

Minutes of the 38th meeting of Advisory Council

Thursday 25 February 2021

A virtual meeting hosted digitally via Zoom

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

Present:

Honorary Officers					
CHAIR: Jane Findlay President		Adam White Immediate Past President		Carolyn Göhler Vice President	
Keren Jones HonSec					
Elected Members:					
Diana Ispas Elected		Anna French Elected		Wing Lai Elected	
Michele Lavelle Elected		Peter Neal Elected		Anna Penning-Rowell Associate Rep	
Adrian Wikeley Co-opted - Chair College of Fellows					
Branch Reps:					
EofE	Catherine Bailey	EMids	Ben Betts	London	Ben Gurney
NE	Kevin Johnson	SE	Ruth Shelton	SW	Cynthia Filipiak-Szymborska
NI	Paula Gillan	Scot	Rebecca Rylott	Wales	Mary O'Connor
Committee Reps:					
EMC	Vanessa Ross	PCC	Annie Coombs (for Ian Houlston)	Tech	Bill Blackledge
In Attendance:					
Jane Swift CEO		Amina Waters COO		Antonella Adamus Head of Standards, Education & Engagement	
Ben Brown Head of Policy		Catherine Brown (item2) IndRev Consultant		Gideon Opaluwa Head of Professional Regulations	
Paul Lincoln Executive Director Creative & Publishing		Yvonne Matthews Executive Assistant to CEO & Leadership Team		Gideon Opaluwa Head of Professional Regulations	
Emma Wood Governance & Regulation Manager					
APOLOGIES					
Rupert Dugdale BrRep Mids		Ian Houlston (represented by Annie Coombs) PCC Rep		Catherine Birkin Elected	

1. President's Welcome and Report

The President Jane Findlay (JF) welcomed all to the meeting and Introduced the new interim CEO Jane Swift (JS) together with the new Honorary Secretary Keren Jones (KJ) and the incoming Head of Professional Regulations Gideon Opaluwa (GO)

The most significant event recent since the last meeting was the LI Awards which were a resounding success. This was the first online Awards with some new categories, a record number of entries, over 1000 delegates registered and Julia Bradbury did a great job as host. Other highlights:

- i. Competition Transforming the urban landscape, 160 entries from all over the world
- ii. LI Trustee Wei Yang inaugurated as RTPI President, looking forwards to a close collaborative relationship

- iii. Spoke at Trees, People and the Built Environment
- iv. LI 2020 AGM - 1st digital event with a 10.5% turn out and on the day over 100 attendees from 8 countries. Very engaging event at which we announced Karen Fitzsimon as the winner of the Volunteer of The Year Award
- v. Upcoming event: 22-26 March LI Greener Recovery Festival
- vi. Network groups
 - local government network. Kevin Johnson (KJ) is leading a proposal regarding this network and a new network will be created on LI Connect, more informal than the previous working group
 - international - have been in discussion with Lionel Fanshaw regarding a possible international branch, we are looking to run as a pilot network on LI connect
- vii. Staff workload - Board have agreed not to add to staff workload. The staff team are already working beyond capacity and it is important that we don't overload any more

2. Independent Review

IndRev consultant Catherine Brown (CB) gave a presentation on the review confirming that the review focussed on specific areas of concern rather than the myriad of successful projects and activity

Themes emerging from the research:

- Critical time for the profession to contribute to solving the world's problems
- The current situation and pattern of behaviours in the LI is unacceptable and unsustainable
- Strong sense of good will in almost everyone I spoke to
- Good level of solvency
- High level of stress in Board, other volunteers, and staff
- Large amount of effort being put in by everyone without clear results
- High level of frustration
- Concern about the behaviour of a very small minority of members
- High level of focus on personalities rather than issues or even specific behaviours
- Little visible alignment between the strategy agreed by the organization and the work plan and resource allocation
- Small organization trying to do too much – culture of overambition at Board and exec level
- Leadership problems: lack of confidence, clarity, transparency, robust stewardship, and board support and decision making

Solution requires:

- Listen curiously and debate issues
- Decide and communicate (prioritize and deprioritize)
- Implement effectively

Recommendations include:

- Improve ability to deliver your strategy – growth in impact and numbers
- Improve Board and Executive leadership
- Improve the environment for staff and volunteers
- Adjust existing governance arrangements
- Stewardship and resource management

Areas of immediate focus by the Board:

- Address staff stress – appointment and tasking of interim CEO
- Address member behaviour – establishment of panel to review cases

- Improve support to Board and Council – interim CEO
- Ensure appropriate stewardship of resources – audit commissioned

Comments:

- How long to action the recommendations? - the report has been published to all members and the Board are working with the CEO to develop a programme plan and this will include regular reporting. HR issues can't be discussed but otherwise will be a transparent process
- Was the departure of the CEO related to the review – it might have seemed an unexpected departure but this was actually something that Dan Cook had been thinking about for some time. Dan had originally intended to stay 4-5 years at the LI, and having served 5 years this was a good point for him to move on, particularly as he had already been considering a change of career

