

General Assembly Meeting Minutes, 09th June 2021

10.30am, Virtual Meeting

Chair: Wei Yang, RTPI President 2021

Present: Andrew Taylor; Andrew Trigger; Andrew Martin; Atefeh Motamedi; Adam Banham; Adele Maher; Alexander Oxley; Alice Lester; Alison Blom-Cooper; Barbara Cummins; Bernadette Hillman; Christine Naylor; Claire Hephher-Davies; Cath Ranson; David Carlisle; David Lowin; David Stovell; Emily Kitching; Gabrielle Appiah; Garry King; Gavin Lewis; Giuseppe Zanre; Helen Fadipe; Harry Quartermain; Ian Tant; Janet Askew; Joanne Harding; John Collins; John Powell; Judith Onuh; Katherine Green; Carol Ramsey; Kirsty Macari; Laura Archer; Laura Webster; Layla Vidal-Martin; Lubaina Mirza; Lindsey Richards; Lucy Seymour-Bowdery; Maria Dunn; Mark Southgate; Martin Edwards; Michael Vout; Meeta Kaur; Nicky Linihan; Niall Byrne; Nick Smith; Olafiyinfoluwa Taiwo; Peter Geraghty; Rebecca Dewey; Robyn Prince; Sarah Platts; Stefano Smith; Timothy Crawshaw; Samer Bagaeen; Sue Bridge; Tola Amodu; Tom Venables.

Apologies for absence: Nadeem Ahmed; Liz Wood-Griffiths; Jennifer Winyard; Paul Bateman

In attendance: Victoria Hills (Chief Executive); Richard Patrick (Chief Operating Officer); Will Finch (Communications Officer); Sukhpreet Bhatia (Governance Manager); Simone Tomlinson (Governance Officer); Andrew Close (Director of Education); Simon Creer (Director of Communications); Craig McLaren (Director of Scotland & Ireland); Roisin Willmott (Director of Wales & Northern Ireland); Professor Michael Batty (Guest Speaker)

S. No.	Agenda Items
1.	<p>Welcome message by the President of RTPI and the Chair of General Assembly, Wei Yang</p> <p>The Chair, welcomed everyone to the June 2021 General Assembly meeting.</p> <p>The Chair gave an overview of the agenda for the day. She invited Vice President Timothy Crawshaw to be the Vice Chair and would facilitate Q&As during the meeting..</p> <p>The two breakout group discussion sessions (one in the morning and one in the afternoon), had been divided into groups and would be held by Microsoft Teams. Each group would be led by a Trustee and note would be taken by an officer.</p> <p>The Chair gave a verbal report of the Presidential Team's Activities. She advised members that since the meeting in January the Presidential Team had been very busy and regular update of their activities had been posted on the RTPI website and social media channels.</p> <p>Vice President, Timothy Crawshaw, had been promoting the importance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the need to tackle both the climate and ecological emergencies which sets the scene for the urgent work ahead as a profession. He has also had interactions with the Nations & Regions regarding a discussion on the RTPI Research Strategy consultation.</p> <p>Immediate Past President, Sue Manns has continued her role in promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity both with the planning profession and in the way the RTPI</p>

