

Answers to Questions raised at the PFS AGM 2024

29 November 2024

The PFS Board received 154 questions in advance of the AGM 2024. Some of these were identical and received multiple times. A further 22 questions were submitted electronically during the AGM; some of these were identical to those received in advance of the AGM. Some additional questions were asked in person at the event and answered at the time. Below is a catalogue of answers to all questions that were received from members. These answers are given on behalf of the PFS Board given their knowledge and views as at 29 November 2024. The PFS Board may choose to update or amend these answers in future should further information become available, views change, or errors are identified. Any changes will be clearly marked, with the previous answer retained for transparency. The questions have been grouped into themes for ease of reference.

1. Questions about PFS Board appointments

1.1. Please register my extreme disappointment and disagreement regarding the recent flooding of the PFS board by CII representatives. As clear a conflict of interests as anyone could imagine and an absolute disgrace for a supposedly professional organisation.

- The CII executives are comfortable with the obligations – legal and professional – that come with their positions on the PFS Board, and they would not have agreed to become Directors of the PFS if that were not the case.
- All PFS Board members share the passion and ambition of PFS members to take the organisation forward, ensuring it is best in class.

1.2. "There is an acknowledged consensus that minimising or eliminating conflict of interest is an important hallmark of any advice profession. Please explain how the CII's imposition of a significant and unnecessary conflict of interest, by flooding the board with their own employees, helps build public trust and confidence in the financial planning profession?"

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, made it clear at the PFS AGM that he and the other CII Executives on the PFS Board would recuse themselves on items of business in which there were a conflict of interest that could not be managed appropriately by other means. Please refer to question 1.5.

1.3. At the CII AGM, Matthew Hill stated "declaration of interest is a thing to which great attention is paid and that causes me no difficulty or trouble whatsoever." Mr Hill's declaration of interest is not the main concern. In order to fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities, the PFS Board cannot arbitrarily accept Mr Hill's assurances of his and his colleagues' "bona fides". How will you manage the potential compromise or bias affecting decisions and actions related to services managed by the CII Execs? This will include the CII Execs assessing the charge for those services which will be funded by the members' subscriptions.

[This question was asked by 14 members]

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, made it clear at the PFS AGM that he and the other CII Executives on the PFS Board would recuse

themselves on items of business in which there were a conflict of interest that could not be managed appropriately by other means. Please refer to question 1.5.

1.4. Given the past trust concerns and challenges between the PFS members and the CII, how specifically do Matthew and Gill manage their conflict of interests when sitting on both CII and PFS Boards? Please give specifics on issues such as the discussions/demands for inter-organisation recharge rates.

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, made it clear at the PFS AGM that he and the other CII Executives on the PFS Board would recuse themselves on items of business in which there were a conflict of interest that could not be managed appropriately by other means. Please refer to question 1.5.
- Please note, Gill White does not sit on the CII Group Board.

1.5. The CII-employed members of the board, particularly the CEO of the CII, have a fiduciary duty as officers to protect CII's financial interests, as well as a fiduciary duty to protect PFS member interests. Where these duties are obviously in conflict, will the board-members recuse themselves from any votes or decisions?

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 39:45]:
 - “Yes.”

1.6. Who made the decision to remove four independent and experienced Institute Directors and replace them with Executives who report to the CII Chair?

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 39:05]:
 - *“That was I believe a collective CII group board decision. Can you confirm?”*
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, added:
 - *“Yes, it was a CII board decision. Just one point of clarification, the executives don't report directly to the CII Chair, they report to the CII board collectively.”*

1.7. Will the board provide better commentary surrounding departures and appointments of directors?"

- Recent Institute appointments reflect decisions of the CII Group Board which it has said are in the interests of supporting members in the context of the ambitious plans for the PFS.
- The PFS and CII have provided details of the appointments and departures from the PFS Board on their respective websites:
 - [Appointment of Institute Directors – 1 October](#)
 - [Anthony Ward - 17 November](#)

1.8. Why, when there are many capable individuals in financial planning, have CII decided to add individuals to the PFS board who are also part of the CII Executive?

- Recent Institute appointments reflect decisions of the CII Group Board which it has said are in the interests of supporting members in the context of the ambitious plans for the PFS.
- The PFS Nominations committee leads on member nominated director recruitment. This is chaired by the PFS President. Previously, the PFS Nominations Committee reviewed 30 applications in 2023 and concluded that no applicants had the skills they were looking for.
- The PFS Board is currently seeking an additional PFS member to become a Member Director of the PFS Board.

1.9. Access to systems should not be a reason for appointing Institute Directors to the PFS Board. It worries me and others about them accessing funds from PFS...

- There are governance and accounting protocols in place that mean it is simply not possible for the CII to access or use the PFS reserves.
- The recent Institute appointments reflect decisions of the CII Group Board which it has said are in the interests of supporting members in the context of the ambitious plans for the PFS.
- The CII is financially sound. It's year-end-2023 accounts were signed-off by independent auditors, as has been the case every year.

1.10. Why is there such a high turnover of Directors?

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 41:25]:
 - *“So, recent Institute appointments, those reflect decisions of the CII board, which are said are in the interest of supporting members.”*
- Additional information:
 - The changes in Directors reflect a variety of reasons – some personal to individuals, and others that reflect decisions of the CII Group Board, which it has said are in the interests of supporting members in the context of the ambitious plans for the PFS.
 - The PFS and CII have provided details of the appointments and departures from the PFS Board on their respective websites, most recently:
 - [Appointment of Institute Directors – 1 October](#)
 - [Anthony Ward - 17 November](#)

1.11. Why are members not asked to vote on the appointment of CII directors?

[This question was asked by 19 members]

- This PFS [Articles of Association](#) (section 9) set out the basis on which Directors are appointed and retired from the PFS Board. The Articles provide (and have always provided) the CII with the right to appoint Directors and for those Directors to form a majority of the Board. This reflects the fact that the PFS is a subsidiary of the CII Group.

1.12. Do the Member Nominated and Lay Directors agree that replacing four “high calibre professionals” with four CII Execs will “bring additional strength to the PFS Board”?

[This question was asked by 22 members]

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered a variant of this question at the AGM. See question 1.10.

