
Council Courier

27.09.2018

This is an informal account of the discussions and decisions most recently taken at Council. Action notes and official minutes will be produced in due course.

Obituary

Council resolved to send condolences to next of kin. Particular mention was made of M J Long, Robert Venturi, Richard Spencer-Dean, Colin Amery and Elizabeth Robertson (former Executive Director, CSR).

Declarations of interest

There were no new declarations.

S15 letter from the Charity Commission to the RIBA

The letter was already in the public domain. It contained five recommendations for improvement, including the discharge of duties by trustees. Council voted to respond to the letter within a fortnight. Contributions on the letter's content were to be made to the Council Secretary within seven days. Those abstaining and voting against responding (three members) were asked to write to the President explaining their reasons, also within seven days.

Royal Gold Medal 2019

Sir Nicholas Grimshaw was confirmed as the Royal Gold Medallist for 2019.

Minutes of meeting dated 5 July 2018

Agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the minutes

Council voted to agree that as a matter of principle the Institute should take advice from the legal firm it had formally instructed, and not those firms other

trustees may have consulted on an individual basis.

Appointments

Vice President Practice & Profession: Caroline Buckingham
Honorary Librarian: Elena Tsolakis
Vice President Education: Nicky Watson
Chartered member of the RIBA Board: Helen Taylor
Council member without portfolio on the RIBA Board: Wendy Charlton
Chair, British Architectural Trust Board: Rob Dickins

Council also confirmed the list of main committees, noting the small number of vacant seats which needed to be recruited for.

President's report

Council noted the report.

RIBA Board report

Council noted the report.

Chief Executive's report

Ruth McIntosh, an external member of the RIBA Board, had been appointed to the board of Williams Topco Ltd as a non-executive director.

Returning Officer report

Feedback was given on the recent presidential and council elections. Council agreed on a number of reforms to the operation of the election process, including tightening up the guidelines and permitting the sanctioning of candidates who infringed them. The

Returning Officer role would be reviewed and the Constitution Review Group would examine any other issues arising.

Question from Richard Wooldridge on benefits of chartered practice membership: no supplementary question was put.

AGM: Trustees report and financial statements 2017

These were formally approved together with the reappointment of auditors Sayer Vincent.

Professional Standards

Council noted the standing report. Code of conduct interim report: Council voted in favour of the civil standard of proof being applied at RIBA professional conduct hearings. Council also approved principles for the broadening of the Codes, plus other improvements, to be developed and presented in December.

Ethics and Sustainable Development Commission interim report

Chair of the Commission Peter Oborn reported on the interim findings prior to a final report to Council in December. Council members noted the progress with approval and were invited to send any points for consideration via Carys Rowlands, Head of Professional Standards.

Education futures

It had been agreed that a report would be made to Council by David Gloster, Director of Education on:

- 1) the changing context of architectural education (nationally and internationally)
- 2) status update on progress of RIBA Education Review (RER)
- 3) the modernisation of architectural education, and challenges to this

- 4) progress update on RIBA/ARB dialogue re architectural education
- 5) future RIBA strategy for architectural education.

Following the presentation a discussion ensued and the following recommendations were agreed:

- 1) that, on its introduction, the RIBA encourages all practices to commit to use of The Compact and RP, with these requirements agreed as extensions of the eligibility criteria for RIBA Chartered Practice;
- 2) that an education system integrating professional skills and delivering successful graduates to registration is agreed as the principal pathway for UK students of architecture;
- 3) that to extend opportunity and promote diversity and inclusivity in the profession, practices (irrespective of whether they are levy payers, or not) commit to the long-term employment of apprentices, particularly at undergraduate level, and throughout the period of study;
- 4) that, reinforced by advocacy to the MHCLG to encourage a more proactive approach by the statutory body to modernisation of the profession, the RIBA considers forming a joint liaison group with the ARB with clear terms of reference committing both to shared intent, full disclosure, and collaborative working;
- 5) that the RIBA, as the sole distance learning provider of architectural education in the UK, considers investing in virtual learning globally as a further route to qualification as an architect, and a means to enhance professional standards;
- 6) that the RIBA invests in RIBA Education, and provides a sensible resource for the team commensurate with its strategic ambition and importance to the Institute.

