

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **Minutes of hybrid meeting held on Thursday, 15 May 2025**

#### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Kim Harrison (KM), President, formally opened the meeting and thanked those attending for joining the meeting. KM also thanked those who voted in the recent APIL additional officer elections. KM outlined the agenda:

Review of the year  
Financial report  
Election results  
Work planned for the coming year.  
Close

KM really enjoyed her year as President at APIL and was particularly delighted that APIL's campaign to abolish the 3-year limitation period for non-recent child sexual abuse civil cases in England and Wales and align law with Scotland was approved by the Government.

KM was delighted to announce that Nicola Ealey of Nockolds Solicitors will be joining the Executive Committee in the Junior Member seat.

#### **REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

Brett Dixon (BD), Secretary, opened by saying that 2024 was a busy year for APIL. It saw the success of our judicial review. We challenged the Lord Chancellor over rules relating to the extension of the fixed recoverable costs regime. Our litigation prompted significant Government concessions and saw it commit to a future review of the impact the rule changes are having on vulnerable people. We were of course delighted by the outcome and the positive impact that has had for APIL members and those you represent; however, the litigation did come at a significant financial cost to the organisation. Despite this, we continued to maintain our campaigning momentum in a general election year.

BD highlighted the impact APIL work has had over the last 12 months:

- APIL used the general election as an opportunity to build relationships and trust with potential new MPs and raised the profile of negligence victims among parliamentary candidates.
- APIL influenced reform through 25 consultations and numerous meetings with civil servants.
- Our high-profile campaigning on key issues such as fixed recoverable costs, the personal injury discount rate review, the impact of civil court delays on injured claimants, the need for regulation of cosmetic procedures and the critical difference between an accident and negligence saw a significant boost to our press coverage, which grew by 71%.
- Research exposed the barriers to justice for injured people.
- APIL's research into a 'no-fault' scheme for medical injuries showed that the introduction of such a scheme would see a collapse in compensation for negligence victims.
- Our research shone a light on the impact of whiplash reform on injured people.
- Rusty's Story, the new film in the Rebuilding Shattered Lives campaign, reached more than half a million people in three months.
- Once again you showed huge support of Injury Awareness Week. There were more than 50,000 views of APIL's own content across social media and 23 mentions of Injury Awareness Week in the press and broadcast media.

- We campaigned across a full range of Government departments and jurisdictions and made our presence felt at party conferences.
- Our briefings also made a political impact in Parliament being quoted by politicians in both houses of Parliament, when the House of Lords considered the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill, and the House of Commons debated the Automated Vehicles Bill.
- Our persistent arguments on product safety contributed to a commitment to much needed reform of product safety and the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) 1987.
- We successfully obtained permission to intervene in a key ruling on mixed injuries. The Supreme Court granted us permission to intervene in the whiplash mixed injury claims cases of *Rabot v Hassam*, *Briggs v Laditan*, heard in February last year.
- We continue to work collaboratively with others in the sector and last year continued with our Serious Injury Guide work and examination of the difficulties with Universal Credit.
- We launched an updated version of our Best Practice Guide on Rehabilitation, providing members with the tools for assisting clients and improving their recovery.
- We delivered 20 training courses, comprising 14 live virtual events and six in-person only events, which were highly praised by members.
- We helped our members to stay informed and up to date with more than a hundred webinars over the year.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Gordon Dalyell, Treasurer, presented the financial report.

GD outlined that like many not-for-profit organisations since the pandemic we have continued to face significant operational headwinds and challenges arising from, increased costs and staffing changes. Last year was no easier, APIL faced many financial challenges including increases to the costs associated with providing our training events, higher than anticipated recruitment costs and the remainder of the costs of the Judicial Review which meant we ended the year with a deficit of -£83,733. Despite this financial position we maintained our campaigning momentum and have shown significant impact for our members. The contribution to the organisation's finances from membership subscriptions and training remains vital and the continued support of our members is valued.

For the next financial year, we have set a cautious budget to stabilise our finances, with the intention of being in a position to grow the organisation in 2026 and beyond.