	<p>engages with communities. Change - One year on progress report was launched by Sue in May.</p> <p>The President has been busy on both national and international engagements. The RTPI International strategy was launched by the President in March. She had regular engagements with international sister planning institutes & UK built environment institutes and had been invited to speak at many international & national events. In the UK, the President has been actively engaging with students and young planners. One of her focuses has been raising the awareness of the role of planners in creating harmony for people and nature, and on place-based climate actions.</p> <p>To support her focus on trees and natural environment, the Institute has planted trees in the National Forest. The RTPI has also gifted the opportunity to plant trees to each of our national awards winners. The President is grateful for the support, and she would like to encourage RTPI regions and nations do the same for the RTPI regional & national awards.</p> <p>In addition, to make sure feedbacks from engagements with RTPI members and external bodies are properly recorded and leading into actions, the President had included a formal section in her President Paper to the Board.</p> <p>For the three Board meetings took place this year, the following items were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early planning meeting for flagship conferences • The digitisation of RTPI Archive • Maximising the Role of Young Planner of the Year • Concessionary tickets for retired/student members • Accessibility of paid virtual regional events • Free Lifetime membership for long-standing members <p>Relevant officers and committees have been asked to consider these issues. Further comments and suggestions are welcome.</p> <p>The Chair reminded members the responsibility of the General Assembly - a constitutional body under the RTPI Royal Charter, Bye-laws and regulations. Two of the General Assembly's main Role & Responsibilities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding the Board to account - The Board of Trustees are accountable to the GA who elect Trustees and Chair of Board. • GA acts as a forum for debate on planning related topics. <p>The Chair clarified that papers should be sent to the Chair and Vice Chair 3 weekends before the meeting for approval and sent out to members at least two weekends before the meeting and any late papers would not be accepted. Regional Representatives are requested to circulate the papers to their Regional Management Board for comments, and take a collective view when joining the GA.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Chair of the Board, Sue Bridge to introduce her report.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>BOT Chair's Report followed by Questions</p> <p>The BOT Chair, Sue Bridge thanked the GA Chair and stated that she would take the report as read and was happy to take any questions.</p>

	<p>She reported that the RTPI had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Irish Planning Institute as a basis of internal discussions with both Institutes.</p>
3.	<p>GA Consultation: The changes to the RTPI regulations and bye-laws</p> <p>The BOT Chair, Sue Bridge presented a report regarding a Governance review of the RTPI regulations and bye-laws.</p> <p>The BOT Chair explained that an extensive consultation had taken place in modernising the constitution and the Chair visited the Nations & Regions, Standing Committees, Panels and members reaching out to members. The Board had lengthy discussion at their Board meeting on 26 May. Changes will be finalised at the General Assembly meeting.</p> <p>Governance Working Group Member, Janet Askew asked to note, to thank Sue for all her hard work concerning the GA consultation changes, the piece of work undertaken was very good and democratic.</p> <p>The General Assembly members broke to the break out rooms for discussion. Feedback will be reported in the next GA.</p>
4.	<p>Chief Executive's Report</p> <p>The Chief Executive gave a verbal update. (written report now attached to these minutes)</p> <p>She reported that on the work on Pillar 1 – the value of membership, progress was continuing on NURTURE regarding the mentoring programme.</p> <p>Pillar 2 – sporting planning services continued to provide an essential point of contact for members 'virtually' for many RTPI services and activities. It had 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.</p> <p>Pillar 3 – the new Director of Communication was now in post and will play an important role in this pillar for delivering and raising the profile of planning. Extensive election analysis had been undertaken across the Nations. Plan the World We Need campaign had been shortlisted for the best digital campaign by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries Awards, announcement of the winners will be announced shortly.</p> <p>Pillar 4 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity a lot of progress had been made and the APC arrangements were being finalised for the new apprenticeship route into membership, work continues in the preparation for apprentices to start the End Point Assessment from September 2021.</p> <p>Foundation 4 - The RTPI had been recently awarded a contract by the Scottish Government for the project 'Scottish Digital 2', which was a significant recognition of the strength of reputation and skills to support the aspirations to fast-track digital capabilities and capacity across the Scottish planning system.</p> <p>A suggestion was raised regarding the GA meeting being an in-person meeting. The President advised members that as soon as the COVID restrictions were made lifted then this would made a priority and the final GA meeting in October should be an in-person meeting, restrictions pending.</p>

