Reference	BOT21.MAY.15
Date	Wednesday, 26th May 2021

Board of Trustees

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH IRISH PLANNING INSTITUTE

Report from the Director Scotland, Ireland and English Regions

FOR DECISION

Trustees are asked to agree the attached Memorandum of Understanding with the Irish Planning Institute.

1. Summary

This paper outlines the proposed content of the memorandum of understanding with the Irish Planning Institute (IPI) and the process to be undertaken for its agreement.

2. Background

The discussion generated by the Institute's stakeholder analysis highlighted the desire for a closer working relationship with the IPI. This has led to discussions being held with the IPI President Conor Norton and Director Orla Purcell on agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding. These discussions have been very productive. RTPI Ireland Chair Aidan Culhane has been involved in these and the idea of an MOU has been discussed within the Irish Executive Committee and Northern Irish Executive Committee, both of which are supportive.

In taking forward due diligence on the implications of Brexit discussions have been held with both BEIS in the UK Government and the Irish Government. Both have very much welcomed the signing of a MOU between the Institutes and highlighted that it could be seen as good practice in taking forward UK-Ireland relationships as part of post-Brexit cooperation.

3. Memorandum of Understanding

The Annexe to this report sets out a draft MOU which has been agreed as a basis for internal discussions by both Institutes. At the outset of these discussions it was made clear that this will not cover mutual recognition of membership nor accreditation of planning education given differences in approach and agreed standards. The MOU covers a number of areas of potential joint or complementary working:

- CPD events and programmes
- networking and social events
- policy development, political engagement and public affairs activity

- research and dissemination of good practice
- dialogues to promote further knowledge exchange between members of the Institutes
- sharing of information on routes to professional membership and continuing professional development frameworks
- promoting the profession of planning as a career, in particular to young people and under-represented groups

4. Approval Process and Launch

The process to approve the MOU has involved it being discussed at the IPI Council in May and the RTPI Ireland Executive Committee. The BOT will be updated on these at the BOT meeting. The MOU will also have been shared with the RTPI NI Executive Committee in advance of the Board of Trustees meeting to ensure they are able to contribute to it. If required a special meeting of the Executive Committee will be held to agree the MOU.

If agreed we will look to hold a joint launch event for the MOU. It had been thought that the obvious occasion for this to take place would have been at the proposed joint Institute's dinner to be held in Dublin on 11 November however this may be difficult as our international travel ban would mean that RTPI staff or volunteers from the UK could not attend, unless this was deemed an exceptional circumstance. The alternative is to hold a virtual, recorded launch event.

5. Recommendation

Trustees are asked to agree the attached Memorandum of Understanding with the Irish Planning Institute.

6. Health and Safety Implications

There should be no health and safety issues arising from the signing of the MOU Statement and any joint working with the IPI will be checked to ensure compliance.

7. Equality and Diversity Implications

The signing of the MOU should allow for a more joined up and high profile approach to attracting more diverse membership of the Institute in Ireland, especially the commitment to "promoting the profession of planning as a career, in particular to young people and under-represented groups".

8. Resource Implications

The MOU will result in closer working between the Institutes and may therefore leverage in more administrative support from the IPI.

9. Governance and Compliance Implications

The signing of the MOU should have no implications for the Institute's governance, charter, byelaws, or regulations. The MOU will cover all of RTPI's activities with a focus on the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. In discussing the plan to have an MOU between the Institutes, both BEIS in the UK Government and Irish Government have very much welcomed it as part of post-Brexit cooperation.

10. Communications Implications

The signing of the MOU is an opportunity to highlight the constructive and productive relationship between the Institutes, building upon one another's strengths.

11. Corporate Strategy - Climate action

The action in the MOU regarding joint policy development and promotion should provide a stronger voice to highlight planning's role in taking forward climate action.

12. Corporate Strategy - GROWPLAN

It is hoped that the MOU will provide planners on the island of Ireland with greater exposure to the RTPI and the value of membership.

13. Corporate Strategy - Digital Transformation

None.

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DATED THIS xx DAY OF xx

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

PROMOTION OF
PLANNING AND SUPPORTING PLANNERS

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1. The following parties, namely,

IRISH PLANNING INSTITUTE, and

ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE

have agreed to co-operate with the purpose to provide a good platform to enable planning and development professionals to share good practice and to promote the value of the planning profession and its ideals.

2 Opportunities include:

a. Jointly promoting the profession of planning as a career, in particular to young people and under-represented groups
b. Creating complementary and/ or joint CPD events and programmes that are available to members of both Institutes.
c. Creating complementary and/ or joint networking and social events that are available to members of both Institutes.
d. Undertaking complementary and/ or joint policy development, political engagement and public affairs
e. Undertaking joint research and dissemination of good practice
f. Organising dialogues to promote further knowledge exchange between members of the Institutes
g. Sharing of information on routes to professional membership and continuing professional development frameworks

3. The Parties agree:

a. that when each party hold seminars, training, industry conferences and other related activities, the organisers would invite the members of the other party to attend, where relevant.

b. that any cost of participation in this agreement shall be borne by each organisation separately and without the expectation of reimbursement. This Memorandum of Understanding does not impose and will not impose any financial and legal obligations on the Parties

c. not to disclose any confidential information disclosed to each other, to any third parties and to use such information strictly for the purpose of planning and organizing the programmes.

d. not to use the name of any Party for any other purpose whether in relation to advertisement or publicity without the prior written consent of that Party.

e. that this Memorandum of Understanding is reviewed after five (5) years of the date of signing. Each party participating in this Agreement does so voluntarily and may terminate their involvement at any time upon thirty (30) days' written notice to the other party.

f. that disputes between parties of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be settled amicably by means of negotiation in the spirit of friendship and partnership.

Signed by for and on behalf of
IRISH PLANNING INSTITUTE

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Name : Conor Norton
Designation : President

Signed by for and on behalf of
ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE

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Name : Victoria Hills
Designation : Chief Executive

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