Last year the turnover for the association was £2,212,618 an increase of 16.7%. Our training activities remained a mixture of online and in-person, with webinars continuing to be a big draw. Our highly successful residential conferences were once again held in person, with the option of attending virtually. Membership income improved on the previous year by 11%. Membership subscriptions account for 36% of APIL's income, followed by conferences at 31% and training activities at 26%.

The direct costs of providing APIL's activities rose by 36% more than the previous year, with the biggest rise seen in venue hire. Despite rising overheads, APIL saw a decrease in costs of 6%. This was mainly due to the scaling back on proposed business development projects when it was decided that we should concentrate on our core activities. The operational deficit, before bank interest and capital expenditure, stands at £-100,574. APIL has spent £45,667 on a Judicial Review of the extension of fixed recoverable costs (October 2023 reforms). At the time of producing the annual report that was ongoing and we incurred costs into 2024.

At the year end, APIL's reserves stand at £827,352.

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AGM minutes of meeting 15.05.2025.

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We are a unique community of dedicated personal injury professionals and our strength lies in our ability to work together towards our campaigns. I am grateful for the leadership and support from our Officers and Executive Committee members and for the commitment, dedication, and hands-on attitude of our hard-working staff team. Thank you for your support during 2024 and I look forward to working with you and your firms in our ongoing fight for the rights of victims of negligence.

## **RESOLUTION AND ELECTION RESULTS**

BD, secretary presented the results of the resolution and election.

There is one resolution which the meeting has been asked to vote on. The resolution being to appoint: Clayton and Brewill Chartered Accountants, 149-155 Canal Street, Nottingham, NG1 7HR as APIL's auditors and to authorise the Executive Committee to fix their remuneration. The resolution was proposed by myself, Brett Dixon and seconded by Gordon Dalyell. All the votes have been cast via a poll. The results of poll are as follows:

**For: 75**

**Against: 1**

This resolution is approved.

### **Election results: Officer election.**

Following a call for nominations for the positions of President, and Treasurer, the following APIL members were elected unopposed:

**Matthew Tuff -President** and  
**Gordon Dalyell- Treasurer.**

All candidates are automatically elected and will start their terms of office after today's AGM. Kim Harrison automatically remains on the executive committee as an Additional Officer in the role of Immediate Past President for a term of one year.

### **Additional Officers election.**

There were four vacant additional officer positions of:

- Additional officer x two vacancies
- Additional officer who shall be either:
  - (i) a practising barrister at the bars of England & Wales or Scotland or Northern Ireland or an advocate practising at one of the Channel Island or Isle of Man Bars" (Article 32.3.5), and
  - (ii) Additional officer who shall be a practising member or honorary life member who works wholly or mainly in Northern Ireland;

We welcome Sabrina Lawlor of Thompsons NI, who is elected as the Northern Ireland representative, unopposed and James Bryne of Deka Chambers who is elected as the barrister representative unopposed. I look forward to working with you both on the EC.

There were 6 candidates for the other two additional officer vacancies. All candidates were eligible to be elected as ordinary officers on the EC. There were no invalid votes.

The results of the voting are:

Candidate	Number of votes
Jonathan Scarsbrook	129
Erin Darling- Finan	65
Sana Bibi	60
Paul Morpeth	49
Jerard Knott	45
Denise McKeown	42

Jonathan Scarsbrook of Irwin Mitchell and Erin Darling- Finan of Amicus Law are elected, having polled the most votes. For those unsuccessful this time I encourage you to get involved in APIL over the coming months through our campaign work.

This year we say thank you to Richard Baker, Stephen Glynn, Oonagh McClure and Leticia Williams as they stand down from the Executive Committee. These members have contributed significantly to the organisation. They will be greatly missed, and our thanks go to them for their hard work and dedication as they step down from APIL's EC.

I would also like to thank Jonathan for his term as President and Immediate Past President. Jonathan following completion of this term I have the pleasure of awarding you with Honorary Life Membership, please come up to the stage to accept this with our thanks. Of course, following the recent election this does not mean we are losing Jonathan and we very much look forward to working with him further.