	<p>Will Finch attended the meeting to take a group photo of the GA members to publicise on social media.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Subscription Rates 2021</p> <p>The Honorary Secretary gave GA members an update on subscription rates 2021 which were set by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the GA members.</p> <p>He reported that the fees are normally set yearly but in 2019 it was agreed to move to a 3-year business plan for certainty and it was agreed that subscriptions increasing CPI for 2021-23. In 2020 because of COVID it was agreed not to increase CPI but to hold subscription at 2019 rates. Current CPI is 0.7% leading to a low increase in subscription rates, but costs are still rising so expected 2% increase 2021/22.</p> <p>The Board considered two approaches going forward, no increase in subscriptions; increase subscriptions more than CPI.</p> <p>The Board proposed an increase of 2% for 2022 adding £6 to current subscriptions.</p> <p>It was reported that the Board would be making the decision regarding the subscriptions at their Away-Day in July.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>One Institute Project</p> <p>The GA members noted a paper from the Director of Scotland, Ireland and English Regions.</p> <p>At the most recent meeting of the Board of Trustees it was agreed to gather views on what was needed to support a “One Institute” approach across the Institute. The “One Institute” approach had never be defined in any detail however information was being put together on what it would look like and comprise of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate consistency working towards a common goal across the Institute in terms of brand, offer and quality of service • Developing services and products to meet members’ needs and circumstances, building on strengths of nations and regions • early engagement, collaboration and co-design across all relevant parts of the Institute in the development of new products and services • Ensuring that there is regular, constructive and ongoing dialogue between • Committees and the nations and regions. <p>This was the first stage of the paper and involved discussions with the Board of Trustees, Nations and Regions Panel, each National Executive Committee and Regional Management Board, SET and Heads of Service to gather views on the possible changes that can be made to support a One Institute approach. These discussions will inform phase 2 of the project which will look to develop proposals on engagement, responsibilities and governance. These will be ‘tested’ with the Regional Management Boards and National Executive Committees, the Nations and Regions Panel before being brought back to the Board of Trustees in December 2021.</p>

<p>7.</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy Delivery</p> <p>The General Assembly were asked to note the progress made on implementing the Corporate Strategy, and make any comments on future priorities.</p> <p>The Chief Executive reported that many good progress had been made on key projects. There were 13 remaining projects that were likely to require additional funding and/or staffing capacity in the future and a refocussed service plan. It is those 13 projects that will be the focus of the engagement for 2022 projects, albeit programmed over the remaining period to 2029/2030</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Summary and Overview of morning session</p> <p>The Chair gave an overview of the morning session and thanked everyone for an excellent discussion and debate.</p> <p>The GA members broke for lunch.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Welcome back by the Chair of the General Assembly</p> <p>The Chair and RTPI President for 2021, welcomed everyone to the afternoon session of the General Assembly meeting.</p> <p>The Chair introduced Craig McLaren, Director of Scotland and Ireland to give his presentation.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Spotlight Item on COP26</p> <p>The GA members noted a paper from the Director of Scotland, Ireland and English Regions.</p> <p>The themes of COP26 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation and resilience • Energy transition and clean growth • Nature based solutions • Accelerating the move to zero-carbon road transport. • Financing the transition <p>This work was being taken forward in conjunction with the RTPI Climate Action champion Bernadette Hillman. The Institute’s objectives for COP26 were to increase the understanding of the role planners and planning in tackling climate change internationally and across each of the UK Governments, the Irish Government and other national government internationally, influence the COP26 discussions and debate, elevating the position of planning in tackling climate action, increase the profile of planning, planners and the RTPI, identify and highlight good planning practice to international audience and UK governments.</p> <p>There would be a focus around the Plan the World We Need research and campaign for a more international audience.</p>