Council split into break outs groups to consider what Board should prioritise to deliver

FEEDBACK

- Keeping bad behaviour in check and maintain
- Transparency
- Website difficult to find information
- Branch communication
- Clarification regarding confidentiality
- Roles and responsibilities of AdCo members
- Induction process, buddy etc
- How can people contribute – bring subjects/topics to the table
- Understanding the structure through organograms – maybe voxpops
- Supporting staff team – small organisation with a big remit, need to support the LI team
- GovRev did identify issues, silo working, communications, timing of meetings etc would be good to address in parallel with this project
- Member behaviour – be more specific, how endemic. Duty of care to staff
- Communication
- Protect the Presidents time so can be more outward facing
- Importance of the Code of Conduct
- Must remember that the pandemic has meant that we are all working differently with different pressure and need to be realistic about time and resources

JF gave thanks to Catherine Brown for help with this difficult project

3 LI Election 2021

Emma Wood (EW) spoke to paper and Council engaged in a full and wide ranging debate

3.1 Timeline

EW confirmed the proposed timeline included morning open/close times:

For:	24	Against:	0	Abstain:	1
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DECISION: To agree the LI election timeline:

15 March	Nominations open at 0900am
15 April	Nominations Close at 1159am
04 May	Elections Open at 0900am
01 June	Elections Close at 1159am

3.2 Multiple Posts

Comments:

- should only stand for 1 role – not hedge bets
- should be able to stand for more than one seat with a mechanism to stand down from one
- limitations could potentially stop members from standing
- voting system could be set up to choose a second choice
- unfair to make changes at this stage due to the ongoing Governance Review as well as the Independent Review
- need more clarification of the rules and implications of changes to consider fully

Council voted on the recommendation to change the rules so that that members can only stand for 1 seat in LI elections:

For:	7	Against:	8	Abstain:	10
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DECISION: Not to change the rules regarding standing for multiple posts

Council voted on the recommendation that members who are elected are required to step down from any pre-existing roles:

For:	8	Against:	2	Abstain:	15
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DECISION: Members who are elected are required to step down from any pre-existing roles

3.3 Alphabetical bias:

Comments:

- don't think it should be first come, first serve
- listing in the order of nominations are received could give current members of AdCo an advantage
- alphabetical is clear and transparent
- fishbowl system (candidates names pulled randomly)
- the Mi-voice online system may be able to randomise candidates

Council proposed that candidates be listed in a random order:

For:	25	Against:	0	Abstain:	0
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DECISION: That candidates will be listed in a random order

[post meeting note: Mi-Voice have confirmed that the election site system can randomise the candidate order and will randomly change the order for each log in]

3.4 Other organisations

Comments:

- useful that we have a list of other memberships, some are complimentary to the LI work and some are less well aligned which gives an idea of the person you are voting for - but only need a list
- don't think it is necessary to list them. You could contribute very little to that organisation but be a very active LI volunteer

Council voted on whether membership of other organisations is a useful component of the election nomination:

Yes:	20	No:	5
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DECISION: That membership of other organisations will remain a component of the election nomination

Having agreed to retain the membership of other organisations section Council voted on whether this section should be restricted to a simple listing of the names of the organisations:

Yes:	22	No:	3
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DECISION: That membership of other organisations be restricted to a simple listing of the names of the organisations

3.5 Clarification of rules for video

Council suggested that this year it would be fairer for all to have a single video shoot through Zoom Council supported the clarification of the rules for video submission going forwards but for the 2021 election in light of the COVID-19 pandemic Council proposed that all filming be undertaken remotely by the LI:

For:	22	Against:	0	Abstain:	3
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DECISION: Council supported the clarification of the rules for video submission going forwards but for the 2021 election in light of the COVID-19 pandemic Council agreed that all filming be undertaken remotely by the LI:

3.6 Candidate Statement

Council confirmed that candidates will be required to address the key questions within their candidate statement:

1. How would you support delivery of the LI corporate strategy whilst living the LI core values?
2. Please summarise your skills and experience relevant to the role for which you are standing

For:	24	Against:	0	Abstain:	1
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DECISION: Candidates will be required to address the key questions within their candidate statement:

1. How would you support delivery of the LI corporate strategy whilst living the LI core values?
2. Please summarise your skills and experience relevant to the role for which you are standing

3.7 Election officer

Council considered whether to appoint independent trustee Jim Smyllie as the LI Election Officer:

For:	24	Against:	0	Abstain:	1
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DECISION: To appoint independent trustee Jim Smyllie as the LI Election Officer

3.8 Conduct Declaration

EW confirmed that we have been asked whether a conduct or other complaint against a member would affect their eligibility to stand for election. We are seeking advice from the governance consultant regarding the requirement to make a declaration, including within eligibility criteria or other alternate process. This would not prevent candidates from standing unless that was part of the judgement against them

Having considered the issue Council felt that this issue needed further thought once the guidance was available. The vote was undertaken on the basis that For = agree to the introduction of a declaration but with a time limit, Against = do not support, Abstain = issue needs more thought

For:	8	Against:	3	Abstain:	12
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DECISION: To consider the introduction of a conduct declaration to the LI election process once additional guidance is available

4. Member Survey

Ben Brown (BB) gave a presentation on the preliminary results of the LI Members Satisfaction Survey 2021 which closed Tuesday 23 February.

