

WEB Minutes for the 71st meeting of the Board of Trustees

Tuesday 08 December 2020

A virtual Meeting via WebEx

Board Meeting 3 - Business Planning

Present:

CHAIR JF	Jane Findlay President	AW	Adam White Immediate Past President	CG	Carolin Göhler Vice President
NW	Niall Williams Non Chartered Trustee	CH	Chris House Education & Membership Chair	KB	Kate Bailey Policy & Communications Chair
JS	Jim Smyllie Independent Trustee	MvG	Marc van Grieken Technical Chair	WY	Wei Yang Independent Trustee
In Attendance:					
DC	Dan Cook CEO	AmW	Amina Waters Items COO	JD	Jane Debois Head of Professional Regulations
RL	Ruth Lake Item Project Delivery Manager	AM	Andy Morris Items Commercial Director	YM	Yvonne Matthews
EW	Emma Wood Governance & Regulation Manager				
Apologies: none					

The President Jane Findlay (JF) welcomed all to the last Board meeting of 2020

1. Declarations of Interest

There were none

2. Minutes of the Board meeting 06 October 2020

For:	7	Against:	0	Abstain:	0
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DECISION: The Minutes of the Board meeting 06 October 2020 were approved

3. President's Report

JF gave a short update on activity since the October Board and highlighted:

- i. LI Awards – this was a fantastic event, host Julia Bradbury was exceptional, the speakers were excellent, the after-party event also had great speakers, and we have received fantastic feedback. Huge thanks to the staff team.
- ii. BALI Awards - it was good to be involved and maintain the collaboration between our 2 organisations
- iii. Webinar 15 December – the final event of the year with JF and guests Dan Pearson and Louise Wyman. Will be announcing the winners of the Transforming Urban Landscape competition (160+ entries)

Would be interesting to know the carbon footprint of the virtual awards compared to the in-person event

4. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Plan

Dan Cook (DC) spoke to the paper and confirmed that this is not the overall LI EDI strategy, this is a deeper focus on racism, discrimination, ethnic diversity etc. The paper and action plan reflect the member consultation and feedback regarding discrimination in the workplace. Some of the work will also link to the other EDI strands such as gender and it is important to bring the same approach to the whole of the LI.

A lot of the work can be delivered within existing resource but areas such as bursaries, mentoring programmes etc will require budget allocations to deliver effectively.

The term 'racialised' is a new term that has caused concern. The text includes an explanation of what is meant by the term (being those that have been discriminated against on racial grounds) but it is difficult to find an alternative that applies to the experiences of people in different cultures and geographical areas. May be helpful to provide additional commentary regarding context within the text and also refer to 'people who have been discriminated against'.

DECISION: To support the EDI plan in principle and funding levels to be agreed in February and March 2021.

ACTION: To provide additional commentary and context within the EDI paper and action plan regarding the term 'racialised' and also to refer to 'people who have been discriminated against'.

5. Business Plan Priorities

Amina Waters (AmW) opened the presentation with a review of the 5-year strategy to 2023 and confirmed that we will ensure that future activity reporting links back to the planned priority areas.

2020-21 has been a challenging year. The COVID-19 crisis forced us to move more quickly than planned on some areas, such as the shift to 'digital-first'. 2021-22 will be our year of consolidation, where we aim to continue our progress under our 5-year corporate strategy, while also going back to introduce much-needed systems and processes to drive successful and sustained growth in future years

5.1 Follow on / insights from strategy session/ideas for exploration

DC provided an overview of the insights and feedback from the strategy sessions including:

- i. External contexts: Covid19, economic, environment, clients, compliance changes
- ii. Professional skill needs: business, HR, LVIA, climate positive design (& management), digital/IT, inclusive environments, EDI
- iii. Areas to explore in business plan:
 - Start: Greater focus on engaging clients of landscape sector. Promote apprenticeships. Activity/voice given to our younger members
 - Improve: #chooselandscape. Technical standards with related tools needed for practitioners. New compliance needs – Brexit, environment bill/ELMS, planning reforms
 - Keep: Equity Diversity Inclusion, Climate & Biodiversity Action, Ethics, Governance
 - Stop: Nothing currently identified

5.2 Business plan assumptions

AmW reviewed the business plan assumptions for 2021/21 and beyond

- i. Moving from face-to-face to online
During 2020/21, we moved to online meetings, events and P2C exams. This was necessary in light of COVID-19 pandemic, but we believe we should continue in this direction in 2021/22. In many cases,

online options offer significant cost savings and reduced carbon footprint, as well as being more inclusive for members who cannot take the time to travel to events/meetings.

