Reference	BOT21.MAY.24
Date	Wednesday, 26 May 2021

Board of Trustees

Chief Executive's Report

Report from the Chief Executive

FOR INFORMATION

The Board is invited to note the contents of this report.

1. Introduction

This paper sets out very high level deliverables in the period April – May 2021 the Chief Executive would like to appraise the Board of Trustees of. It's a snapshot of key corporate strategy related highlights of activity undertaken by RTPI colleagues and volunteers during this period, and does not detail all activity undertaken during this period.

The paper also notes the use of delegated authority by the Chief Executive.

2. Delivering for Members: April - May 2021

This section highlights updates on the four corporate strategy pillars, delivering the climate action plan and corporate strategy foundations.

2.1. Pillar 1 - Promoting the value of membership

- I wrote to all the 2021 The Planner Women of Influence nominees, including non-members, to congratulate them on their nomination and to invite them to a meeting to discuss how they could get more involved with the RTPI. In the instance of the non-Members I also wrote to introduce them to the opportunity of membership of the RTPI. Both the Head of Membership and I have, at the time of writing, met with Suzanne Ornsby QC (non-member), Jenny Wigley QC (non-member), Saira Kabir Sheikh QC (non-member), Jennie Baker MRTPI, and Jane Maggs (non-member).
- The mid-career NURTURE mentoring programme is now firmly underway with matching completed and training underway in advance of commencement. The President and I both undertook the mentor training, and the President will mentor a min-career planner.
- The 2021 member-retention campaign, which started in October 2020, has proved very successful with just over 300 members struck off, which is a reduction from 2020. With this strong foundation and a slight increase in applications during quarter one of 2021, we are one track to hold steady with membership this year. However it is still relatively early in the early to make any accurate growth forecasts for 2021.

- Two APC webinars were delivered by the team on the Reflective Journal and the Degree Apprenticeship End Point Assessment, to support the growth of our membership pipeline.

- Another example of the GROWPLAN in action was the East of England region who hosted an additional APC session complementing the national programme. It attracted in excess of 125 delegates and off the back of that success, discussions are underway with the Membership team to explore how Regions can support the APC process in other ways.

- In support of GROWPLAN, we are now scoping out the future Member Value Review, to lay the foundations for creating and communicating our compelling Member Value Proposition.

2.2. Pillar 2 – sporting planning services

- Our regions and nations continue to provide an essential point of contact for members through being a 'shopfront' for many RTPI activities and services and through proactively engaging with members and potential members. A number of activities took place in April to support members during the continued lockdown. At 'Going Virtual - the local authority experience', West Midlands members were able to draw on their own experience and share tips and knowledge. Yorkshire's Chair hosted a drop in session for members, and many other similar initiatives have taken place to support members during these challenging times and ways of working.

- It has been a busy period responding to Government planning policy consultations across the UK and Ireland, and in the buildup and fallout from the local, regional and national elections to make the case for planning.

2.3. Pillar 3 – Raising the profile of planning: Comms & engagement

- The RTPI continues to make policy statements and respond to policy matters across the nations had played an active role in responding in the lead up to the national, regional and local elections on 6 May, and in providing timely analysis in response to the election results and the implications for planning.

- Detailed scoping work is underway for implementing the planning outcomes research and fleshing out the RTPI's Green Growth Boards proposals, along with many other policy areas across the nations.

- Preparatory work has continued on the soon to be launched Politicians in Planning Network, which will take place from 9.30 on 14 June. It is proposed that BOT Chair be the BOT champion to provide oversight of this area of activity.

- In relation to promoting planning careers, support for the Future Planners/Ambassadors programme continues via university student outreach with Planning Schools. Following visits to the North West planning schools, the region has developed new support initiatives for students - including coffee with a planner, signposting to work experience and a new flier to promote RTPI services to students.

- The 2021 Awards for Planning Excellence were our biggest ever success in terms of impact and reach and the awards announcement resulted in substantial press coverage in regions and continues to do so.

- The Planner Live North was successfully hosted, demonstrating the RTPI's commitment to a broad range of policy and practice issues across the country.

- The Chief Executive and the National Directors have met with a variety of politicians over the last

period, appearing in local and national media to discuss planning matters, including in relation to the Queens Speech on 11 May.

- The Presidential regional visits have continued to be a success, with some jointly hosted across the regions, providing opportunities for the President to engage with the wider membership.

2.4. Pillar 4 – Promoting equality, diversity & inclusivity:

- We have finalised a 'One Year One' publication in relation to CHANGE, reporting to Board (at April's meeting) on progress against CHANGE themes.
- We are secured a two year sponsorship agreement to support 'Building People', social enterprise focusing on developing diverse talent into the built environment.
- In relation to getting clearer date on the diversity of the profession we have undertaken an extensive engagement programme across RTPI teams to discuss options on EDI data capture, analysis and processing
- In relation to finalising the APC arrangements for the new apprenticeship route into membership, work continues in the preparation for apprentices to start the End Point Assessment from September 2021, with a supporting webinar delivered in April on the End Point Assessment.
- Efforts to broaden diversity of Fellows & Honorary Members have commenced with support given to the review and process Fellow applications and encouragement given to unrepresented groups amongst members to put themselves forward.

