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Meeting Date	Wednesday, 20th January 2021

RTPI
Royal Town Planning Institute

General Assembly

Chair's Report to General Assembly

Report from the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Sue Bridge

FOR INFORMATION

General Assembly members are asked to receive this report and attend with any questions or comments. Papers (excluding confidential items) will be available online at https://www.rtpi.org.uk/about-the-rtpi/governance/

Introduction

1.1 I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Members of the GA to the first meeting of 2021 and in particular a very warm welcome to our new members. The purpose of this report is to highlight the main decisions of the Board since the last meeting of the GA so that the Members of the Assembly can ask questions and seek clarification on the work of the Board.

1.2 Since the last meeting of the General Assembly in October 2020, the Board of Trustees held one special meeting on 26th October and one scheduled Board meetings on 2nd December 2020. There was one decision taken by written resolution.

1.3 In addition to the items set out below, which highlight the main work of the Board (excluding confidential items), the board considers standing items, notably the risk register and the health and safety report. It also considers other items for noting, mainly reports from the standing committees, nations and regions, the President, Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive. These items are all available in the board papers on the above link.

2. Board Meeting 2nd December 2020

2.1 The Board considered the budget for 2021 in the light of the exceptional circumstances surrounding the Covid 19 pandemic and the element of uncertainty arising from the lock down and forecasted negative economic impacts. It had previously been approved that the RTPI would move from an annual budget cycle to a three-year rolling budget cycle. The Board agreed that that in the light of the economic and financial uncertainty the budget for 2021 should be a stand-alone budget. This would then be followed by 3 x 3 year financial plans to encompass the 10 years of the Corporate Strategy. The Board approved the Operational Business Plan and Budget and the Regions Business Plans for 2021, being satisfied that the proposed budgets and business plans fit with the Corporate Strategy implementation plan priorities.

2.2 The Board considered and agreed the Corporate Strategy Implementation Plan priorities for 2021, including setting aside a designated budget of £175,000 for funding for the projects. The Chair of

the BOT, the Chief Executive and Head of Finance will be visiting the Nations and Regions virtually to explain and discuss the implementation plan in detail.

2.3 The Board discussed and agree the recommendations of the Governance Working Group, which are set out in detail in the separate report on this agenda.

2.4 The appointments to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Standing and other Committees were approved. A list of these is available online at (insert link). The BOT also approved the re-appointment of John Powell as a co-opted Trustee and David Burch as the new independent member of the Audit Committee. The BOT is grateful for the time the independent members give to the RTPI.

2.5 The Board also appointed Atefeh Motamedi and Paul Bateman as Associate Members of the GA.

2.6 The BOT noted that the total number of members of the RTPI as of 1st November was 25,035 and that this is a 3% increase in overall membership since 1st November 2019. [*Post meeting Note: by the end of 2020, the number of members exceed 26,000, meeting the target for 2020.]*

2.7 The BOT thanked the departing Trustees, the Immediate Past President Ian Tant, Tony Crook and John Fenna for their guidance, wisdom and experience on the Board. The BOT thanked all the officers for their work in carrying on with business as normal during an exceptionally difficult year.

3. Special meeting on 26th October 2020.

3.1 The Board considered and approved the management accounts and resolved to agree:

- Amendment to the Finance Committee Terms of Reference.
- Amendment to the Nominations Subcommittee terms of Reference.
- Award Honorary Membership of the RTPI to Dame Kate Barker.

4 Written Resolution

4.1 Over Christmas the Board approved the membership of the Standing Committees for 2021 following the expressions of interest from GA representatives and other Members.

5. Decisions of the Nominations Subcommittee

5.1 The Nominations Sub-committee takes delegated responsibility on behalf of the Board of Trustees for scrutinising member applications for nomination to external bodies, co-option to the Board of Trustees, General Assembly and standing/other committees. The sub-committee also considers such other selection processes as are referred to them by the Board or standing/other committees. The sub-committee also has the delegated responsibility in deciding the eligibility criteria and applications received with regards to the State Honours, Gold Medal and Outstanding Services Awards.

Summary of 2 September meeting business:

- The Subcommittee appointed the members to the Conduct and Discipline Panel and Appeals Committee.

- The Subcommittee awarded Fellowships to the applicants Gareth Giles and John McNairney.

6. Decisions of the Finance Committee

6.1 The RTPI Finance Committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees (BOT) for monitoring and planning the institutes financial position and financial strategy. The role of the Committee is to ensure the BOT discharges its financial responsibilities correctly and the Institute remains financially viable at all times.

6.2 At its meeting on 25th September the Committee noted the RTPI Investment Performance and it was reported that both funds experienced larger dips during Covid than their benchmarks but both rebounded strongly and are higher than they were before the pandemic.

6.3 The committee received reports on the progress of the Corporate Strategy Investment Programme and note the progress on the spend on the 2020 projects and agreed to recommend the funding for the 2021 projects to the Board.

6.4 The committee received a report on the Digital Transformation project and noted that a Business Review plan is being created to highlight the priorities across the RTPI for the systems and processes that need to be digitalised. The 3-year plan will be reported to a future Finance Committee for consideration. It will be fully costed and will include the priority areas where the SET believe further funding will be required. A Program Board has been formed and will include a representative of the Board of Trustees. (Note the Digital Transformation Board Champion is Laura Archer, the Young Planner Trustee). The Program Board has met once to sign off the initiation document and agreed a program name which is 'INFINITY'. The process review has started and will form part of the 3-year business plan.

6.5 Summary of 5 November meeting business: The Committee noted the RTPI Investment Performance and it was reported that both funds were doing well especially the Barclays Fund. The Committee noted a report on the use of the Business Continuity Fund and The Director of Commercial Services gave a verbal update regarding the Digital Transformation Project.

7. Appointments & Remuneration Committee

7.1 The Appointments and Remuneration Committee is responsible to the Board of Trustees (BOT) for monitoring and setting remuneration policy for the institute. Its role is to ensure the BOT discharges its corporate governance and has an effective reward strategy in place which promotes an effective high performing and diverse workforce and supports the delivery of the Corporate Strategy.

7.2 Summary of 30 September meeting business: It was agreed that the appointment for the two independent trustees to the Board would be discussed at the next Nominations Subcommittee meeting. The Committee noted the report regarding the Annual Pay Review and the Chief Executive made a recommendation to the committee to freeze all staff salaries for 2021 which had already been agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Susan Bridge FRTPI
Chair of the Board of Trustees
January 2021