

Minutes of the 29th Meeting of Advisory Council held on Thursday 01 February 2018

Conference Suite, NCVO Society Building, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9R

Council Meeting 3 – Standards (Entry & Technical) & Policy

Present:

Honorary Officers:					
CHAIR: Merrick Denton-Thompson President		Adam White President Elect		Helen Tranter Vice President	
Elected Members:					
Annie Coombs (<i>& representing PCC</i>)		Maude Pinet		Licentiate: Simon Brown	
Noel Farrer		Ian Phillips		Licentiate: Daniel Watson	
Rebecca Knight		Katharine Schofield (<i>& representing EMids</i>)		Student: Liz Stark	
Branch Reps:					
EofE	Catherine Bailey	NE	Kevin Johnson	Y+H	Mark Smeeden
EMids	<i>Represented by Katherine Schofield</i>	NW	Jonathan Miley	NI	Harry Watkins
London	Hanna Salomonsson	SE	Louise Ward	Scot	Nick Bowen
Mids	Rupert Dugdale	SW	Christine Tudor		
Committee Reps:					
Tech	Bill Blackledge				
In Attendance:					
Dan Cook Chief Executive		Paul Lincoln Executive Director Projects		Simon Odell Head of Professional Standards	
Poppy Smith Head of External Affairs		Rachel Smith Head of Business Development		Amina Waters Executive Director Marketing & Communication	
Ben Brown Policy Manager		Emma Wood Professional Standards & Governance Manager			
Apologies:					
Carolyn Göhler Hon Treasurer		Ray Edwards BrRep Wales		Ian Houlston PCC Rep (<i>represented by Annie Coombs</i>)	
Chris House EMC Rep		Sam Leathers Elected			

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i. Annie Coombs (AC) is an examining inspector for nationally significant infrastructure projects

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Merrick Denton-Thompson (MDT) opened the meeting by emphasising the importance of Council to the work of the LI and thanking all for coming and contributing to the debate

MDT gave a presentation (appendix 1) which included:

App1

2.1 Visit to China

- i. 3000 students on landscape course
- ii. Direct invitation by Beijing University, funded by China Government
- iii. Keen to raise international profile – see UK as world leaders.

- iv. 150million people to move from country to town in 10 years
- v. Suggested landscape character map of China

2.2 25 Year Environment Plan

- i. The plan is just a framework but there's a lot in there that is generally good. The plan nicely aligns with the LI direction of travel
- ii. Host of new organisations being set up
- iii. Focussing on 14 delivery administrations across the country
- iv. Net gain on development. Expect new Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to ensure net gain is embedded into the planning process
- v. New environmental stewardship scheme targeted at all farms
- vi. Who will be responsible for scrutiny and hold government to account once leave Europe?

2.3 Value of Landscape

- i. Greenbelt – membership has been involved in 2 major consultations
- ii. CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) accepting that a structural review of Greenbelt is needed
- iii. New document on greenbelt about to be launched

2.4 Public Sector Debate

- i. We have lost a significant number of members from the public sector
- ii. Private practice now confirming the need for representation at all levels of government

Comments from the floor:

- i. Concern that landscape seems to be increasingly associated with Defra rather than MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's), not clear how Defra and MHCLG align/link particularly when considering housing. MDT agreed real issue is to ensure that landscape is considered as integral to housing and indeed all aspects of government. The 25 year environment plan is a corporate plan for government, not a Defra plan so applies to all
- ii. TCPA (Town & Country Planning Association) more influential with government than RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute) etc. Noel Farrer (NF) offered to have LI invited to forums. Dan Cook (DC) confirmed that we are talking with TCPA re a possible partnership arrangement

3. CEO REPORT

3.1 Corporate Strategy Feedback

DC confirmed that this meeting is timed to influence business planning before delivering a presentation (appendix 2) which included the following:

App2

- i. Main content focuses on the work that came out of the strategy sessions in Bristol etc
- ii. Long term vision and direction of travel
- iii. People, place and nature – what sets LI apart from architects
- iv. Strategic vision - vision, values and mission
- v. Values as identified by Council in Bristol – 'Playful' has triggered some questioning as being in contrast with being professional. Note that should be socially and environmentally aware
- vi. Promote the value and importance of the relationship between people, place and nature
- vii. Demonstrate the value and breadth of the landscape profession
- viii. Lead debates on matters of public interest

- ix. Thought leadership programmes
- x. Reactivating College of Fellows, promoting fellowship
- xi. Resilience and confidence. Future proofing
- xii. Growth has mainly been through better retention but need to consider the bigger potential pool of candidates for membership, both graduates and also non members practising within the sector even for LI Registered Practices (RegPs)

- xiii. Key issues to address:
- xiv. Need to expand more on brand values
- xv. Online events delivery – much cheaper to deliver and allows access to all regardless of location
- xvi. Want to include planned activity from branches
- xvii. 10% of membership is outside the UK

