HEALTH AND SAFETY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

RULES AMENDMENT

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. The current HSLA rules were originally drafted as long ago as 2005 and have only had minor amendments to date. The onset of the COVID pandemic highlighted to the committee the need to update the Rules to take account of experience and to allow for greater flexibility.

2. In the lifetime of the HSLA the Chair has been held by 3 individuals who have held multiple terms. The committee wishes to propose that the period of office for the Chair should be limited to one single period of 3 years with the Chair not eligible to serve a second consecutive term unless there is no other candidate. It will be possible for an individual to stand and serve as Chair in future elections but not consecutively. It is hoped that this will allow the role to rotate more frequently. For continuity purposes it is not proposed that other executive offices, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Vice Chair and Treasurer should be restricted in the same way.

3. It is proposed that anyone who wishes to stand as Chair should have held a previous officer position with the HSLA. As the role is limited to a single period of 3 years an individual should have an understanding of the HSLA's structure and aims to assist in setting an agenda early into the term. However, it is not proposed that the candidate must be a current serving committee member – only someone with a working knowledge of the HSLA and a demonstrable commitment to its aims.

4. It is proposed that all other non-executive roles remain on a two-year rotation leaving those accessible to members and providing a pathway to the Chair role in the future.

5. It is also proposed to provide the committee with greater flexibility to set the rules for elections and timing of the Annual General Meeting. At present the rules provide only for elections in General Meeting with in-person or proxy voting. Having learned the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic and listened to comments from members the committee wishes to have the flexibility to set rules for running elections that take account of changes in available technology, that members are based throughout the UK, the permanent change in working patterns and that not all members have their travel costs reimbursed by employers to allow them to attend meetings in person. Instead of mandating a form of voting in the rules that will require amendments by Special Resolution in the future, it is proposed that this approach will provide the HSLA with improved flexibility in responding to changes in circumstance and generally accepted working practices.