I would now like to handover to Mike to provide us with an insight into APIL's work for the coming year.

#### **CEO Update:**

Mike Benner, APIL CEO, stated that there is no such thing as a quiet year in the world of Personal Injury but as a campaigning organisation this is the challenge that gets APIL staff out of bed every morning in our mission to make things better for injured people. Brett Dixon has pointed out earlier in the meeting the incredible impact APIL has had over the last year.

Congratulations to the new EC members, it was brilliant to see such high levels of engagement this year in the elections. Congratulations to Matt Tuff, the new APIL President, who has sat on the EC for the past year as Vice President and brought a new dimension to the board. Matthew will know that the soon to be Immediate Past President, Kim Harrison, will be a very hard act to follow. Kim has been at the forefront of APIL's campaigns, been an active champion for inclusion and diversity and has driven volunteering. It has been great to see more and more members volunteering at a regional level and through activities on special interest groups. APIL member communications highlight the opportunities members have to get involved. It is the relationship between professional staff and volunteers that creates the magical formula for our success as an effective not-for-profit campaigning group.

Mike Benner also provided a snapshot of what is planned for the next 12 months:

Work has started on the strategic plan and members will hear more about this and get a chance to feed into this through the APIL engagement panel. The strategic plan identifies the 4 key areas affecting our sector:

1. **Public perceptions:** APIL will continue to draw attention to the growing justice gap. Injuries are increasing but claims are falling. The APIL Personal Injury market report published in January revealed the scale of the untapped market and showed that 41% of victims do not go on to claim compensation. This translates to around 4.3 million potential claimants that have not gone on to instruct or approach a Personal Injury lawyer and shows the damaging effect of the Justice gap that we regularly point out through our insight and research work. This is a hint into how public perceptions can affect the willingness of people to make a Personal Injury claim and the stigma of feeling unworthy or undeserving. If firms can reach out more to victims the justice gap will close and victims should have the access to justice they deserve.
2. **Insurer influence:** APIL is in a unique position to be able to push back against the well-resourced insurance industry and bring greater debate by lobbying activities. In 2025 and beyond we will build on our research work to ensure the sector has the right data insight and research outcomes to make our case and secure policy change to put victims at its centre.
3. **Misguided and disjointed Government intervention:** APIL will continue to push back against the misguided and disjointed approach to government intervention that has plagued the sector for many years and created an impossible environment of uncertainty and ineffective legislative intervention. Our essential public affairs work gives us the access we need to make our voice heard. The last month the government announced the MOJ review of the whiplash reforms. APIL has written to seek clarity on the scope of the review and highlighted that since the review commenced there has been a fall in claims and a rise in the number of casualties widening this justice gap. Faced with more uncertainty we must have clarity over the review, but whatever this brings, APIL will be ready to champion our sector.

On the clinical negligence front there are various threats, challenges and opportunities on the horizon and we are actively engaged in each one of them, whether holding a watching brief over the cross-industry and clinical negligence review or the proposed reforms to low value claims we stand at the ready if this should rear its head once again. The government's announcement last autumn of the patient safety landscape review was very welcome and APIL wrote to Baroness Merron stating that the review provides the opportunity to show some strong leadership and coherence in this area.

4. **Systemic failures:** APIL continues to call out when processes that are put in place to serve victims do not work as they should i.e. county court delays which have increased over the last 2 years. One ongoing campaign is 'Injury Awareness Week' and the theme this year will be to highlight what it means to an individual to lose their bodily integrity and what this feels like. Please support us.

Whatever area you specialise in, APIL has your back and this will inform the values of the strategic plan to be launched in early 2026. APIL is the champion of the Personal Injury sector and we will be building on this position. Thank you to the leadership of the EC and the work of our volunteers for your continued support over the last 12 months, without this support we would not be where we are now.

Kim formally closed the AGM and thanked all members for voting and attending.

**AGM closed.**