Dr Elizabeth Price, Chair of the meeting and President of the Society, welcomed all attendees to the 35th Annual General Meeting (AGM). It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

1. **To receive the minutes of the previous AGM held on 2 May 2018 and discuss any matters arising from the minutes**

The minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

2. **To receive a report from the President of the Society**

Dr Price reiterated BSR’s three-year strategy, and advised members that all the work undertaken by BSR was directly linked to its mission statement.

The Society’s educational aims work towards strengthening the abilities of its members as a skilled rheumatology workforce. BSR’s achievements over the past year included successfully implementing the new education strategy (introduced in 2018), which included developing new eLearning modules, launching the new rare disease fellowship programme, delivering the most successful core skills course to date, and introducing a new bursary initiative for trainees and health professionals.

The Society’s plans for 2019 included delivering ten educational courses (including a brand new programme for Rheumatology Specialist Nurse), running an international bursary scheme for annual conference, launching new fellowships (Sjögrens and Transitions), focusing on further support for trainee members and expanding the eLearning offering to the whole multidisciplinary team. There would be a focus on delivering regional taster days to promote rheumatology as a career pathway.

Dr Price encouraged members to sign up for the BSR’s member-exclusive mentoring scheme.

BSR’s second set of strategic aims were around influencing health policy to achieve positive outcomes, creating guidelines and standards that underpin the delivery of care by members. The Society had launched the National Early Inflammatory Arthritis Audit (NEIAA) with over 20,000 patients recruited so far, published NICE-accredited guidelines on biologic DMARD safety in inflammatory arthritis, completed the largest ever audit of a rare disease based on the SLE guidelines, and expanded the peer review scheme across the UK.

BSR had published its second policy report in Scotland, in collaboration with the Scottish Society for Rheumatology. Dr Price informed members that the Specialist Nursing in Rheumatology: State of Play report had launched the day before and the focus next would be on Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology: State of Play.

Plans for 2019 included publishing the first NEIAA annual report, developing and piloting the framework for the quality review scheme, launching a new funding call based around research priorities and member interests, delivering the next round of Best Practice Awards, and working on developing new guidelines.
BSR’s third aim focused on future proofing, which included managing the Society’s assets and collaborating with other organisations to achieve joint goals. For the first time ever, the Society had in post a Devolved Nations Liaison Officer, based at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Glasgow, working to strengthen the Society’s relationship with the devolved nations. Membership retention was at 92%, whilst there had been a 9% increase in membership.

3. To receive a report from the President of the British Health Professional in Rheumatology (BHPR) section of BSR

Dr Flurey reminded members that a significant achievement in 2018 was getting unanimous support at the 2018 AGM to extend equal voting rights to health professional and nurse members. The same group of members now also had online access to the *Rheumatology* journal for the first time, with substantial publication discounts for *Rheumatology Advances in Practice* available. There was a huge focus on increasing the educational content geared towards health professionals and nurses, in the form of online eLearning modules, filmed lectures and on-demand webinars. The fellowship programme had been extended and was open to all UK members, and there had been an increase in the number of bursaries available to health professional members.

Plans for 2019 included developing a bursary scheme for practical clinical courses aligned with the MSK Competency Framework and producing nine additional webinars aimed at health professionals. Dr Flurey provided details of upcoming webinars and listed those that were available on demand on the BSR website.

Members were encouraged to attend the Droitwich Lecture for the next day.

4. To receive a report from the President of the British Society for Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology (BSPAR) section of BSR

Dr Bailey summarised the achievements in 2018: the Society had published core competencies for paediatric rheumatology clinical nurse specialists and advanced nurse practitioners, developed a statement for NHS England for the provision of paediatric rheumatology care for children and young people, and published a factsheet on age appropriate care (paediatric transition into adult care). The BSPAR Section Council was working closely with the RCPCH on safeguarding issues relating to hypermobility and EDS, fostering links with other charities and patient groups, and had recently disseminated a survey of member priorities to inform plans for the coming year. Dr Bailey also mentioned the Capture JIA project, the aim of which was to develop a single platform to collect core data set informing clinical, research, audit and commissioning requirements.

Plans for 2019 included developing competencies for health professionals in specialist and non-specialist centres, publishing a state of play report for paediatric rheumatology, and review and develop guidance on biologics and NHSe funding pathways.

Dr Bailey informed members that the Paediatric and Adolescent Rheumatology Conference would take place in Birmingham on 8-9 October, and encouraged those interested in paediatric rheumatology or research to submit a research idea through the abstract submission site for the conference’s Research Day.

5. To receive a report from the Honorary Secretary

Dr Mukhtyar highlighted that membership numbers were growing steadily across all categories. He asked members in attendance to encourage their colleagues to join the Society. BSR was focusing on delivering tangible benefits that would help professionals across all categories.

There was a brand new Society website, making content easier to find and bringing members timely news and updates. Members were reminded to log in to the ‘MyBSR’ area of the website regularly to keep their details up to date.
Dr Mukhtyar informed members that his term of office as Honorary Secretary ended at this AGM and introduced his successor as Dr Kaushik Chaudhuri.

6. **To consider, and if thought fit, pass the following resolution as a special resolution:**

“It is hereby resolved by way of special resolution that the draft Articles of Association, which were circulated with the Annual General Meeting Notice dated 15 April 2019 are hereby approved and adopted as the new Articles of Association of the Society in substitution for and to the exclusion of all existing Articles of Association of the Society.”

