

Council Courier

06.07.2017

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 Bill Jacob MBE, Susan Francis and two architectural assistants Gloria Trevisan and Marco Gottardi (victims of the Grenfell Tower fire).

Declarations of interest

Russell Curtis: had become a trustee of the Architecture Foundation.
President Jane Duncan: had been made an honorary fellow of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS).

Minutes of previous meetings

23 March 2017: Agreed subject to minor amendments.
24 May 2017: Agreed as a correct record.
29 September 2016, item 15: it was agreed to revert to the minute as originally drafted.

Matters arising from the minutes

Live streaming of RIBA events: this was on track to start by end of year, starting with the Stirling Prize in October. A further update would be given.

Cultural away day, 20 June: this had involved members of the British Architectural Trust Board and some members of the RIBA Board. Notes of the outcomes would be circulated to the Council.

President's report

Grenfell Tower fire: a small RIBA working group had been assembled to

engage with policy and regulatory issues arising. Members were keen to offer their expertise to the RIBA. Outputs from the group were being reported as and when available.

International week: this had attracted some 200 delegates with a packed programme of events. Some of the events were now available to view online at Architecture.com.

Mental health initiative with ABS: a bursary of £10k had been made available by a RIBA member. Multi-lingual guidance would be produced to help those needing advice on dealing with mental health issues.

The new RIAS President Stewart Henderson was welcomed. Members of Council finishing their terms on 31 August were thanked.

Code of conduct for trustees

This had been further revised since its distribution to Council in March. Members would consider the document away from the meeting and discuss any modifications by email via the Council Secretary, with a view to agreeing the final version before the new session in September.

RIBA Board report

Protocol for dealing with questions from Council members to the Board was now part of the governance review.
Great Places to Work (staff survey): results would be reported to Board and Council in September.

Clare learning space: the Board had approved the recommendation to accept the grant from the Clare Duffield Foundation for creation of an education space. The competition for it had been launched.

Chief Executive's Report

Mutual recognition of qualifications: the Brexit Advisory Group had set out the RIBA's position via Architecture.com. Council directed that the RIBA should seek continued mutual recognition of qualifications and that the advisory group should take this on board.

Mann Island: the importance of involving local members in decisions about activities was noted. Income forecasts for the next three years were queried.

Cultural offer of the RIBA: re-establishing outreach activity at the RIBA's flagship London building should be part of any review of the RIBA's cultural activity.

Financial and Human Resources Delegations

The document had been amended since the last Council meeting and was approved after further discussion.

Budget 2017

The extent of expenditure on professional fees (digital and legal) was queried.

Council endorsed the budget.

Trustees report and financial statements 2016

Approved.

Professional Standards

The publication on ethical practice 'UN Sustainable Development Goals in Practice' was now available. Work was continuing on a plan of activity. Head of Professional Standards Carys Rowlands was congratulated for her work.

Professional Conduct Panel: proactive work was required to attract a more diverse group of panellists. It was noted that the requirement of a minimum of 10 years' practice experience was an obstacle in accepting younger panellists.

Fees: undercutting of fees and sanctions that might be applied in such cases was briefly discussed.

The Professional Standards Group was asked to consider the suggestion of providing assistance to practitioners under investigation by ARB on contentious grounds.

Council noted the report.

English regional review

VP Membership gave an update on the collaboration of neighbouring regions, drawing attention to the joint activities of the Northern Group (RIBA North West, North East, Yorkshire).

Council representation review

Council approved a phased reduction of the number of regionally and nationally-elected members (reducing to a maximum of 46 Council members by 2020). It also 1) agreed to request Privy Council approval via a SGM to remove the requirement for a set ratio of nationally/regionally elected members from byelaw 5.3, and to create a regulation dealing with this aspect; and 2) approved in principle amendments to regulations 3.1 and 3.2 regarding the distribution of Council seats.

Membership Reinstatements and resignations:

Council noted the election of

- 466 new chartered members;
- 72 new associate members;
- 28 new affiliate members
- 543 new student members

including readmissions, together with resignations.

Ambassadors' debate

Presentations were made around the theme of 'Professionalism in a global context'. After a discussion, Council voted 'To assert the fundamental importance of public interest, social purpose and sustainability as core values within the profession' and 'To create a sustainable development and ethics commission to consider how the profession can best reflect its core values and engage with the UN's 2030 sustainable development goals'.

The President thanked the discussion chair Peter Murray and the ambassadors who had made presentations: Lynne Sullivan (Climate Change), Elena Tsolakis (Culture of Architecture), Virginia Newman (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion), Chris Williamson (Business Skills), Dale Sinclair (Collaboration and Technical Advancement) and Peter Oborn (Ambassador for Ethics/Vice President International). Peter Oborn was presented with a gift from the RIBA's International Committee on completion of his six years as chair.

AOB

Architecture Trailblazer group of practices: Helen Taylor reported significant progress in developing an apprenticeship scheme for the profession, with consultation due shortly on two draft standards.

Jonathan Ball queried arrangements for the running of the Friends of the British Architectural Library Board.

Elsie Owusu drew attention to the formation of small architect group working with families from Grenfell Tower to provide architectural advice and language assistance. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Elsie Owusu.

The President Elect gave a vote of thanks to RIBA President Jane Duncan which was warmly endorsed by Council.

Reports for information:

- President's Diary;
- Equality and Diversity update
- Membership report
- Main committee reports

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