
Council Courier

28.06.2022

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.

Introduction

The President welcomed Council to its final meeting of the 2021-22 session. It would be structured in two parts: a closed session for confidential and governance items, and a shorter open session.

Obituary

Recently deceased members were remembered. Particular mention was made of Robert Franklin and Honorary Fellow John Harris. Council resolved to send condolences to next of kin and a minute's silence was held.

Declarations of interest

There were no new declarations.

Minutes of 24 February and 28 April 2022

These were agreed as a correct record.

President's report

The President thanked those members who were standing down:

Victoria Adegoke (Student)
Maryam Al-Ihayim (Student)
Stephen Drew (Associate)
Christina Gaiger (RIAS President)
Jon Greenfield (East)
Fraser Middleton (RIAS North)
Alan Jones (Immediate Past President)
Smith Mordak (National)
Alfred Munkenbeck (National)
Mark Shipton (South)
Roger Shrimplin (East)

He congratulated Mark Benzie (South) and Joan McCoy (RSUA) for being elected unopposed for a further term.

2022-23 Biennial Plan: a progress report was given against each of the ten action points to deliver the plan:

1. Building the House of Architecture
2. Balancing the Budget
3. Improving and Increasing Membership Engagement
4. Improving Access to Architecture
5. Addressing PII
6. Addressing Carbon
7. Strengthening the ARB relationship
8. Consolidating and Showcasing Our Collection
9. Improving Our Communications
10. Developing a High Performing Team.

It was hoped the expert advisory/task and finish groups would gain momentum and embed the strategy for the organisation within the Council's activity.

Updates from expert advisory/task and finish groups

Reports given on:

- Climate Emergency (Smith Mordak)
- Professional Indemnity Insurance (Jennifer Dixon)
- Regulation of the Architect (Roger Shrimplin)

- Planning (Tom Foggin)
- Finding and accessing architecture (Femi Oresanya)
- Delivery (Alan Jones)
- Fire safety (written update from Jane Duncan PPRIBA)

Council members were asked to contact the Council Secretary with any views about the need to form additional groups, including those on the original list from June 2021 which had not so far been formed.

Board report

In addition to the standard three-monthly report, the following items were covered:

- Capital
- Profit and loss
- Restructure
- Appointment of new executive directors
- Appointment of new Chief Executive
- Committees
- Property
- Communications
- Overview

Annual report 2021

Council gave its feedback on the 2021 draft annual report and accounts.

In response to a question, the President suggested that information on the RIBA's ethical investment policy might be shared with Council.

Council agreed to note the draft Annual Report and Accounts 2021 which incorporated comments from the Audit & Risk Committee and which would be formally presented to the Board at its July meeting ahead of the AGM in September.

Standards Committee update

Roger Shrimplin, Vice Chair of the Standards Committee, outlined the work recently undertaken by the committee on a Volunteer Code of Conduct, Sanctions Guidance to a Volunteer Code of Conduct, and a Vexatious Complaints Policy.

It was recognised that, in due course, it would be essential to have a related set of disciplinary procedures, creating an integrated set of documents. However, the committee thought that a freestanding, interim Volunteer Code of Conduct could be proceeded with. Their recommendations therefore reflected this.

The committee firmly recommended that all disciplinary matters ought to be dealt with by Standards Committee and that Council and the Board ought to delegate additional powers as necessary for the sake of clarity, reporting to both Council and the Board as appropriate. For the sake of clarity, this procedure should be confirmed in the Regulations.

Council then agreed unanimously to:

1. confirm that the delegated authority of Standards Committee extends to all disciplinary matters relating to RIBA members and to "volunteers" (whether "volunteers" are RIBA members or not);
2. approve the new "Volunteer Code of Conduct" for interim adoption by Standards Committee; and
3. confirm that the RIBA Policies identified in the report are retained until reviewed.

Vexatious complaints policy: the Standards Committee would be carrying out further work on a policy for consideration at the next Council meeting.

Nations and Regions Council committee (N&RCC) update

The committee was continuing to explore professional issues affecting members and to help RIBA engage with members to support their work on these. The research and engagement exercise had been somewhat hampered by the ongoing restructuring. Regional chairs were however doing their best to work with volunteers and explore how the RIBA could support members.

The initial fact-finding mission had shown PII, planning, climate change, core competencies, CPD and procurement as the main issues. Improving international member engagement and the relevance of CPD to local markets was also important.

Climate literacy: In addition to the thought leadership RIBA provided, empowerment of members to follow through was important. Could the RIBA make more education material freely available or partner with other organisations to offer training on this? There was an opportunity to work with regional special interest groups, both to gain insight and to circulate information.

CPD

- There was a time burden attached to this, and a cost which some members struggled to meet.
- Question: Could RIBA support self-assessment in non-core CPD areas where chartered practices had specialist knowledge?
- CPD provisions for international members may not be entirely appropriate/relevant. This could and should be reviewed.

Member engagement and election rules

After recent discussions in between Council meetings about election rules, the President proposed that a working group be formed by the Honorary Secretary to consider RIBA's election rules, electoral colleges, tenures, role descriptions and so on. The group should include a student member of Council, the VP Membership, and other interested Council members.

AOB

A confidential motion concerning the RIBA complaints process was proposed and agreed.

Reports for noting:

Chief Executive's report
Finance update
Governance update
Restructure update
Audit & Risk Committee minutes
N&RCC minutes
Board courier Feb-April 2022