Election statement – **Peter Bryant-Cooke**

Clients seeking psychotherapy should be able to understand the different approaches available and make an informed choice about their care. In NHS-funded practice, I routinely meet patients who did not know that therapy means more than CBT. I am standing because I want UKCP to make the breadth and value of your work better understood by the public, and to make sure practising therapists have a stronger voice in the decisions that affect them.

I know the balance you manage every week: keeping practice safe and thoughtful while also earning a living. That balance shapes what I would focus on if elected:

- Informed choice. CBT has an important place, but people should also hear about other approaches that may suit them better, and be able to reach them. SCoPEd has made a real difference by giving us a shared way to describe training and practice, but that difference is still not well understood outside the profession. I would like UKCP to explain much more clearly, and much more publicly, what UKCP registration means and what you offer. Getting safe, effective therapy should not depend on reaching crisis, or on knowing how to navigate 'the system'.

- Standards and public protection. People should be able to trust that their therapist is properly trained and accountable. I support statutory regulation where it meets the principles UKCP has already set out: public protection first, with protected titles, and respect for both the diversity of our approaches and the depth of our training. I know members hold strong views on this, and I would listen to them. You also need guidance you can use and processes that are fair and transparent. A great deal of consultation already happens, and I would push for UKCP to explain its decisions clearly and show you how your views have shaped them. Research belongs here too: I would support research that is genuinely useful to practitioners, with outcome measures read alongside clinical judgement and the client's own account of change.

- Access and inclusion, for clients and practitioners alike. Cost, disability, geography and caring responsibilities keep people from therapy, and from entering and staying in the profession. I would want UKCP to identify and address those barriers, listening particularly to people whose experiences are less visible.

- Stewardship. Full clinical membership costs more than £300 a year, and you deserve a clear account of what your subscription pays for and what it achieves. I would bring a practical focus on financial sustainability, proportionate administration and the responsible use of technology, including AI. I hold the CISI Certificate in Ethical Artificial Intelligence, and on my College committee I drafted our minutes using an offline AI tool, with the committee's unanimous agreement and approved without amendment. I would want the same approach elsewhere: clear agreement, appropriate safeguards and human oversight.

What I would bring to the Board starts with practice. I am a UKCP-registered psychotherapist. I began my training in 2012 and have been fully accredited since 2018. Most of my work is with trauma, in independent practice and NHS-funded services, and I have now delivered more than 3,000 sessions. I also provide clinical supervision and am listed in the UKCP supervision directory, and that work regularly involves ethical, safeguarding and risk decisions.

Since March 2026, I have served on the Executive Committee of UKCP's College of Outcome-Oriented and Hypno-psychotherapies, and in August I was appointed as a UKCP independent assessor for organisational member reviews. Both roles have given me an early view of how UKCP works from the inside, and I would bring that to the Board, along with a commitment to listening across all of UKCP's Colleges and modalities.

In 2014 I founded Catalyst Therapy Ltd and, through it, established a psychological therapy service, recruiting and contracting a network of 12 clinicians. That meant thinking about contracts, budgets and risk as well as clinical quality. I have since built on it with an Executive MBA, Chartered Manager status and Fellowship of the Chartered Management Institute, and the Institute of Directors' course on the role of the director and the board. In practice, I read any plan by first asking how it fits UKCP's strategic aims, then what it will cost, what could go wrong and how we will know whether it has worked.

Outside the therapy room, I have a background in music and finance. In 2020 I founded an investment partnership, which traded between 2022 and 2025. Being trusted with other people's money taught me what integrity, transparency and diligence mean in practice. I became a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment along the way.

My doctoral research at the University of Chester looks at how EMDR may help people with complex medical presentations involving chronic pain, where psychological distress is too often treated as secondary to physical illness. I hope the work may contribute to clinical policy and NICE guidance, including how services match people with the clinicians and approaches that suit them. I have also recently joined the faculty of the New School of Psychotherapy and Counselling as a research supervisor, within its existential tradition. Pluralism matters to me. I think our different understandings of distress and change are among the profession's real strengths.

Trusteeship means acting for UKCP as a whole. I would use independent judgement, declare any conflicts of interest and work constructively with fellow trustees and staff. I am prepared to ask difficult questions without becoming oppositional, to support

collective decisions without becoming passive, and to change my mind when the evidence warrants it.

UKCP is an important part of my professional life. I would like to help it become better understood, better value for you as members and a stronger voice for choice in psychotherapy. I would be grateful for your vote.