	<p>There had also been an expression of interest through the UK Government portal for an event to be held in this area called <i>The Race to Zero: How to Plan the World We Need</i>. This event would be led by the RTPI with support from the American Planning Association and in partnership with the Global Planning Network and the Commonwealth Association of Planners.</p> <p>There would also be involvement in the RTPI's The Planner Live events as a virtual fringe event which would provide a focus for member engagement in the discussion and raise the profile of planning.</p> <p>There would be a discussion at the RTPI Scotland annual conference The Scottish Planner Live on the green recovery and the role of planning in supporting the ambitions of COP26.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Update from Committee Chair: Education and Lifelong Learning Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (ELLC) gave the GA members an update the work of the Education and Lifelong Committee under the ELLC terms of reference, "The standing committee will take delegated responsibility on behalf of the Board of Trustees for education policy development and provision of planning education, training and learning for RTPI members throughout their professional career and for others associated with the activity of planning; and for the promotion of planning as a career choice."</p> <p>This was summarised into two key educational objectives for ELLC and the RTPI; being a leader in Learning & Development for the profession and addressing the pipeline of planners. The core mission, vision and aims from the Corporate Strategy – a ten year plan and governs committee and RTPI officer work. Learning is one of the three key aims and two educational objectives are rooted in supporting the 4 pillars, particularly Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, by broadening access into the profession.</p> <p>The existing work of ELLC is focused on the delivery of the Corporate Strategy Implementation Plan or CSIP. There has been work across 4 major work streams – guided where possible to try to make a difference along the career timeline of a planner, with opportunities for influence and engagement with schools, higher education and setting standards for planning education, and also in offering lifelong learning opportunities to members as part of a commitment under the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>A series of CSIP projects, linked to these work streams, and would drive forward this work as well. They are: Balance, Explore, Education for Everyone, and a Seamless CPD Journey.</p> <p>Balance – there had been good success with school competitions, bursaries and Agent Plan-It. For this CSIP project, the team would be commissioning data analysis for Future Planners campaign looking at areas of deprivation versus areas of regeneration and growth which would support Regions and Nations ambassadors to target schools activity with an EDI focus, as well as supporting One Institute and volunteering strategies.</p> <p>Education for Everyone – the Institute continues to manage around 130 accredited programmes and support standards across 32 universities. As background to this CSIP project, an existing student pipeline research project would report in 2021. Scoping a commission for an education policy review for 2022 which had already</p>

	<p>begun to ensure the accreditation processes remain fit for purpose, including an EDI focus, and supporting membership growth strategies. Currently there were over 280 apprentices on the Chartered Town Planner scheme in England, after only 2 years since it was launched to support employers and increase the talent base. This was being built and expanded to Nations, and develop new education routes. The outcome from this year's development of the CSIP project Explore would be the commissioning of a secondary school work experience pilot scheme for 2022.</p> <p>There had been ongoing improvements to the design and development of e-learning RTPI Learn and other training products, and more was planned as part of seamless CPD journey.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>GA Debate: The Future of Planning 2: Planning in the Digital Era Guest Speaker: Michael Batty</p> <p>The Chair gave a summary of the feedback received from the January GA discussion on Question 1: What are the transferable skills planners have? and Question 2: What are the transferable skills planners should have? (attached).</p> <p>The Chair also presented the result of the pre-meeting questionnaire (attached).It is noted that leadership skills, public-private cooperation, multidisciplinary skills, and digital skills have been listed as important skills planners should have. However, the preparedness of digital skills is the lowest of all.</p> <p>Guest Speaker Professor Michael Batty gave a presentation to the GA members. He outlined the development of digital tools and technologies in relation to planning and introduced the purpose of Digital Task Force for Planning initiative.</p> <p>The Chair then invited members to break out into breakout sessions for the GA Debate. Question 1 (Group 1-4): What should digital planning look like in 20 years time? What are the potentials? (From a broad evidence-based plan-making & place-making perspective)</p> <p>Question 2 (Group 5-8): What are the priorities now? (From planning practice, research, education and lifelong learning perspectives)</p> <p>After discussion, members returned to give feedback from each group to the GA. A summary of the feedback will be reported at the next GA.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Research Strategy</p> <p>The Chair of PPRC gave an update regarding the current work being undertaken on the Research Strategy in line with the Corporate Strategy “We will build upon our widely respected research and policy work to broaden the impact of our influence, focussing on the key issues of interest to our members and our stakeholders, in particular government and the general public.”.</p> <p>The actions which were being undertaken were:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commission larger (>20k) and smaller (5k) projects

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Strengthen our relationship with accredited planning schools 3. Disseminate RTPI and planning school research 4. Maximise the value of <i>Planning Theory and Practice</i> 5. Promote research excellence through the Research Awards 6. Promote practitioner research through the P.R.Fund 7. Promote the RTPI Library Series <p>The GA members were presented with three questions and responses could be followed up after the meeting.</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>Closing words from RTPI 2021 President Wei Yang</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending the GA meeting and closed the meeting.</p>

Approved,

Chair,
 Wei Yang
 President