1.13. There has been a well-publicised catalogue of poor decisions, operational failings, financial mismanagement with massive overspend on the IT transformation, poor customer service, unethical behaviour and misinformation from the CII’s Board and their executive in relation to their own affairs over the last 7 years.

Given the CII’s appalling track-record, does the PFS President and the other Member Nominated Directors truthfully believe the CII’s PR statement that it, “... will bring additional strength to the PFS Board and help achieve this strategic alignment for the benefit of members?”

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered a variant of this question at the AGM. See question 1.10.

1.14. How was the PFS Board informed of the appointment of four CII Execs to the PFS Board?

[This question was asked by 20 members]

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 40:25]:
 - *“The PFS Chair was informed shortly before their appointment, by the CII. It was the CII Chair who informed the PFS Chair.”*

1.15. “Last month four Institute Directors, described by Helen Phillips as high calibre professionals, had their employment terminated without notice. When and how did the PFS Board find out about these sackings and how is their removal an example of the “blueprint for governance” promised by the CII Chair?”

[This question was asked by 16 members]

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered a variant of this question at the AGM. See question 1.14.

1.16. All CII directors should be stood down with immediate effect THEY DO NOT REPRESENT ME or other PFS members

- All PFS Board members share the passion and ambition of PFS members to take the organisation forward, ensuring it is best in class.
- The Articles provide (and have always provided) the CII with the right to appoint Directors and for those Directors to form a majority of the Board. This reflects the fact that the PFS is a subsidiary of the CII Group. Only the CII has the right to stand down the Directors that it has appointed to the PFS Board.

1.17. It looks like the CII are performing a ‘smash and grab’ on the PFS to strengthen its own power and finances with no care whatsoever for the good of its members or more importantly the public we as members serve. Please advise why we as members should interpret the CII’s actions over the last few years in any other way?”

- This is categorically not the case. The PFS’ and CII’s finances are accounted for separately. There has been no transfer of resources from PFS to CII save for the annual recharge for services provided by the CII to PFS Members and for the use of the PFS brand, which is licensed from the CII. The CII also provides benefits directly to PFS members, for example discounted regulated qualifications, the SPS and Chartered Status.
- The appointment of CII Executives to the PFS Board brings a direct line of sight to the member benefits and services that the CII group offer as a whole, and closer collaboration will help to enhance the organisation’s strategic ambitions.
- Having CII Executives serve on the PFS Board is not novel or new. The current PFS Board structure resembles previous approaches, including when the PFS was first established in 2004.

1.18. Please confirm that appropriate service level agreements between the PFS and the CII have been amended or put in place following the appointment of the CII ELT to the PFS Board?

[This question was asked by 20 members]

- The PFS Board receives updates at its Board meetings on the activities being undertaken by CII Group staff on behalf of PFS members.
- The PFS Board provides a report to members on the work completed during the year in its Financial Statements, Annual Report and AGM.

1.19. It has been reported that the previous directors of the PFS who were terminated on 1st October, were improperly terminated, and not told in advance, and were in fact seeking legal advice. Can the board provide an update to the members on behalf of this apparent governance failing from CII?

[This question was asked by 15 members]

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 40:55]:
 - “No.”

1.20. Please may we have an explanation from the Chair as to why one of the recently sacked non-executive directors is considering (or has taken) legal action against the CII, what is the nature of the claim against the CII and what is the current position with the claim; and are other members of the PFS Board supportive of this action against the CII?

- The PFS does not comment on speculation.

1.21. Can the PFS and CII websites make it clear on the 'composition of the Board' pages which type of director the individual is i.e. member, lay or CII appointed. I think PFS members would find that helpful to know.

- A decision was taken some time ago to remove the titles from the website, since all Directors share the same fiduciary responsibilities.

1.22. "I have just read the IoD's Policy paper on the PO scandal - 'a failure of governance'. It occurs to me that there are many lessons from this can be taken and applied to what I perceive to be the current CII/PFS situation and I advise any board members who have not read it to do so. Key lessons for directors include 1. Don't ignore red flags, 2. ensure proper governance of outsourcing, 3. directorship is about more than one thing, 4. demand access to all relevant information. 5. advisers advise, directors decide. 6. get properly trained as a director (e.g.IOD course). 7. use board evaluation as a key governance tool. 8. Insist on IT literacy. 9. Due diligence and induction is more than a 'nice to have', 10. Maintain a moral compass.

Board structure can be made up of up to 8 MNDs/LDs. 3 MNDs (NED) is the lowest number ever & IMO disproportionate 5 IDs. Referring to the above points, can all board members confidently meet these?"

- All PFS Board members are comfortable with the obligations, legal and professional, that come with their positions.

1.23. There was a significant level of disquiet expressed by members at the meeting that ratified the merger of the LIA and SOFA to create the PFS, concerning Item 8.10 of the original articles of association allowing the CII to appoint a majority of non-member nominated directors.

The concerns expressed were satisfied by the CII making a commitment at that meeting that they would only need to use Item 8.10 in extreme circumstances where the PFS Board, "...went rogue" and the CII had to force a majority. It was on that basis that members voted in favour of the merger. The explanation the CII has recently given for forcing a majority is that it will, "... bring additional strength to the PFS Board and help achieve this strategic alignment for the benefit of members."

Were the CII being disingenuous at the time of merger or are they being disingenuous now?

The CII has now broken that commitment. Can the Chair suggest how the CII can be held to account and what can be done to change the Articles of Association to prevent further broken promises and remove the incentive for such unethical behaviour.

