Please provide these details to assist us in tallying the votes for motion 1.

By now you should have the first motion in front of you.

Motion 1: That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6 December 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Please indicate if you are in favour, not in favour or wish to abstain.

Counting the vote, in total we have:

In favour - 17

Against - 0

Abstain - 1

I **DECLARE** that motion carried.

7. RECEPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

5.16pm – The *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and Rule 76 of the *Legal Profession Rules* require Council to keep proper accounts.

The *Financial Accountability Act*, also requires the Auditor-General to audit the Society's accounts.

The Auditor-General has provided the report about the certified the financial statements as required by the *Financial Accountability Act*.

The Annual Report for 2023-24, contains the financial statements as well as an overview of our year's activities, it has been available for inspection and accessible on the Society's website and there are hard copies available for attendees.

The Society's Acting Chief Financial Officer, Peter Lucas is present in person to elaborate on any financial issues arising in respect of the Society's finances.

I table the Annual Report and Financial Statements for financial year ending 30 June 2024.

Are there any questions about the Annual Report or the Financial Statements? *[No questions]*

Do I have a mover for the 2023-24 Annual Report and the Financial Statements of Council for the year ended 30 June 2023 be received?

Moved by: Vice President Jolly

Seconded by: Deputy President Genevieve Dee

We will now move to a vote.

Please open up the camera app on your phone and scan the QR code. If you are having difficulties accessing the link, please let us know. For our online participants, please click on the link in the in the chat box section. The link will again ask you to insert your full name, email address, how you are attending the meeting and confirmation that you are a full member. Please provide these details to assist us in tallying the votes for motion 2.

[Helen Driscoll joined the meeting at 5:17pm.]

Motion 2: That the 2023-2024 Annual Report and financial statements of Council for the year ended 30 June 2024 be received.

Please indicate if you are in favour, not in favour or wish to abstain.

Counting the vote, in total we have:

In favour - 18

Against - 0

Abstain - 0

I **DECLARE** that motion carried.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.20pm – The Secretary has advised me there is no notice of any other business.

Do members have anything they wish to raise in general business? [*none raised*]

[Hong He joined the meeting at 5:21pm.]

9. PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

5:21pm - President Rebecca Fogerty: I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words before closing the meeting. I wish to publicly record that it has been an honour and privilege to lead the solicitors branch this year. In truth, I have loved every minute of what has been an extraordinarily busy, challenging and memorable year for the profession and the Society. I love our profession and I love our Society, I think we can take enormous pride from the fact that together, we are part of a project of justice and community which will outlast all of us.

Acknowledgements

I thank the profession for allowing me to serve. I thank the QLS Council for their insight, involvement and desire to serve. I thank all QLS staff for their support, guidance and hard work. I would also like to thank our CEO, Matt Dunn for your insight and guidance.

I acknowledge former Presidents Murphy, Shearer and Doyle while have been a source of support and have been generous to me this year and I thank you.

I wish President Elect Dee and the Council all the very best for this next term. In the President Elect Dee, you have the total package, a generous leader with integrity and moral courage in spades, and who I know from personal experience will advocate tirelessly for the profession. Working closely with you Genevieve has genuinely be one of the most deeply rewarding experiences of my professional career and I am confident the profession is in safe hands.

10. MEMBERS' ADDRESS

Does anyone else wish to address the floor?

5:22pm - Deputy President Genevieve Dee: Yes thank you Madam President; before we close, I would like to take the opportunity to share a few words.

2024 has been another year of change for the legal profession. As with previous years, we have had to deal with numerous challenges arising from legislative changes, the soaring cost of living and community anger and debate with regards youth crime and domestic violence.

Given those issues, it was as important as ever this year for the Queensland Law Society remain a steadfast beacon for our practitioners; a hub for them to access professional support, information, and know that the Society was advocating for issues that were important to them and our community. Madame President, you have met those challenges for our profession this year with confidence, enthusiasm, and a fierce intellect. It was clear to all of us who had the great pleasure to work with you this year, that you have a deep affection for and commitment to the role of the law society and the integral part our members play in the administration of justice all across this great state.

Earlier this year, in your wonderful speech at the legal profession dinner, you quoted from *The Little Prince* saying: *'it is the time that you have wasted for your rose, that makes your rose so important.'*

Just as you thanked his Honour Judge Dearden for the wisdom and time he spent with you during your time as his Associate, we thank you for the time you have spent this year leading the Solicitors of Queensland through 2024.

As I commented to you and to Council yesterday, your presidency will be remembered for your fearsome intellect, your capacity for empathy, your ability to repair relationships within the profession that we did not know required attention, and for your commitment to prioritize transparent and ethical decision making within all levels of the Society and our Council. For that, we owe you a great debt of gratitude.

The dedication you have displayed is evident in the tireless work you have undertaken to represent our members this year.

One of the hallmarks of your tenure was your commitment to the wellbeing of the profession through development of the pilot Peer to Peer Support Network.

You have signed an incredible 141 submissions so far this year, dealing with issues ranging from community safety, crime and corruption, mining and energy, AML/CTA to the new Aged Care Act.

You have lent your expertise to represent QLS at many hearings, and addressed the Court on many occasions, including addressing our profession at Symposium, welcome and celebration ceremonies across the state, welcome and valedictory ceremonies for Justices of the Supreme Court, Judges and Magistrates and tribunal members, and the Christmas Greetings this morning in the Supreme Court.

You advocated publicly on issues relevant to the Society and our members including at least 40 interviews that I can count and other written statements.

Your Presidency has been marked by not only your eagerness to advance the needs of our members and the issues of importance to the legal profession but also your dedication, leadership and generosity to assist the profession that you are so proud to be a part of.

You have led us with pride and with distinction and we thank you.

11. CLOSE

5:26pm - *President Rebecca Fogerty*: Thank you. I am deeply humbled.

In closing, I note that all of the business set out in the notice of the meeting has been conducted and that there is no further item of business to be raised. Thank you very much to everyone for your attendance today.

There being no further business I formally close the 96th Annual General Meeting at **5:26pm**.

Genevieve Dee
Queensland Law Society – 2025 President