Comments from the floor:

- i. Science is missing from the strategic objectives list – this will be corrected
- ii. Education isn't included, undergrad and postgrad level. Must ensure accredited courses are teaching core skills and must therefore have an understanding of what those core skills are. DC increase access to landscape delivery definitely includes higher education but now also includes technical and apprenticeship options.
- iii. The strategy does not refer to Landscape Architecture. DC confirmed that the Board of Trustees has agreed to preference the term Landscape Professional (LP) as more inclusive and broader than the term Landscape Architect (LA), can add LA as appropriate but the overarching term is LP for inclusivity, LA has acted as a barrier. Ian Phillips (IP) noted that LA is internationally recognised, IFLA may be disturbed by LI move to LP
- iv. Research has a major impact on policy and practice, are we engaging enough with this area? We aren't a research organisation and having reviewed options have agreed this not a primary focus for LI. Can include reference to importance of research and linkage within the document.
- v. The member comments include offers of assistance – important to take up those offers
- vi. Influencing debates – do we need a fast response/media team who can respond to things in the spotlight? Something for future development but this would require a very different approach
- vii. Values – there's some work to be done on the 3 values. Needs more emphasis on creativity, innovation, professionalism and authority. DC important that people are comfortable with the values and any other suggestions are welcome
- viii. Strategy seems to be largely responsive, responding to known, existing situations. Don't seem to be looking to become thought leaders on matters of public interest – ambition needs to be higher.
- ix. Section 3 should include explicit reference to the devolved nations, particularly in light of policy
- x. Suggestion that the vision should be informed by the Charter. DC confirmed that we have tried to simplify the language. Perhaps have a footnote and link back to the Charter. This was AGREED
- xi. Some concerns regarding use of the term *products* and *services*. DC responded that it is very common for professional bodies to have product development as an important element of their work. External communications will use the appropriate language. This is an internal and decision making document and as such uses language for that internal audience
- xii. Transform landscapes and places – but we don't always transform, often conserve and maintain and sometimes protect

DC noted that this was a very constructive session and thanked all for their input. Additional feedback and comment to be forwarded to DC asap

ACTIONS:

- Science to be added to the strategic objectives list
- Reference to importance of research and linkage within the document
- Take up the offers of assistance contained within the consultation member feedback
- Values to be reviewed to give more emphasis to creativity, innovation, professionalism and authority
- All to forward suggestions for Values to DC
- Section 3 to include explicit reference to the devolved nations
- To include a footnote and link back to the Charter
- Additional feedback and comment to be forwarded to DC asap

3.2 Business Planning

- i. Sector doing well but outlook is neutral to negative so need to be quite cautious as we go forwards
- ii. Digital upgrade is underway and has been phased to allow for changing external environment. 300k digital costs – creating base platform followed by continuous improvement and additional services. This is a Microsoft dynamics system, not so much a bespoke system as previously. Will be managed largely in house
- iii. Major conference to be held in September on ‘value of landscape’ – suggestions for content and speakers welcome. Steering group to be set up this month
- iv. Repton and LI90th – any ideas to be forwarded to Paul Lincoln (PL) to build into the 2019-20 plan
- v. New staff structure
- vi. Education standards sits within Standards
- vii. Engaging with future talent sits within External Affairs
- viii. Teams work across the organisation
- ix. Its around managing people and skills

Comments from the floor:

In answer to a query re monitoring of CPD DC confirmed that the LI currently undertake 3% random sampling. In future will use digital systems and then in perhaps 3 years move to 100% monitoring. With online recording we will also be able to identify member needs, objectives and trends which can then influence our service delivery

4 POLICY & INFLUENCING

4.1 PCC Policy Update

PL spoke to the paper highlighting:

- i. Greenbelt – exhibition, 2 detailed consultations with members and have now developed a set of recommendations for the LI
- ii. Guidance note on Shale – being written
- iii. Landscape position paper being revised by AC and NF
- iv. Landscape local plans – being led by PCC Chair Kate Bailey (KB), complemented by model case study
- v. Portfolio of new work to be launched soon
- vi. Joint meeting of PCC and Technical Committee (TechCttee) to be held next week

4.2 Corporate Plans

PL and AC led Council in an exercise regarding corporate plans. Members considered how their jobs could be presented to better align with the corporate plan.