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [time stamp 28:43]:
 - *“That is very strong stuff. The Chair has a limited number of options to suggest, but perhaps the most important of them is operating transparently, which we are doing today, and will continue to do in future. The urgent need to be focusing on is delivery. And obviously there are technical mechanisms such as an EGM if the strength of feeling is such. But we have to carry the whole membership. We have a representative group today, but it is only a group. So, I think you are doing a very good job, I think, of holding us all accountable.*
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, additionally answered this question at the AGM:
 - *“It’s a great question; there’s a lot to unpack in it. I hesitate to say that I am going to channel Liz Truss slightly by saying I don’t accept the entirety of the premise of the question, but I think the really important thing to say from my point of view - I’ve been doing this job for seven months I’ve been a director of the PFS for one month - is that an observation I would make coming to this area afresh, is that for various reasons, I think the PFS has tended in recent times to try to put some distance between it and its delivery infrastructure at the CII. And what do I mean by that? There’s an equation at play here. I’ve had the privilege today to sit in lots of sessions where members have expressed themselves with great passion and clarity, and the main message is ‘you are not doing enough of the right things in the right way’, and that has been heard. On the other side of that equation, is a PFS - a Personal Finance Society – as we have heard from Trevor, that has humongous reserves. OK, let’s not beat around the bush. Its reserves are way higher than they should be for an organisation of this nature. By way of comparison, the CII’s reserves policy is to run reserves at about three to six months. The PFS reserves are running at 21 months or something like that. So, what I’m working up to here is the reason why the CII appointed me and Trevor and Gill and Mat, who are also in the room, to the PFS Board, was to create a stronger connection between what members want and the delivery infrastructure so we can really get motoring on things like restoring the regional events, improving CPD, responding in all sorts of ways to the concerns that have been expressed today. And I would say that in recent times that connection has been diminished and attenuated. We are changing that and - somebody was talking to earlier on said, ‘So what are you going to say that’s different this time’ – and I will say that the difference is, this year we are connecting the engine to the wheels much better by having CII directors who are responsible for delivery in the room with the PFS - as part of the PFS - so that we can directly take that ambition and turn it into delivery.”*
- Additional information:
 - There has been an Institute majority on the PFS Board since June 2023. The recent appointments are changes of personnel, not of balance. The CII Group was very clear in its reasons for exercising its right to form a majority on the Board. Those reasons remain valid.

1.24. Governance: I note from the CII AGM report that there have been several Board Director resignations through 2023/4, and similarly, but now to a greater extent for PFS - there is yet another NEW Board, with little, to no satisfactory explanation from the respective Boards to the changing Governance

structure? It cannot surely, be proper governance for its' 'membership services' employees to be appointed PFS Board Directors? How can the PFS membership be persuaded by the present CII CEO's self-assurance that he has 'no difficulty or trouble whatsoever' on his dual appointment - the PFS membership should be the arbiter in that regard? It is of major concern that the CII Group Board have permitted the ELT PFS Board appointments, and given the lack of proper governance oversight to potential conflicts of interest I believe it brings the Board independence and audit into disrepute.

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered a variant of this question at the AGM. See question 1.10.

2. Questions about PFS and CII finances

2.1. Will the board be asking the CII to commit to repay the remaining £8.9M of outstanding intercompany loan immediately, or commit to a repayment schedule with appropriate fees and interest paid, to support the interests of PFS members?

[This question was asked by 28 members]

- Trevor Edwards, PFS Finance Director & CII Group Executive Director, Resources & People, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 45:45]:
 - *“First off, just to clarify to members, the intercompany balance that exists between the PFS on the CII is not a loan. It is a transactional balance that arises from the fact that all the revenue from that generated by the PFS passes through CII’s bank account. It’s an infrastructure system that has been set up many years ago with a view to trying to make the operations more efficient by not having multiple accounts in multiple different channels of having to transact. So, all of the revenue for the PFS passes through CII’s accounts and similarly all of the expenses of the PFS are met from the CII’s bank accounts. The difference between those two ins and outs represents a balance that is owed to or from - more often to the PFS from the CII - that’s what that balance is and that balance is represented by cash. That cash is held in CII’s bank accounts – mainly in deposit accounts, either 32-day call deposit accounts, or 95-day call deposit accounts - and those funds receive the interest that is appended to those accounts. So, it is interest bearing, it does generate interest which can be seen in the PFS’s accounts, and just for reference if you wanted to see that coming through you need only look at the PFS’s accounts from the last few years when the PFS only had £42,000 of cash in its bank account yet still its interest was way more than that and in the same P&L in the same financial statements. So, the PFS does receive interest.”*
 - *On the repayment part, because of the way that the operations are done at the moment with respect to the PFS expenses being met from the bank account of the CII - and I would also draw a reference to the fact that the PFS does have direct expenses between £3 and £4 million a year, two and a half to three and a half million, and this is not the recharge. These are to meet event costs, journal costs, speaker costs etc. So, these are met from the CII’s bank account. So from that perspective it makes sense that there is an amount that is held by the CII for PFS to meet PFS’s expenses. So there has not been a discussion at the Board with respect to repayment of the full amount but there is value in having a certain amount of that balance exist based on the operational infrastructure that exists at this moment in time.”*

- Additional information:
 - No loan exists between the CII and PFS. The intercompany balance was referred to as an intercompany 'loan' in the 2019 PFS financial statements, but it was subsequently recognised by the PFS Board (in 2020) that this was an inappropriate characterisation. The balance can be said to be 'owed' (which was the language adopted in the 2021 and 2022 financial statements) by the CII to the PFS, but it is most accurate to describe it as a transactional balance.
 - In 2011, the PFS transferred cash to the CII as part of the centralisation of operations of the Group within CII. The transfer is recorded in the independently audited [PFS financial statements](#) from that year. This centralisation allows for internal operating efficiencies as well as PFS members to be able to purchase multiple products which are provided by different entities in the Group (CII for qualifications, CII Enterprises for e-learning products) on one invoice and one payment transaction rather than multiple payment settlements for each product.
 - The money held by the CII is represented as an accounting balance associated with this centralised operating model.
 - The accounting balance was £8.1m at 31 December 2023, as stated in the PFS and CII Financial Statements.
 - The existence of the centralised operating model means that it is necessary to always hold an accounting balance. The CII similarly holds cash and cash equivalents greater than the accounting balance at all times, so all PFS funds are always available for use on behalf of PFS members.
 - The size of this accounting balance has reduced in recent years, with the transfer of funds (£12.5 million) to PFS bank accounts. The PFS receives (and has always received) interest on the funds that make up the accounting balance. This interest is shown in the financial statements (as part of "Operating Profit: interest receivable") and is allocated to the PFS based on the prevailing deposits rates which are earned by the funds represented by the accounting balance.

2.2. We need a fair deal for our members. Keeping the finances & management separate ref PFS & CII.

- Please refer to the answer to question 2.1.

2.3. I would like to understand more around the current position around the £9m intercompany loan and how this is likely to benefit PFS members in the longer term.

- Please refer to the answer to question 2.1.