Dr Price advised members that, according to the Charity Governance Code, a charity should have an independent governance review carried out every 3 to 5 years, and so BSR underwent a governance review towards the end of last year. A series of recommendations were presented to the Board of Trustees in January. The Rules of the Society reflected the majority of the changes approved by the Board, but the most significant change to the Articles of Association was reducing the maximum number of trustees allowed on the Board at any one time from 14 to 12. Other changes to the Articles of Association included very minor amendments, such as tidying up of reference numbers.

Voting members were asked to vote to approve the changes to the Articles of Association. A majority vote was required to pass the resolution. Dr Price confirmed that BSR had not received any proxy forms. The members of the AGM proceeded to vote, with a unanimous vote to pass the resolution.

The resolution was approved.

7. **To note the amended Rules of the Society adopted by the Board of Trustees on 8 April 2019 (under Article 107 of the Articles of Association which were then binding on the Society)**

Dr Price asked the members to note the amended Rules of the Society, previously circulated with the papers of the AGM.

The main changes to the Rules included: giving the Board the flexibility to recruit up to three (previously only two) non-medical trustees to help address any potential skills gaps on the Board; changing the term of office for trustees, chairs of committees and committee members to three years, with the option of being re-elected for a second term of three years; renaming the BRiTs Committee to Trainee Committee; and renaming the Clinical Quality Committee to Clinical Affairs Committee.

8. **To receive a report from the Honorary Treasurer of the Society**

Dr Karim asked the members to note the figures for unrestricted and restricted income and expenditure for 2018, and also clarified that the 2017 figures had been restated on advice of the Society’s auditors.

The Society had experienced a strong financial year, and would seek to continue investing in its membership.

8.1 **To receive the subscriptions for 2020**

Dr Karim introduced the new subscription fees, which were approved by the trustees.

A question was raised in relation to non-clinical scientist members and whether they were currently in the correct membership category. Dr Karim agreed to look into this in further detail.

8.2 **To receive the annual audited accounts and reports for the financial year ended 31 December 2017**

The members received the annual audited accounts and reports of the Society. No further questions were raised.
8.3 To re-appoint haysmacintyre LLP as the Society’s auditors and authorise the trustees to determine the auditors’ remuneration.

A majority vote was required to pass the resolution. Dr Karim confirmed that BSR had not received any proxy forms. The members of the AGM proceeded to vote, with a unanimous vote to re-appoint haysmacintyre LLP as the Society’s auditors.

9. To receive the following reports:

9.1 Honorary Editor’s Report, *Rheumatology*

Dr Bukhari introduced himself as the new Editor-in-Chief of *Rheumatology*. The journal had had a successful year, and there was a new strategic vision in place for 2019-2023 to ensure the journal’s continued growth. The focus would be on expanding global presence, growing quality, improving digital presence, and improving service to authors.

The journal was ranked fifth in rheumatology; the impact factor was currently 5.245, with readers in 178 countries. There had been over 3.6 million article downloads in 2018, and papers published by authors from 36 different countries.

9.2 Honorary Editor’s Report, *Rheumatology Advances in Practice*

Professor Watts informed members that *Rheumatology Advances in Practice* was a growing journal, and now featured in Scopus – the largest abstract and citation database of peer reviewed literature. The journal had received 76 original submissions and 86 revised papers in 2018, and over 28,000 full text downloads.

Members were informed that they would receive a deeply discounted Article Publication Charge for RAP and submissions from health professional and nurse members in particular.

Future plans for the journal included launching supplements focused on young researchers, nurses and health professionals, increasing online usage and global impact, increasing publishing output and targeting databases for abstracting and indexing.

9.3 Honorary Heberden Librarian’s Report

The Heberden Library was an archive of over 1,500 medico-historical books, journals and photographs and was freely accessible to all BSR members. Most recently, the library had begun a project to record oral histories on experiences of treatment before the advent of biologics. Donations had been received from Richard Watts and Richard Hull in 2018.

10. Any other business:

10.1 Departing officers

Dr Price thanked all those that were stepping down from their respective roles on the various committees of the BSR, and extended a special thank you to Professor MacGregor, who had chaired the now disbanded Research Committee. The Board had made the decision to instead reconvene a working group to help define the Society’s research priorities going forward.

Dr Price thanked the following trustees at the end of their term of office for their hard work and commitment to the Society:
It was noted that Dr Chaudhuri, whilst stepping down in his capacity as Chair of the Education Committee, would retain his position on the Board as the newly elected Honorary Secretary.

10.2 Elections announcement

Dr Price reminded members that the elections process usually kicked off at the beginning of the year, with successful candidates announced at the AGM. However, due to the governance review and subsequent changes to the Society’s governing documents, the Board made the decision to delay the elections until after the AGM, to allow for changes from the review to be implemented as quickly as possible.

Nominations would open on 1 July, and close on 8 August, with a round of voting following shortly after. Details of current vacancies would be published in the coming weeks, and the Chair encouraged members to put themselves forward for any position they may be interested in. The Society relied on its members to volunteer their time, skills and knowledge on the various committees, each set up to focus on different areas of work, such as policy, service improvement, delivering the annual conference and the educational programme.

10.3 Any other business to be advised in writing to the Chief Executive by 17 April 2018

There was no such items received.

The Chair invited questions from members, with one raised in relation to whether BSR would consider commissioning and/or endorsing an IT system to help members in their day-to-day practice. Dr Price explained that this was being explored and that a working group would be convened to consider it further.

Dr Price thanked the members for attending.

The meeting was closed at 2.00pm.