

Resolution 1

Trustee tenure

“On advice of Charity Commission we seek to resolve Trustee tenure and members resolve that no trustee should serve more than 6 consecutive years for The Open Spaces Society, (old Society and or constituted and or incorporated).”

Proposed by Trustee Dr H Pratt, seconded by Trustee Miss S Burfoot (in personal capacities).

Proposer’s comment

Dr Pratt was invited to submit up to 500 words of explanation for our members. His submission took the form of a letter from an adviser available at www.oss.org.uk/agm/resolution-1.

The board of trustees opposes this resolution and comments as follows:

Since 2009 our constitutional policy has indeed been, and remains, a maximum of six consecutive years’ service and the resolution would have no effect on that. But in 2009 and again in 2011 we included transitional arrangements to prevent a sudden loss of several trustees, which were supported by our members at general meetings. Dr Pratt’s resolution, by overriding these transitional arrangements, has the effect of immediately removing our Chairman Tim Crowther, together with trustees Peter Newman and Chris Beney; it has no other effect whatsoever. This would create unnecessary disruption to the work of the society.

Dr Pratt and Miss Burfoot cite the Charity Commission. The trustees state unequivocally that this resolution was not on the advice of the Charity Commission. Miss Burfoot approached the commission in a personal capacity and was told that, if there was an irresolvable dispute among the trustees, both sides of the argument could be put to members at a general meeting. The argument she had sought advice on was whether Messrs Crowther, Newman and Beney were legitimately trustees in 2012. That issue

is not addressed by this resolution. The mention of the commission is a red herring.

We must make it clear that Dr Pratt's 'Independent Examiners' are wholly unconnected with the OSS's independent examiners. The advice was not from a legally qualified person or firm. The trustees identified fundamental flaws in the document and both Dr Pratt and Miss Burfoot refused to discuss these.

The trustees therefore urge members to vote *against* this resolution.