2.4. I note that in 2023 the CII paid £2.5M to the PFS to reduce the amounts owed. Has the same happened in 2024 and what is the payment schedule (amounts/dates) for the CII repaying the FULL amount owed? What interest rate does the CII pay to the PFS on the amount owing. If not a commercial rate - why not?

- Please refer to the answer to question 2.1.
- The accounting balance is held in bank accounts, with interest paid at commercial deposit rates. All interest earned on PFS money is applied to the benefit of the PFS, not the CII.
- We will report in detail on 2024 in the 2024 financial statements, but we can confirm that no further payment has been made so far this calendar year.

2.5. "At the meeting with the CII executive at their offices in Fenchurch Street on 27th August 2021 (duplicate copies of the notes are available) we were informed that the CII's tactics of wanting to wind up the PFS at companies' house (which they had already tried three times) was part of a strategy to reduce the CII's liability that the PFS represented on their balance sheet. Given that the CII has since announced that it has abandoned the idea winding up the PFS, and the liability still exists, does the CII's decision to sack the four directors they appointed and replace them with four of their own employees, represent a cynical change of tactics to help them implement the same strategy?"

- No.

2.6. "In the accounts I noticed the following

Admin Expenses (section 3)

- Contribution to central overheads up from £3,825,000 to £5,993,000 (i.e. 56% increase!)

- Exceptional items £1,240,000

Can the board explain these items please?"

- PFS members receive a broad range of benefits delivered by the CII on behalf of the PFS. These include operational services, such as governance, marketing, communications, HR and IT, as well as providing all PFS qualifications, learning & development, exams, certificates, training, events, and Statements of Professional Standing.
- The central overhead recharge in 2023 was £6.0m, comprising £4.8m of central costs and £1.2m of exceptional costs – which included a contribution to central capital expenditure (on the new Customer Relationship Management system and enterprise resource planning system) and support for members' qualifications.
- In 2022 and 2021 the recharge was £3.8m, in 2020 it was £4.5m and in 2019 it was £4.7m.
- The recharge was always expected to be higher in 2023, simply reflecting increased costs stemming from the rate of inflation.
- The CII and PFS boards reviewed the recharge arrangements for 2023 and 2024 to ensure that they appropriately reflect the work undertaken on behalf of PFS members. The 2024 recharge figures will be provided in next year's financial statements.

2.7. Please will you detail the additional central costs (overhead) spend of £3.068m billed to PFS in 2023?

- Please refer to the answer to question 2.6.

2.8. What was the exceptional cost that resulted in the recharge increasing dramatically? Was this justified given the lack of service felt to be provided?

- Trevor Edwards, PFS Finance Director & CII Group Executive Director, Resources & People, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 33:30]:

- *"Thank you, Christine, and thanks to the member that posed that question. So, as I indicated in the part that I had described, the PFS does receive a number of benefits and services from the CII, but for which it pays a recharge - it shares costs, it's a group shared cost model. So, all of the entities in the group - and the PFS is one of them - that receives those benefits does pay a proportion of that cost, sharing the cost as the costs are incurred. And with respect to the specific question of the one of the exceptional item that was asked, so, the PFS board had agreed that the PFS would support the capital*

investments that the CII had been making to improve its infrastructure. The CII had very notably - and it's in our financial statements, making capital investments to improve its infrastructure over last few years – and the PFS board had made a decision to support that by contributing an element of that. So, that is the capital element of that £1.24 and there was also an element of a contribution which the PFS directors supported again, to support the qualification that is provided to PFS members by the CII.”

2.9. Why should the PFS contribute to the CII's capital investment and then pay more for the service provided by those new resources? Is it not analogous to tenant paying to refurbish the house they rent and then have to pay a higher rent because the house has been refurbished?

- The size of the recharge and value of capital investment are completely unrelated.

2.10. Against the backdrop of a previous independent report that stated that the recharge was too high and the CII were required to refund the amount overcharged, and in light of the poor level of service provided by the CII to the PFS, why did the PFS Board agree to a significant increase to the recharge to the CII and is there as robust service agreement in place to ensure the CII are held to account for their poor service delivery?

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 35:15]:
 - *“The answer to the latter, I believe, is ‘no’, however, obviously accountability does come in the form of board meetings. Anything else you wanted to say on the recharge, Trevor?”*
- Trevor Edwards, PFS Finance Director & CII Group Executive Director, Resources & People, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 35:52]:
 - *“Yes, certainly. So, with respect to that particular report, that the question references, I wanted to say that there are in a group structure, such as ours, there are different ways in which costs can be shared or distributed among entities that participate and benefit from the services that are provided. The report that was referenced in that particular question is just one of those ways. However, the group has adopted - and has for quite some time a cost sharing model - and that is yet another way. And that way that we have adopted, and that the PFS has participated in for a number of years. So, we identify what is the total cost of providing the services - I'm using a particular cost driver, that cost driver could be number of customers, it could be a number of transactions - we share the cost among the entities that benefit from the from those costs. So, that is the way that it is done and that, as I say, is the way that it has been done for quite some time, and that is what the group has adopted.”*

2.11. What formula was used to calculate the sharing of group services for recharge and was the same basis applied to both CII and PFS members.

- Trevor Edwards, PFS Finance Director & CII Group Executive Director, Resources & People, answered a similar question at the AGM. Please refer to question 2.10.

2.12. How can PFS members be assured that the services provided by the CII to the PFS members is both worth £6m pa and what independent research is obtained to verify it?

- It is a responsibility of the PFS Board to ensure transparent reporting to members, including through independently audited accounts. It is also open to the PFS Board to seek independent external advice to verify the value for money of the recharge.
- The PFS Board agreed the recharge in 2023, acknowledging the services that PFS members received.
- Members will recognise that they depend on the CII for, among other things, the provision of the SPS and all of the infrastructure that supports it; for the Chartered Financial Planner designation, which only the CII can provide and which is a source of pride and recognition for many members; and for the wide range of regulated qualifications that are at the heart of professionalism in personal finance.

2.13. With the inter-company recharge increasing from £3.83M in 2023 to £5.99M in 2024 (a 56.3% increase), how can PFS members assess what the PFS is getting for £5.99M and whether it represents value for money. Surely this is a reasonable question that the PFS Board should be able to answer with transparency?