- ii. Uncertain economic environment
We expect continued economic uncertainty in 2021/2, due to the impact of COVID-19 and Brexit. The Bank of England's [November 2020 Monetary Policy Report](#) estimates that unemployment will rise, GDP growth will be slow, and inflation will return to around 2%. This 'highly uncertain' economic environment will *directly* impact some members, practices and sponsors – but we expect more will take a cautious approach to their business plans than they might otherwise.
- iii. Regulatory and Policy Environment
There are several Government policy and regulatory changes anticipated for 2021/22, to which we would need to respond – through member guidance, policy development, public affairs work, etc.
- iv. Membership
During 2020/21, membership income reduced slightly - due mostly to an expected increase in concessionary rates. We also had lower than normal numbers of new Associate members. We expect these trends to continue into 2021/22 as a reflection of the uncertain operating environment, but we aim to mitigate their impact by launching/promoting new grades of membership after July 2021.
- v. Products and sponsorship
We made significant changes to our commercial products and sponsorship offering during 2020/21,.
- vi. Climate and Biodiversity Emergencies
Some of our originally-planned climate and biodiversity emergency responses were either delayed or reshaped during 2020/21 due to other work taking priority during the pandemic. Responding to the emergencies remains a priority.
- vii. LI Operations, Governance + Projects
During the past few years, we have made significant investments in modernising the way that the LI operates – for example, implementing a new CRM and digital systems; upgrading our entry standards to be more relevant to more potential members; starting the Governance Review. We want to consolidate this work and do more in key areas during 2021/22 to ensure that the LI operates in a resilient, efficient, inclusive and transparent way:
 - Update our finance systems
 - Website and brand
 - Governance and independent review projects
 - #ChooseLandscape
 - Market Development (Parks & Greenspace)
 - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

COMMENTS:

- i. The 2020 online LI CPD days have been great and there are still opportunities to collaborate with other organisations in 2021
- ii. Our sector often shows a delayed reaction to recession – *We are trying to provide more flexible payment models and additional support*
- iii. Important to support new practices/sole traders with advice on business start-ups and skills
- iv. We will need flexibility to respond to other Government issues that will inevitably arise through the year
- v. Like the idea of a Foundation for youth scholarships and research
- vi. Does practice registration take on board the number of offices? – *Currently each office is registered separately, this is being looked at in the registered practice review*

5.3 Any likely Pricing/product changes

Andy Morris (AM) confirmed that this year we have made significant changes to the sponsorship package

in response to C19 and the move to online has resulted in new sponsors and good rates of revenue. Updated finance system project to be brought forwards. Includes new cloud-based accounting system (with online approvals and other processes), documentation and other processes. We will start planning/prioritisation for this project in the current financial year.

6. Entry Standards Update and Proposed Plan

Ruth Lake (RL) spoke to the paper confirming that now the Competency Framework and main Entry Standards have been approved by the Board we are planning for the launch and promotion of these, and developing comprehensive plans for the next stages of development.

The competency framework is to be published on a dedicated web page with clear guidance and information in a variety of formats (video etc) and we will start promoting in the new year

We are currently undertaking detailed implementation planning and will report on a phased implementation plan to March 2021 Board

Board supported the approach

7. CEO Report / LI team Updates

Jane Debois (JD) confirmed that she is leaving the LI to take up an unmissable opportunity to work as regulator for printed media at the Independent Press Standards Organisation. The Board wished her well

DC gave an update on the recent resilience training staff team event from Impact Factory. The team Christmas event where we will be cooking our own lunch will be held this week and we will be joined by Jane, Carolin and Adam.

Board requested that DC look into providing resilience training for the trustees.

ACTION: DC to look into providing resilience training for the trustees

7.1 Performance Report

The paper was noted

It was AGREED that JF would send a personalised email to all staff recognising /thanking for their efforts this year. JF to work with Yvonne Matthews (YM) to get a personal message out to staff before Christmas

DECISIONS: Jane Findlay to send a personalised email to all staff recognising /thanking for their efforts this year.