5 key insights [interim analysis]

Five early take-away messages from this year's survey for Advisory Council



- i. Satisfaction is up and increased above target
- ii. Has identified issues of core focus we could improve and suggested possible new services
- iii. Confirmed that climate change remains the greatest priority
- iv. Total respondents up to 1574 – suggests the survey is better designed and members are more engaged which is very positive. Quite unusual to get such a high response rate. Results are also more representative of the membership
- v. Overall satisfaction up to 64%, the 5 year target is 65% so we are making great progress

Comments:

- i. Will the results be broken down by branches – we do normally look at geographical data and can share with branches once available
- ii. Concern regarding only 16% highly satisfied and next level is only somewhat satisfied – we have been using the same response levels for ease of comparison but agree this isn't a very graded response
- iii. There are additional data sets that deal additionally with satisfaction and other metrics may provide additional context and aid Board in identifying appropriate targets going forwards

5. LI Leadership Report

Amina Waters (AmW) gave a presentation confirming that overall financials are pretty healthy, we are on track to hit individual and Registered Practice subscription income and we are looking at a stable year.

5.1 Forward Major Events Calendar:

Inclusive Environments	15-17 June	LI Graduation	Feb/March 2022
Planning Design Reforms	28-30 September	Climate Festival	21-25 March 2022
Jellicoe Lecture	02 November		
LI Awards	25 November		

5.2 LI staff team changes:

Head of Standards & Education	Antonella Adamus	Replacing Simon Odell
Membership Marketing Manager	Lucy Pickford	New role
Events & Products Marketing Manager	Anna Serazetdinova	Replacing Tahlia McKinnon
Head of Professional Regulation	Gideon Opolawa	Replacing Jane Debois

Covid has impacted pattern of pathway examinations but these are now on track

COMMENTS

- i. Need to ensure P2C candidates are aware of whats going on with exams programme, process etc

- ii. Perhaps move to 3 exams pa – unfortunately the current P2C software doesn't support 3 exams pa and this could also be onerous on the examiners etc

6. Priorities for 2021-22

6.1 Policy and Influencing 2021-22

BB noted that the paper provides a framework that the LI aims to work within but also allows for emerging issues

COMMENTS:

- i. Would like to see more policy back up and engagement with the High Streets Task Force
- ii. Ecologists are statutory but Landscape Architects aren't in local government, this is impacting on Landscape Professionals ability to undertake a range of works -this is a larger issue than can be addressed here, for discussion outside of meeting

6.2 Technical Workplan 2021-22

Antonella Adamus (AA) confirmed Technical Committee (TC) skills and membership to be reviewed

Looking to introduce a more holistic approach to technical products and delivery, move away from an automatic assumption that will publish set numbers of Technical Information papers and move to mindful commissioning – what is the risk we are looking to mitigate, what is the opportunity, collaboration etc

Currently everything in the technical workplan is delivered by volunteers and should be looking, especially on bigger pieces, to supplement with professionally commissioned products. LI Connect will be crucial to commissioning insight going forwards

Any additional comment or feedback to be forwarded to AA

6.3 Entry Standards Project

Paper for information taken as read. Any feedback or comment can be forwarded to the team

7. Any Other Business

- i. Accredited courses - Anna French (AF) noted that Writtle College undergraduate course has recently closed which is a concern for the PRG. It seems that there may be a number of courses under threat. Vanessa Ross (VR) confirmed that this was discussed at Education & Membership Committee (EMC) this week. The situation at Writtle is ongoing but it is limited to Writtle and there needs to be a warning flag system that enable PRGs to alert relevant parties of any concerns/risks/threats. EMC are taking these issues seriously and it is a priority concern. On a more positive note there are new courses going through the accreditation process at the moment
- ii. AdCo communication - would welcome the opportunity to communicate with AdCo members informally outside of AdCo meetings - Once the testing phase of LI Connect is completed then AdCo could certainly be one of the early groups to utilise it
- iii. Meeting format – members found the break out session useful and indicated that they may be interested in single subject focussed discussions outside of the main AdCo meeting programme
- iv. Governance JWG, what's happening next? Ruth Shelton (RS) confirmed going to launch a Doodle Poll to coordinate member availability and consider context of the IndRev, any overlaps etc

7 Close

There being no other business JF thanked all for their contributions before closing the meeting at 1715