- It is a responsibility of the PFS Board to ensure transparent reporting to members, including through independently audited accounts.
- The PFS Board agreed the recharge in 2023, acknowledging the benefits that PFS members received.

2.14. What is the proposed 2025 recharge by the CII to the PFS and is there a formal service agreement in place for good governance of the contract?

- Trevor Edwards, PFS Finance Director & CII Group Executive Director, Resources & People, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 48:53]:
 - *“Well, the proposed recharge has not been considered yet, as was mentioned, I believe, earlier in the day. We are in the middle of our business planning process right now so that is currently underway and it is yet to be presented to the PFS board for deliberation so that will be considered as part of that exercise.”*

2.15. The board will no doubt be aware of the fantastic reporting undertaken by various news outlets on the issues between CII and PFS, and the question of intercompany loans and 'recharges for services'. Can they promise transparency and member information over any agreements in relation to the "recharge"?

- Yes, the PFS Board will be fully transparent.
- All financial matters are reported in the organisation's Financial Statements each year.

2.16. I would like clarification on the PFS and CII relationships. Is the CII in trouble financially and any monies the PFS has advanced / is held by the CII will be at risk? Why is the PFS money not being used to benefit members?

- The CII is financially sound. It's year-end-2023 accounts were signed-off by independent auditors, as has been the case every year.
- The PFS Board is keen to see the PFS reserves invested for the benefit of PFS members.

2.17. Why is having a high reserve at the PFS through their hard work, mean that PFS felt they had to bail the CII out? 2PFS directors approved," does that include the new CII Directors recently recruited to the board, and is that the

reason why they joined the board to outvote PFS directors to gain more cash from the PFS bank account ?

- Please refer to the answer to question 2.16.
- The very high levels of reserves have been built up by charging members significantly more in fees than has been expended on benefits. This needs to change going forward, with investment in an improved membership offer. This is a position shared by the CII Group Board.

2.18. How are you going to keep the promises made to PFS members that you have the best interests of the financial advisory profession at heart, and not using the financial advisory profession's success to shore up the CII finances?

- The CII is financially sound. Its year-end-2023 accounts were signed-off by independent auditors, as has been the case every year.
- All PFS money is accounted for, as can be seen in the PFS financial statements, which were independently audited.

2.19. Where has all PFS money gone and why are you not acting for your members?

- All PFS money is accounted for, as can be seen in the PFS financial statements, which were independently audited.

2.20. Can the board explore complete separation from the CII? The CII's misappropriation of PFS funds is scandalous.

- There has not been, nor has there ever been any "misappropriation" of funds. The CII is financially sound and does not rely on PFS funds.
- The PFS makes a fair contribution to the costs of providing key benefits such as the SPS, Chartered status and membership designations.
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered a similar question at the AGM. Please refer to question 3.19.

2.21. Hello, Do you think that at anytime in the future that the PFS will be able to be a stand alone organisation, or at the very least on par with the CII? If so when and what needs to happen?

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered a similar question at the AGM. Please refer to question 3.19.

2.22. On what basis are the auditors recommended to be re-appointed? What additional value do they bring over & above any other firm in the marketplace and when was the last time a benchmarking exercise carried out?

- Crowe, which is a reputable firm of excellent standing, was appointed as the PFS auditor in 2022 following a robust tender exercise which was conducted by the CII Group. The tender evaluation committee included a Member Director of the PFS Board.
- The recommendation of the evaluation committee to appoint Crowe in 2022 was approved by the PFS Board (minuted on 22 July 2022).
- The CII Group policy which was approved by the PFS Board (minuted on 16 June 2022) is to retain auditors for a maximum of 10 years, although the Group reserves the right to replace auditors at any time if there is a valid reason to do so.

2.23. Why are there no accounts for the year in the annual report?

- The financial statements and annual report are issued as separate documents because they are prepared at separate times (though cover the same reporting period).

2.24. Would The Pensions Regulator be content for a trustee to also be employed by the company who is the sponsor to the pension and making decisions that could impact the financial wellbeing of the PFS?

- It is common for pension trustees to be a member or employer nominated individual often with links to the sponsoring company, including being employees (current and past). Trustees will be aware of their fiduciary responsibilities. If any discussions or decisions relating to the CII Pension scheme arose that could be considered to be a PFS conflict of interest, it would be managed consistent with the appropriate guidelines.

3. Questions about PFS membership and other matters

3.1. What progress has here been in persuading the CII to let local PFS committees have access to contact details of the local membership in order to arrange local meetings, study / interest groups etc. as this has not been forthcoming despite Don's best intentions.

- We are pleased to advise that a facility to contact members will be made available in Q1 2025.

3.2. During the last 12 months what tangible evidence is there of the CII promoting to the public the benefits of taking independent financial advice in the UK form qualified advisers?"

- Carla Brown, PFS President, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp: 52:10]:
 - *"So, we recognise that we need to become better thought leaders. We want to be the body that the press come to, that the media come to when they're looking for quotes, when they're looking for information. We're also aware we need to be in more dialogue with the FCA, with the regulators. So, this is something that's very clearly set in our intentions going forwards."*
- Additional information:
 - Please also refer to the report provided by Daniel Williams, Vice President, at the AGM [Time stamp: 19:54].

3.3. Will the board try and fight for financial planning as it's [sic] own professional [sic], rather than being seen as part of the insurance industry - a completely separate profession?

- The CII wants to see the PFS flourish as part of the CII Group.
- We want to grow PFS membership, and we are embarking on improvements to our membership proposition to help us – including
 - raising our game as a sector thought leader, helping to shape the national debate on financial services
 - overhauling our learning offer so it can be more relevant, attractive and ahead of the curve of national and global events
 - re-launching our corporate chartered offer so that all of you who have worked so hard to achieve it can be confident that it has value in the public eye
 - continuing to build our membership offer so it is much more effective in creating networks of committed professionals who belong to something really worth belonging to.

3.4. "The notes (a duplicate copy can be supplied) from the meeting on 13th September 2021 with the CII's Executive Director for Member Engagement and Learning record the fact that she described the CII as having got itself, "...into a rut" over the qualification's framework, which is highly relevant to PFS members.