2.5. Climate Action

- Trustee Bernadette Hillman, BOT Climate Action Champion, took part in The Planner Live North, and a separate report on progress with implementation of the action plan is being brought to this meeting by the Chief Operating Officer.
- Whilst some aspects have inevitably been put on 'hold' due to the extended national lockdowns, there have been some progress, with some considerations featuring in a separate report to this meeting on 'covid recovery' in relation to improving the office environment for RTPI colleagues
- Following the submission made to the COP26 invitation to tender by HM Government for the 'green zone', we are awaiting to hear feedback on the submission. Conversations are continuing with built environment partners, including the Construction Industry Council, on other opportunities for collaboration in November 2021.

2.6. Corporate Strategy Foundations updates

There are 10 foundations to the corporate strategy. This section notes occasional updates where progress is noteworthy. On this occasion, there are six updates.

2.6.1. Foundation 1: Member services (Digital Transformation)

- Project Infinity, the umbrella programme board for all RTPI digital projects, continues to meet regularly, supported by Trustee Laura Archer, BOT Digital Champion, who attends the programme board meetings.

- Following the successful on-boarding of the CRM and upgrade to the RTPI's website, steady progress has been made on a number of areas, and a separate paper regarding a 365 IT upgrade is being brought to this meeting, by the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Technology Officer.

2.6.2. Foundation 4: Research

- An extensive engagement programme has been undertake across the nations and regions and with the wider membership on the future research strategy. It will be discussed with the General Assembly in June before being agreed with the BOT later in the year.

- The RTPI has been recently awarded a contract by the Scottish Government for the project 'Scottish Digital 2', which is a significant recognition of the strength of our reputation and skills to support their aspirations to fast-track digital capabilities and capacity across the Scottish planning system.

2.6.3. Foundation 6: Finance & Income

- Finance have been working hard on finalising the audit of the 2020 accounts and are expecting a clean audit opinion. We have been working with the membership team to review our member income reconciliation process and also with the IT team to improve the finance data out of the CRM. In addition the team have been reviewing the management information to increase clarity and invested time in improving the timeliness of extracting the information from the finance system.

2.6.4. Foundation 7: Volunteer strategy

- Planning Aid England continues to grow in strength, providing excellent opportunities for members to volunteer, with continued growth in interest on the webpages and enquiries to the team. A more detailed update is contained within a separate report to this meeting.
- To support the further role out and implementation of the volunteer strategy, recruitment is now underway for a volunteer project coordinator.

2.6.5. Foundation 8: Governance

- Since the last Trustees meeting in April, the Institute's governance have facilitated the NCVO training for the Trustees and the SET; Governance Working Group (GWG) Meeting, Audit Committee Meeting, Finance Committee Meeting, Nomination Subcommittee meeting, Remuneration and Appointments Subcommittee meeting, and the RTPI Trust Meeting.

- With regard to the need to amend governing documents, the Institute engaged NCVO to conduct the board effectiveness review for which the Trustees received a report in July 2019. There were in total 60 recommendations proposed by the NCVO. Some of the recommendations have been fairly simple to adopt by amending/adopting as an internal process; but some will trigger changes to the Bye-Laws and Regulations. None of the recommendations or proposals involve any changes to the Charter.

- To progress with the recommendation the Trustees formed the GWG as a task and finish group to share their recommended action plan to the Trustees for approval. The GWG had their first meeting in October 2019 and concluded the discussions in their last meeting in April 2021. The final report of the GWG is being reported to this meeting.

- With regard to elections, the governance team are in process of preparing for opening the elections on 22nd June. The team in consultation with the EDI Manager are in process of trying to achieve the best possible way out to record the EDI aspects through elections process.

2.6.6. Foundation 9: The Right Home for the RTPI

- Continue work in support of the roll out of business transformation and new ways of working has included a recent post-covid staff survey and consultation with the Staff Committee, and a report to the Remuneration and Appointments Committee in May.

- The emerging 'hybrid' ways of working model has also been discussed with the Remuneration and Appointments Committee in May. In the meantime there is a need to ensure all our offices are 'covid safe' and prepared for the 'hybrid' model of working from offices. The health and safety requirements associated with this are set out in a separate report to this meeting from the Chief Operating Officer.

3. Use of delegated authority

The RTPI Bylaws permit that *'the Chief Executive shall be the chief permanent officer of the Chartered Institute and shall be responsible to the Board of Trustees for the orderly and proper conduct of all the affairs of the Chartered Institute including the appointment and management of employees and the control of finances'*.

In addition to the day to day operational decisions taken to enable the smooth operations of the RTPI, it is worth nothing the following significant or sensitive decisions taken using authority delegated to the Chief Executive utilising delegated authority permitted by the bylaws:

- **RTPI employee membership:** In recognition that the RTPI is a membership organization, from 1 January 2021 all non-member employees have been automatically given affiliate membership. This is an important addition to our staff offer and retention, 'one institute' culture and ways of working, which will enable colleagues to feel very much part of their employer organisation even though the majority would not be eligible for chartered membership. There is cost neutral and has been well received by colleagues.

- **Tree planting:** In support of the RTPI awards, and in consultation with the President, I agreed that part of the awards budget could be used to recognise and mark success of the award winners by offering them the opportunity to plant a tree as part of their award.

- **Building People:** As part of our commitment to working with others on diversity of the profession we have joined Building People, a built environment network specialist who will provide us with new audiences in non-traditional markets for potential recruits to the career of town planning.

- **Singapore Institute of Planners:** In support of our International Strategy and offering support to others, we have agreed to provide support to the Singapore Institute of Planners, via a framework agreement, to assist their development of an APC process for their membership officer. This will be provided via our Education and Membership Teams, for a commercial rate, over a three year period (at total of 29 days).

Victoria Hills MRTPI, FICE May 2021