**Report of Quality and Audit Committee to the ASE AGM in January 2017,**

**for the year August 2015 - July 2016**

Presented by Graham Kingsley, representing the Quality and Audit Committee.

To start this Annual Report, I think it would be a good idea for me to indicate briefly what the Q & A Committee is and does. The Committee consists of five members. Four are appointed by the members of ASE, and one is a representative of Council (which is to say, the Trustee Body of the Association). Its role, according to the Bylaws of the ASE, is “to Monitor the Council’s management of the Association’s resources and to report accordingly to the members in a General Meeting.” It has the power to “Require the production of such information, by the Council, its Officers and the employees, as the Committee shall consider necessary”.

You will see that this is an important remit, and the Committee – which in practice consists of experienced and long-serving members of ASE – considers a range of matters on which an opinion is required, either by its own choice or on request by the Chief Executive or Council,. The Committee has no executive powers; its role is advisory.

**Membership**

This year saw the retirement from the Committee of its chair, Roger McCune, after nine years’ service; he was thanked at the last AGM. As agreed at last year’s AGM, elections for Q&A took place along with other ASE in the Spring and early Summer, and Sue Flanagan and Alan Rhodes were elected, who with the existing members myself and Dennis Sutton, and the Council representative, Maggie Hannon, make up the full Committee. I was elected Chair of Q & A for 2016-17 by the other members at their September meeting.

As agreed at the 2016 AGM, this meeting needs to vote to confirm formally the appointment of our two new members, and I invite the members present to do so now.

(This was agreed by the meeting.)

**Matters considered during the year**

Review of governance of the Association including the operation of the Trustee Body (Council) and the Education Group. This has included Dennis Sutton attending Council meetings to report the findings of Q & A and to observe and comment on the conduct of business, and by Dennis and myself attending some meetings of the Education Group. In both cases we have felt that these bodies have settled down to a satisfactory way of working. For example, the Education Group now has a clearer focus on its role in relation to services to members. Also Council is addressing the issue of achieving an appropriate balance of skills in its membership.

A Review of the risk register, jointly with Stephen Fyles and Shaun Reason, is on-going.

We were consulted on the establishment of the Remunerations Committee –now in place – to regularize the system for determination of the salaries of the ASE’s employees.

We were asked to consider the arrangements for election of Chair of the Association. A number of features were considered, including the desirability of allowing or requiring a video presentation by candidates, publication of an item by each candidate in Education in Science, the identification of the candidate’s Region in the application and a clear statement that (as is already the case) the voting system on the website does not allow any member to register more than one vote.

Comments on these items were passed to the Trustees for decision.

Clarification of the term of Office and election of the Chair of the Trustee Body: these were felt not to be clearly expressed, and were clarified as follows:

The rules provide that the chair can serve for three years but this is subject to annual re-election.

It would be best if trustees were alerted to the need to nominate a chair in advance of the Summer Trustees’ meeting. An election could then be held at that meeting. Thus the chair could take up office, or continue in office, at the Autumn meeting. The Vice-Chair should be elected at the Autumn meeting.

**Proposed review topics for 2016-17**:

To review of the Rules and operating procedures to check accuracy and consistency in the light of the changes in governance (this is potentially a big job, as the Operating Procedures are a lengthy document)..

To continue to be involved in the revision of the risk register

To monitor the proposals for succession planning

To monitor the plans for Association development

To review of the criteria for Honorary membership and its role (a draft response was produced at our last meeting, which when agreed will be passed to the Trustees for consideration)