Nothing material seems to have improved since she made that statement. Why haven't the PFS Member Director Board members taken steps to hold the CII to account and get out of the rut they say they are in, and what are you proposing to do to persuade the CII to make the obvious significant improvements to the qualification's framework and suite of qualifications that are so urgently needed?"

- The CII has embarked on a radical and exciting transformation of its qualifications framework, which the PFS supports.
- The PFS has been directly involved in supporting the Group's business planning process over recent months.
- The work being undertaken in 2025 and beyond will include improvements to the CII's qualifications framework, consistent with the plan set out in the Group's Strategic Plan published in April 2023.
- More detail will be provided to all CII and PFS members in the new year, once the plans have been confirmed by Board members.

3.5. Can you please explain why the CII & PFS are currently engaged in such a public spat, and do they realise it's professionally embarrassing?

- Christine Elliott, Chair of the PFS, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp: 52:45]:
 - *"Of course it's professionally embarrassing. It is disappointing that some commentators are choosing to portray developments in a particular way. What I can say as being relatively new again, back into the chair, is the board's been working together very hard. We have got that membership focus. Membership interests are the number one item on the agenda. So, it may look like a bit of a storm, but the business of the PFS is being carried on as you know today proves, and we are determined that that's the way of things for future."*
- Carla Brown, PFS President, added:
 - *"I completely concur with that. I think one of the things that's been very refreshing in Christine's meetings is at the end of the meeting she asks, 'what we done for members?' and that needs to be very clearly at the forefront of everything that we do. You know, we need to collaborate as a board and make sure we are delivering tangible results for our members going forwards."*
- Daniel Williams, PFS Vice President, added:
 - *"Just to add to that, whatever evolution of any board, especially in the membership sphere, the only focus should be the members; how we're delivering from members, what we're delivering for members, and what we're not delivering from members but we should be. So, the intention of the board needs to - whoever are at the seats around the table - that needs to be the continued intention of the board focusing on you guys to the members."*

3.6. Please can you explain your performance over the last 12 months and your comprehension of how badly this damages the reputation of financial services in the UK? please explain how you feel your bullying actions have made

things better, as I am at a loss. Please keep it simple, I'm only a poor and clearly daft financial adviser.

- At every point, the CII Group Board has taken decisions that it believes will better support the PFS Board and PFS members.

3.7. Did the CII get to the bottom of the 'governance failings' at the PFS? Have they published what these were (if so I've missed it). The CII may feel they are confidential, however, as the 'failings' have been discussed as a headline very publicly I think the CII should provide their findings for the PFS membership to read. You are telling us that our Board have failed - we now need to know how they failed, who failed, and hopefully they will be the same people who have resigned from the PFS Board. We need the CII to be transparent on this otherwise trust will not be re-built - which is bad for the PFS and bad for the CII.

- The previous PFS Board conducted a governance review in 2023 and acted on the findings, including creating the position of an independent Chair. The PFS has been working on a new governance framework, but it is not yet complete.

3.8. Please can the board share the robust and transparent process they will use to find a permanent CEO, and confirm that they will be directly employed by the PFS, to prevent any potential conflicts of interest that may arise from them being the officer of a different company.

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 1:04:16]
 - *"The PFS terms of reference make the PFS CEO a CII employee and appointment. So, I can't give that guarantee, but I will refer to the answer I gave earlier on [see question 3.20] which is my strong belief that the PFS needs access to someone whose job it is to be the lens in both directions between the membership and the delivery infrastructure and that is something that I will be working very hard to support and deliver for the PFS."*

3.9. Why did Don MacIntyre 'step down'?

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered a similar question at the AGM. Please refer to question 3.20.

3.10. Please can we have a truly honest answer as to why Don's position seemed to be terminated so no [sic] quickly

- The interim CEO's appointment was not terminated.
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered a similar question at the AGM. Please refer to question 3.20.

3.11. What did the CII do to replace an interim CEO before he resigned to justify the push that Don was only an 'interim'?

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered a similar question at the AGM. Please refer to question 3.20.
- It is a matter of fact that the position was interim, and that was clear from the outset of the appointment in 2022.

3.12. Given the influence the CII Chair exerts on CII Directors and therefore the PFS Board, how much is the CII Chair paid, does the PFS bear any of this cost and when is the CII Chair's term of office due to conclude?

- The PFS does not bear any of this cost.
- The CII Group board Chair is appointed for three-year terms and can be appointed for a maximum of two terms. The current Chair began their second term on 1 July 2023.

3.13. Is there any truth in the rumour that the CII's Chair sent a threatening letter to the PFS Board members and, if so, what were the specific threats and what did the threat prevent the board from doing what they wanted to do?

- No, there is no truth in that rumour.

3.14. "There was a significant data breach at the CII that was so serious that the CII was required to self-report to the Information Commissions [sic] Office. As this impacted upon many of the PFS members, what action has the board taken to ensure the CII has taken appropriate steps to ensure that PFS member data is protected?"

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp: 54:45]:
 - *"Without wishing to belittle the intention behind the question, the first thing to say is self-reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office is usually a good thing. It means you've identified something that's gone wrong and you're taking steps to alert the regulator, but I'll put that to one side. I mean the really good news on this question is that with a huge amount - I mean a really huge amount of really hard work by the teams and colleagues involved - the CII, and given its infrastructure encompasses the PFS - the CII achieved in June this year Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation. Many members in the room will be familiar with that, but it is an economy wide standard in terms of cyber security. It is a huge step forward for the CII, and something - I can't claim any credit, I'd only been here two minutes - but I am very proud that we've managed to do it this year."*
- Additional information:
 - The incident occurred in 2022 and at the time, the CII immediately secured its systems, hired external IT experts to investigate, and reported the incident to the ICO. The CII also contacted all those who were affected by the breach.
 - The CII advised that there was a very low risk to the affected customers and members because the information was likely already in the public domain. However, they informed the affected individuals out of a spirit of transparency and openness.
 - The CII undertook a detailed review of security systems and testing protocols and made improvements.

3.15. What is the view of the member nominated directors on the CII's proposal to implement the experiential route to chartered and whether it is appropriate, particularly for Personal Finance Society members operating in a highly technical profession; and in the context of Consumer Duty, how does this help to improve consumer outcomes and to enhance the reputation of the financial planning profession?