Council were encouraged to continue to consider outside of the meeting and forward any other comments to AC before Tuesday 06 February

5 STANDARDS

5.1 Education and Practice Reviews

Simon Odell (SO) spoke to the paper and confirmed that there had been considerable consultation and feedback - Licentiate Routes Working Group, Landscape Management Forum, PARN, other professional bodies etc

- i. P2C Syllabus needs to be made more inclusive and attractive to next generation
- ii. More flexible approach to assessment – not about reducing standards rather providing different ways to meet those standards
- iii. Some specific steps flagged by the research – encourage the development of apprenticeships this is being led by the sector and supported by the LI. Will need a route to entry for technical / apprentice members, consider technical grade to reflect level of qualification
- iv. Graduate quality – look at what we accredit, way we accredit and regulatory side. Move to separate support to universities from regulation
- v. Next steps – working on an implementation plan for the Board. This is very detailed and will be going back to the Board for sign off. Board has established a board level working group to ensure high level thinking and commitment. This will be led Helen Tranter (HT) and will include Michelle Bolger (Chair EMC)
- vi. Framework of Competencies – after considerable work, consultation and development in order to replace the current Areas and Elements of Practice. To include a number of different levels of membership across the field of possible practitioners, different levels of competence.
- vii. This will then feed into education framework (may be a replacement for QAA)
- viii. Useful for universities as well as the assessment of candidates for membership
- ix. Commission a competency expert to draft the framework and competencies
- x. Looking towards November AGM for any amends to governing documents. There will be real opportunity to focus on this area at July Council

Comments from the floor:

- i. Concern that we will dilute the brand Landscape Architecture. Any new types of member would be equivalent level of qualification not a diminution. Very happy to receive any job specifications, descriptions or frameworks as examples for the development work. Trying to reflect the changes that are or have already happened as well as considering emerging trends
- ii. 'Be a landscape architect' - some areas are broken, these will be fixed asap. The site will be replaced by Choose Landscape which we are hoping to launch March/April
- iii. Looking to focus on professional competencies, not just technical. Will also need to cover soft skills
- iv. Hope is that will have a draft framework (dependent upon availability of the consultant) available in May for all member consultation. Such a major issue needs ownership by the whole membership

ACTION: All to forward examples of job specifications, descriptions or frameworks to Simon Odell
'Be a landscape architect' broken links to be fixed asap

5.2 Technical Committee Future Guidance

The paper was noted. Any comments to be forward to SO for consideration by TechCttee

ACTION: All to forward any comments on Technical Committee future guidance to Simon Odell

5.3 Ethics Update

The paper was noted and due to time constraints the planned exercise will be restructured to a post meeting activity

Emma Wood (EW) confirmed that the CPD monitoring and review of 2017 records is currently underway and asked all to encourage their colleagues to set their objectives for 2018 and update their records regularly.

ACTION: All to encourage colleagues to set their CPD objectives for 2018 and update their records regularly.

6 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Branch Activity and Future Thinking

Rachel Smith (RS) confirmed that the Branch Reps (BrReps) have fed back that some of the language in the paper is perhaps too corporate so that will be addressed in future redrafts

RS gave a presentation (appendix 3) on future thinking:

App3

- i. This is a 1st draft plan
- ii. Volunteers need to feel valued, we really appreciate all the effort members put in and need to ensure recognition
- iii. The LI is the sum of its members

Feedback has confirmed some key general issues:

- iv. Poor Communications and alignment between LI and the Branches
- v. Poor uptake and commercial returns of events
- vi. Poor committee succession planning and engagement with new volunteers

Where do we want to be:

- vii. 100% alignment with LI Corporate Strategy & Business Plan
- viii. Better understanding of regional issues affecting the sector
- ix. Improved levels of engagement & attendance
- x. Be the 'go-to' CPD delivery partner for all landscape professionals

Sneak preview of a number of online tools coming soon:

- xi. Branches Intranet
- xii. Document sharing
- xiii. Best practice guidance
- xiv. Toolkits

Comments from the floor:

- i. Business language and high level requirements are daunting and unlikely to be delivered. Concern over expectation of volunteers to deliver business plans, forward planning, KPIs etc. RS confirmed these would be produced with the Business Development Team (BDT)
- ii. How will branch funding be dealt with in future and would there be greater support for the process? Current process will remain and any changes will be consulted on in advance
- iii. Branches can continue to provide events just need to communicate with each other to ensure we're not competing against each other
- iv. Branches wanted support to deliver services to their local members and the paper seems to suggest that branches need to completely change their approach
- v. Branches feel as though the process for sending out emails is unnecessarily slow and it seems as though numbers of members aren't receiving their branch mailings
- vi. NF commented that branch issue is a sensitive one. Very aware of the fragility and challenges facing branches. The paper is outlining an ambition for the future and whilst this will be challenging it is vital to reinvigorate and enthuse our members.
- vii. Jonathan Miley noted that the key to enacting vision is how do branches attract the right volunteers to the right roles

ACTIONS: Redrafts of the Future Thinking paper will take comments re corporate language into consideration

6.2 Journal, Digital, Marketing & Communications Update

Presentation (appendix 4) by Amina Waters (AW) highlighted:

App4

Updates:

- i. New Editorial Advisory Panel (EAP) Chair, Eleanor Trenfield
- ii. Ruth Slavid has resigned as Journal editor and we are now seeking a new editor
- iii. Journal redesign in Winter 2017 edition
- iv. New Journal strategy, aligned to LI's wider strategy
- v. Aim to broaden Journal appeal to wider range of landscape professionals

Journal initial position:

- vi. Standalone – not aligned to LI activities, strategy or comms
- vii. Outdated visual design
- viii. Narrow focus, with articles largely written by the editor
- ix. No advertorials / sponsorship packages (low yield)

For the future:

- x. Themes which align to LI activities / strategy
- xi. Integral part of LI comms, including stronger digital focus.
- xii. Bold & fresh visual design
- xiii. Broader viewpoints & more contributors. Shorter, sharper content which fosters debate.
- xiv. More advertising options

Comments from the floor:

- i. It was requested that as much as possible of the Journal should be made available online for download in PDF format. AW confirmed that the last 3 years of the journal is already available

online, the last 3-4 years should be available as downloadable content by mid March and this is an ongoing project

- ii. What's happened to Yammer? It still exists but hasn't really delivered. Moving to Sharepoint as this has greater capacity for a range of services.
- iii. AC urged caution on reliance of member content vs professional writers . AW confirmed important to have a well written and engaging journal

1714 Kevin Johnson left the mtg

- iv. Concern regarding the inclusion of advertorials rather than independent product reviews
- v. AWW everything that we are doing will need to comply with GDPR as well all other relevant regulations and requirements

7 APPOINTMENTS & SELECTION COMMITTEE

Katherine Schofield (KS) reported on current A&SC activity:

7.1 Trustee terms

The membership agreed at the AGM in November to extend Board membership from a maximum 2 terms to 3. Whilst awaiting Counsel accreditation of that decision Board have recommended that independent trustee Phyllis Starkey serve a 3rd term as Trustee under special circumstances. Council agreed:

For	21	Against:	0	Abstentions:	1
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DECISION: That Phyllis Starkey serve a 3rd term as Independent Trustee under special circumstances

7.2 Trustee recruitment

Recruiting a new Trustee and A&SC will review candidates, interview, and recommend a candidate to Council for approval

7.3 College of Fellows

The CofF are looking to put together a new Steering Group and have asked A&SC to review any applications. Council were happy for A&SC to proceed with this activity

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Devolved Nations

Nick Bowen (NB) requested that the devolved nations be reflected in any policy planning, reports etc. DC confirmed that we are fully committed to supporting influencing in all 4 nations

8.2 Meeting preparation

MS suggested that the dates of all meetings be notified in advance at the beginning of the year and that papers be circulated 3 weeks in advance so that they can be circulated to branch committees. DC confirmed that Council papers should not be circulated outside of Council membership, especially as much of the content is confidential. Investigate possibility of providing papers separated out by what can be circulated outside Council

ACTION: To investigate possibility of providing papers separated out by what can be circulated outside Council

8.4 Branch Reps Communication

Would request that LI set up teleconference calls for the Branch Reps in advance of meetings to facilitate Branch Reps communication

8.5 IFLA

IP noted that a steering group for the general assembly and conference needs to be set up asap. MDT confirmed that this is already in hand

1730 *Robert Dugdale, Simon Brown left meeting*

8.6 Talking Landscape

BB requested that a way be found to preserve the content on Talking Landscape. AW confirmed that we are looking at how we can maintain that content in future. DC noted that we have not yet identified a solution for a digital engagement platform to replace talking landscape as yet

MDT thanked all those in attendance making particular reference to the excellent papers that had promoted vibrant debate

The meeting closed at 1740

NEXT MEETING	DATE	VENUE
Meeting 1 - Oversight	Thursday 05 July 2018	tbc

Decisions and Actions

DECISIONS:

1. That Phyllis Starkey serve a 3rd term as Independent Trustee under special circumstances

ACTIONS:

1. Science to be added to the strategic objectives list
2. Reference to importance of research and linkage within the document
3. Take up the offers of assistance contained within the consultation member feedback
4. Values to be reviewed to give more emphasis to creativity, innovation, professionalism and authority
5. All to forward suggestions for Values to DC
6. Section 3 to include explicit reference to the devolved nations
7. To include a footnote and link back to the Charter
8. Additional feedback and comment to be forwarded to DC asap
9. All to forward examples of job specifications, descriptions or frameworks to Simon Odell
10. 'Be a landscape architect' broken links to be fixed asap
11. All to forward any comments on Technical Committee future guidance to Simon Odell
12. All to encourage colleagues to set their CPD objectives for 2018 and update their records regularly.
13. Redrafts of the Future Thinking paper will take comments re corporate language into consideration
14. To investigate possibility of providing papers separated out by what can be circulated outside Council