Those things requiring delivery needed to be part of the autumn business plan for 2019. Post-business plan, feedback on how the proposed work had been supported should be provided.

Membership Reinstatements and resignations:

Council noted the election of
127 new chartered members;
17 new associate members;
11 new affiliate members;
71 new student members

including readmissions, together with resignations.

Strategic finance and budget process

Ideas on investment opportunities were invited from Council by end of October, for review later in the year. The overall aim was to improve income and reduce expenditure. Some regions were already involved in considering how to achieve this. Nations and Regions Committee would report on their strand of work at the December Council. Short and longer-term planning ideas were welcome.

Council noted the 6+6 forecast, July management accounts and performance dashboard.

Constitutional review

Council received an update on the work of the review group and noted its progress to date. It approved detailed changes to the Charter together with a detailed workplan, to progress to drafting stage. The final draft of the constitutional documentation would be shared with the Charity Commission

Comments from Council members on the new trustee code of conduct were invited as soon as possible.

An open invitation was made by the Constitution Review Group Chair, Kerr Robertson, for expressions of interest from Council members to join the Group to replace PPRIBA Jane Duncan, who would now be a corresponding member.

Communications Committee: Council also endorsed the suspension of the Communications Committee pending the final constitution review, noting that it was now being covered by the relevant Executive Director reporting directly to the RIBA Board. The importance of continuing to benefit from external communications expertise present on the committee was noted.

Regional devolution: report on the debate at Local Members Forum (LMF) and recommendations for discussion

The LMF held in July had considered three ideas for reshaping regional activity. The 'regional renaissance' option had been chosen decisively by members attending. In this scenario RIBA Council would set strategy and the executive identify new funding for regional councils to determine the most effective way to deliver this across their branches and in coordination with neighbouring regions. In particular, increased resource would be made available for the development of local policy and political engagement. The unified voice and identity of the RIBA was a valued asset. The link between the RIBA and local groups would be enhanced through LIF funding so that members, stakeholders and partners recognised the RIBA in everything done.

Council discussed the proposals and made the following points:

- Focus of regional teams needed to be looked at, with joined-up thinking across regional activity required.

- A global dimension was needed, to foster the RIBA's relationship with members outside the UK [international regional members were joining the Nations and Regions Committee]
- A regional approach would vastly increase outreach.
- Decentralisation of member services should be investigated, independently of this exercise.

Council then endorsed the following proposals:

- Aim to increase the Local Initiative Fund in the 2019 budget. Nations & Regions Committee to oversee the distribution of the funds to enable an increase in projects which demonstrate the link between the RIBA and branches through locally delivered, member-driven activity.
- Investigate ways to fund Regional Councils to support members, including the feasibility of 50% of new member subscriptions generated in a region being ceded to the Regional Council for determination in the first year of membership, to focus on activities to engage and retain new members.
- Investigate options for the delivery of local policy and political development and further enabling the emerging education futures agenda.
- The Regional Renaissance scenario to be developed into a strategy that provides for change, resulting in increased benefits to members, and moves the local-member focus to the

centre of the RIBA, thus balancing opportunities for maximising membership growth and retention within regions.

- If approved, the resultant strategy is implemented through current operational and governance reviews.

Nations & Regions Committee and international members would develop these proposals for discussion and possible inclusion in the business Plan for the following year.

AOB

- Alan Jones was congratulated on becoming President Elect.
- World Architecture Day, V&A/RIBA, 1 October: Council members were asked to promote this.
- Student/associate event in Birmingham on 3 November: all Council members were invited, and practices were encouraged to partner with the 'Future Architects Network'. The President offered his own practice's premises for suitable events.
- Trustees were reminded of the availability of discounted tickets for the Stirling Prize event in October.

Reports for information:

- President's Diary;
- Equality and Diversity update

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