- Carla Brown, PFS President, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp: 50:40]:
 - *“So, this was something that was brought to the board in pilot form earlier in the year and the board at that time expressed no further wish in pursuing it at that time.”*
- Additional information:
 - The PFS agreed to part fund the first stage of a pilot in this area. A second stage of pilots is now being undertaken. It was not proposed by the CII that personal finance professionals be involved in this second stage.

3.16. Over the last three years, there have been a number of concerns raised about the way in which the PFS’s Articles of Association were changed without members being properly informed of the consequences. Are the 2012 Terms of Reference still in place because they appear to conflict with the Articles in that they appear to frustrate the PFS Board’s ability to meet their fiduciary obligations and potentially breach their obligations under the Companies Act 2006?

This is an important issue. Would you therefore provide full transparency to the members on this issue at this AGM?

- All versions of the PFS Articles of Association are available through Companies House.
- The current Articles of Association were passed by PFS members through an AGM resolution on 20 September 2010. They were updated to align with the Companies Act 2006, which included incorporating the original Memorandum of Association into the Articles. Incorporating the Memorandum into the Articles ensured there was just a single document related to the organisation, instead of two.
- The 2012 PFS Terms of Reference are still in place. There is no conflict with the Companies Act 2006.

3.17. When were the Terms of Reference disclosed to the PFS Board members and to what extent did they form the basis for the CII’s decision on 21st December 2021 to flood the PFS Board, claiming ‘governance issues’ as the reason?

- The PFS Terms of Reference are made available to every Director when joining the PFS Board.
- The CII Group Board stated the reasons behind its actions of [21 December 2022](#) at the time.

3.18. Will members be able to have a vote on a demerger of the PFS from CII

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 41:50]:
 - *“Any proposal needs to conform with the PFS Articles of Association and to be brought before the membership. However, what we would emphasise are the many benefits that PFS members get from being part of the group including the all important SPS, Chartered status, membership designations and associated world-class qualifications offer.”*
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, added:
 - *“So, this is a question that comes up quite frequently, you know, should the PFS breakaway from the CII and become fully independent. And the answer is, if that’s what PFS members want that is possible, yeah. But I think it’s*

really important that if there's going to be a debate about that particular question just to remember some sort of fundamentals of the question. So, many of the things that PFS members value - Chartered status, qualifications, the SPS – they are all delivered through the infrastructure of the CII. Now that can be replicated under other arrangements. So, take the SPS for example. The CII delivers the SPS. We are the accredited body by the FCA. So we – the CII - is the accredited body by the FCA for the purposes of being SPS. If the PFS wished to set itself up independently, it would need to find a way to replicate those arrangements and secure accredited body status - either by partnering with somebody else or by investing in the ability to do that for itself. That is not straightforward. That would be very expensive, take time - three maybe four years - and even then it is not guaranteed that the PFS would get that accredited body status. So, it is risky and it is time consuming and it is expensive, or would be expensive, but it is possible if that's what PFS members wanted. Similarly with qualifications, the CII holds the awarding body status for PFS qualifications – the CII is the body that is regulated by Ofqual for that purpose. The PFS could replicate that if it wanted to, but it would take time and it's not certain and in between times PFS members who depend on those qualifications and that SPS would have to do something to fill the gap. And finally, Chartered status, the charter designations that many of the people in this room have they come from the CII's Royal Charter. And if people wanted to go to CISI, for example, which is what people you know lots of people have said that they'd like to do, it's a different set of chartered designations. So, these are all things - I don't raise them as as sort of saying, you know, stay with the CII – although that's what my view actually is - but just so that everybody is aware that it isn't as simple as saying 'let's be free' and you know tomorrow you would be. It isn't like that, and that's something that members I think need to have in mind when they're thinking about this particular issue.”

3.19. How would the board comment on a "managed separation", where the PFS agreed an exclusive contract for services for a period of time, but with an aim to require CII to tender competitively for those services down the line? This would give the CII certainty of income for a period of time, but allow the PFS membership the independence [sic] they clearly want.

- The CII is not a commercial provider of services to the PFS. It provides benefits to PFS members on behalf of the PFS. Those benefits include the SPS, regulated qualifications and Chartered status. The PFS is not currently in a position to provide those benefits, and it seems unlikely that there would be a competitive market that would enable a tendering process in the way suggested.
- It is not clear that a majority of members of the PFS do want independence.
- The ramifications of any proposal would need to be clearly considered by the PFS Board and wider membership.

3.20. Don MacIntyre told members that if he wasn't present at the AGM, "it would mean there is big trouble". Would the board be able to comment on this?

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 37:10]

- *“Well, first off the appointment of the PFS chief executive is a CII matter.”*
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, added:
 - *“I mean, I'm rather loathe to sort of comment on remarks attributed to Don, that I don't know, you know, whether Don said them or not. But, let's just for argument's sake say that he did say those, well let me say, with no flippancy whatsoever, that if the passion that I've heard expressed today can be equated to big trouble there would have been big trouble with or without Don. So, you know the message is heard. Coming back to, you know Don isn't with us, but there's much less to this than meets the eye. Don was appointed as an interim CEO more than two years ago. That's an awfully long time to spend as an interim and Don decided that it was time for him to develop his career in other ways, and he goes with our blessing and thanks for everything he achieved while he was here. Now I happen to believe that the PFS deserves substantive, permanent, sustainable arrangements to ensure that the views of members can be reflected into the CII part of the delivery infrastructure and that the CII's decisions and the reasons for them - and indeed the PFS' - can be reflected back out to members, and there could be much more of a dialogue in a way that many members have expressed today they feel is lacking. And that's what we will be pursuing with pace and alacrity until we've got those arrangements in place.”*

3.21. How can we hold the President and Vice President accountable with such short terms? Next year, it feels as though we will be asking the same questions to a different set of people.