ACTION: Jane Findlay to work with Yvonne Matthews to get a personal message out to staff before Christmas

7.2 New and upgraded members

Chris House (CH) confirmed that the Education & Membership Committee (EMC) support the proposed list being awarded Fellowship. Board AGREED to support the proposal and award Fellowship to the named members

DECISIONS: To award Fellowship to the named members

There are 2 more days of online P2C exams next week, 4 more in January and we are planning additional days in March. We are working through the backlog but more candidates are delaying to later in the year.

Board recorded thanks to staff for their work in delivering online P2C exams

8. Governance

8.1 Independent Review

JF gave a brief update on the Independent Review (IndRev) confirming that Catherine Brown (CG) has completed the first phase: information gathering. This has included the interviewing of 50 individuals

The IndRev Panel Jim Smyllie (JS), Wei Yang (YW), Mary O'Connor (MOC) and JF are meeting regularly and liaising with CB

CB is formulating a draft report to be issued to the panel for review January 2021

8.2 Governance Review Joint Working Group ToR and revised timeline

CG confirmed that the 1st JWG took place 30 November. JWG membership has now been established together with 2 reference groups (Standing Committees and Branches). The first meeting considered the Terms of Reference and next will look at the workplan

Having considered the paper recommendations, the Board AGREED to extend the deadline/ termination of JWG as per agreed revised programme by the Board in early 2021 and that the ToR should be updated:

1.4 Replace 'prepare' with 'to support'

6.5 Where no clear consensus, the Board should be presented with several options for decision making

DECISION: To extend the deadline/ termination of JWG as per agreed revised programme by the Board in early 2021 and that the ToR should be updated:

1.4 Replace 'prepare' with 'to support'

6.5 Where no clear consensus, the Board should be presented with several options for decision making

ACTION: Jane Debois to update and publish agreed JWG ToR

8.3 Forum ToRs: EDI Forum, College of Fellows

DC noted that Board had previously requested more consistency with the ToRs and these drafts followed a standard format and are now clear, concise and consistent

i. College of Fellows (CoF) ToR

The ToR was AGREED

DECISION: To agree the College of Fellows Terms of Reference

ii. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Forum (EDIF) ToR

The EDIF will need to recruit a Convenor in the new year

The EDIF ToR was AGREED

DECISION: To agree the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Forum Terms of Reference

8.4 By-Laws 2020

The paper was noted

8.5 AGM motions and arrangements

Emma Wood (EW) spoke to the paper confirming that the holding of an Annual General Meeting (AGM) is a regulatory requirement, however, the current requirements on social distancing (due to the Covid-19 pandemic) mean that physical meetings cannot take place.

Having considered the advice issued by the Charity Commission that Trustees can hold virtual meetings, but should document their decision to do so if there is no current provision in their governing document, Board AGREED to hold a virtual AGM on 04 February 2021.

The Board also AGREED to maintaining the hybrid approach with the majority of voting taking place in advance and a system of online voting being put in place to allow for additional votes to be taken during the meeting

The Board also AGREED to commission the Governance Consultant to redraft Part 2 of the Regulations to allow for flexibility regarding the format, proceedings etc and in particular to support virtual AGMs

CG notified Board of a proposal to conduct a review of the auditors throughout 2021 with a view to changing auditors at the 2021 AGM and to commit to reviewing every 5 years. This was AGREED. DC confirmed would need to hold an additional short meeting to approve the audit report

- DECISIONS:**
- To hold a virtual AGM on 04 February 2021
 - To maintain the hybrid AGM approach with the majority of voting taking place in advance and a system of online voting being put in place to allow for additional votes to be taken during the meeting
 - To commission the Governance Consultant to redraft Part 2 of the Regulations to allow for flexibility regarding the format, proceedings etc and in particular to support virtual AGMs
 - To conduct a review of the auditors throughout 2021 with a view to changing auditors at the 2021 AGM and commit to reviewing every 5 years
- ACTIONS:**
- EW to commission the Governance Consultant to redraft Part 2 of the Regulations to allow for flexibility regarding the format, proceedings etc and in particular to support virtual AGMs
 - DC to hold an additional short meeting to approve the audit report

9. Any Other Business

- i. The LI is screening the Sir David Attenborough film 'A Life On Our Planet' at 1730 on 17 December

10. Close

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1649