- Carla Brown, PFS President, and Daniel Williams, PFS Vice President, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp: 49:15]:
 - Carla Brown: *“Hopefully it will be Dan to be reappointed next year, after myself and Ben. But you can hold us accountable by asking us questions. We want to engage with members. We want to hear from you so events like this are really important. The number of people who have actually voted in this year's AGM shows that our members do care and we want to hear from you. So, if there's anything that you feel that that we're not doing that we should be doing then please do get in touch. My e-mail address is out there, contact me if there is something you want to know.”*
 - Daniel Williams: *“I'll just add to that and say whilst I may or may not be Vice President or President, I intend to be board member. I completely intend to still be here and whether I hold a title or not you can hold me accountable as a member of the board as every member of the board expects to be held to account. So, I wouldn't worry too much about the terms of the title, worry about the individuals and the ambition to stay and do the best for our members for our entire tenure.”*

Questions asked from the floor, during the AGM: [Time stamp 56:01]

1. I wanted to ask a couple of questions arising from the CII AGM. One of the things that I was quite surprised about was the fact there's been another review of the chartered corporate status. So, chartered corporate chartered financial planner was

introduced for a 10 year term in January 2020, and now not even five years in there is going to be 17 upgrades to the status. So, I was wondering what involvement have the PFS board had in this and what your view is how many upgrades will affect financial planners.

- Christine Elliott, Chair, answered this question:
 - “That is an excellent question to which I cannot say I know the answer.”
- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, added:
 - *“So, the review that CII is currently carried out focuses on corporate chartered firms. The ambition behind the review is to move corporate chartered status to the next level, if you like, to make it really meaningful from the point of view of the public and recognition. To really strengthen the underpinning accreditation and assessment processes, and to justify the hard work for all those firms that have already achieved it, by really embedding and underpinning the value that it has to offer. Now we have some proposals, some very strong proposals in my view, that we’ll be taking out the consultation early in the new year. I’d encourage every member in the room whether they’re a member of the PFS or nominally a member of the CII to engage with that consultation, we’ll be very interested in your views, but this is something that would be a flagship part of our programme for 2025.”*

2. Can I ask one about tax. It’s a member organisation and it’s always been for the benefit of members, but now it’s controlled by the Institute, not by a member majority board and also the Articles were changed some years ago so on wind of the PFS any surplus would pass to the Institute. That means we fail the conditions from mutual status and we’ll be paying corporation tax. I’d just like to ask, how is that in the best interests of the objects of the PFS?

- Trevor Edwards, PFS Finance Director & CII Group Executive Director, Resources & People, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 58:35]:

“So, the mutual tax status of the PFS is one that is subject to review, based on the requirements of meeting mutual trading tax status as set out by HMRC, so that is something that we will review going forward. We haven’t reviewed it yet for the 2023 year tax returns, which are due by the end of this year. We’re currently undergoing that exercise. So, up to this point the PFS has been filing its taxes as a mutual trader, but as I said we will be looking at it for the 2023 tax return at this time. [Intervention from floor – “It’s the revenue that set’s the rule, not us”] No, that’s correct, but as you rightfully pointed out there have been changes within the PFS that we now need to look at in the context of the rules and we will make that assessment and then that will be shown in the 2024 accounts, when its published.”

3. Thanks very much, I am speaking on behalf of the membership I represent in Manchester. One of the questions we have I hear from many financial advisors is that we've had very competent board members - financial advisors sitting on the board like Vanessa Barnes and others, but for whatever reason stepped aside. Matthew what guarantees are you going to give us that who remains as financial advisors, their arms are not going to be tied and they're going to be allowed to act in the interests of financial advisors and the PFS members, because I get the impression

for some reason something is being blocked. I don't know whether that is general incompetency or there's a hidden agenda, because all I can go is by past data that things were pretty good and things have gone badly wrong, and what is the reason and what is going to be done about it?

- Matthew Hill, PFS Board Director and CII Group Chief Executive, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 1:00:06]:
 - *“So, I think that’s a great question, I can offer you personal observations, which I'm happy to do. Not everybody may agree with them, but it goes back a little bit to the question we talked about 5:00 or so minutes ago about the PFS establishing its independence, and in my view, as someone coming to this area relatively fresh and perhaps a little less jaded by some of the arguments over the last few years, I think that there has been – and I am not sort of criticising this - but I think there has been quite a strong sense on the part of people who have been around the PFS for quite a little while, that it should be independent and it would be better being independent, and I think that has manifest itself a little bit like as sort of withdrawing from the CII's ability to deliver. So, we want to be independent, so one of the ways we will do that is by putting some distance between us and the CII. Now the problem with that is, that it's the CII, in its staff, who do most of the delivery. I mean the fact we're sitting here at this very professionally organised AGM today, it's CII staff operating on behalf of the PFS that have delivered that. Tomorrow's conference, I mean you know, I was very pleased to see the sort of vote of applause for the events team this morning. It's a CII events team, they've organised what will be an amazing conference tomorrow. And I think the big strategic mistake that's been made has been to put that distance in, and to allow the sort of suspicion and mistrust to become the dominating factor in that relationship. And one of the things that excites me about now being on the PFS board is being able to do all the things that I think I can do to recreate that connection and get to a point where we are good at taking the resources that have been built up and turning them into delivery for PFS members. Now, it's early days yet, I don't know you, I'm sort of asking you to take me on trust, but that's very much where I'm coming from. Close that gap. The CII is not the PFS's enemy. I see so much on social media, in the trade press, like the PFS is fighting an invisible enemy. It reminds me, and I don't know whether you can still say this sort of thing these days, but the last Japanese soldier on the Pacific island, emerging from the bush in 1975 to find the war had finished 30 years earlier. It's that sort of thing we've got to try and get over. We are there to deliver mutually in the benefit of members of the Institute, whether they happen to be mainly PFS members or mainly CII members, and that's something I feel passionately about. My passion equals a passion I've heard this morning from members.”*
- 4. I want to ask about the thought leadership side of things, and I want to know what your strategy is in sort of achieving that sort of status, who the target audience is for that, is it the general public or is that internally to others within the profession, and how are regional initiatives expected to contribute towards this intention and objective. Just so that we can align with that and the strategy there?

- Carla Brown, PFS President, answered this question at the AGM [Time stamp 1:05:08]
 - *“Thank you, great question. As I have already said, this is an area that we really want to develop going forward. I think it's important that we can help build public confidence in our profession – trust, credibility – so we want to become thought leaders in both the public domain – so working to build consumer confidence - but also working with the regulators to try and influence policy, looking at how we interpret policy. And how can we help the regional areas, which is the second part of your question, well we'd love to hear what it is that you want from us. You know, how can we help you, in your line of work, in your regional committees, what can we do that will add value for you, and we'd love to hear that.”*

ENDS.