

Advisory Council Meeting
Wednesday 12 July 2023 at 1300
WEB Minutes

Advisory Council Members Present:					
CHAIR CG	Carolin Göhler President Elect/Acting President	NF	Noel Farrer Vice President	MH	Mat Haslam HonT
MS	Mark Smeeden HonSec	BG	Ben Gurney Elected Chartered Member	ML	Michele Lavelle Elected Chartered Member
RH	Ruth Holmes Elected Chartered Member	AkW	Akash Wadhawan Elected Chartered Member	AIW	Allison Walters Elected Chartered Member
MY	Marko Yau Student Rep	LB	Lizzie Bushby BrRep - EMids	DP	Daisy Parsons BrRep - EofE
JC	John Clay BrRep - Mids	RS	Ruth Shelton BrRep - SE	JPF	John-Paul Friend BrRep - SW
Jl	John Ingham BrRep - Y+H				
Apologies:					
AN	Anastasia Nikologianni PCCRRep M/L	NP	Nicola Phillips Elected Chartered Member	VR	Vanessa Ross EMCRep
WS	Will Sandy Elected Chartered Member				
Staff In Attendance:					
RH	Rob Hughes CEO	YM	Yvonne Matthews Executive Assistant	NS	Neelam Sheemar Head of MarComms & Events
NT	Naomi Taylor Head of Membership Services	EW	Emma Wood Governance & Regulation Manager		
Guests					
JaC	Jane Clarke IndT	CH	Chris House EMC Ch	MN	Marc Norden IndT
CR	Chris Rowse Russell-Cooke				

1 Welcome, Apologies and Agreement to the Agenda

Noel Farrer (NF) opened the meeting and confirmed that he would be chairing the initial session before handing over to Carolin Göhler (CG) to chair the remainder

NF confirmed that the meeting was being recorded for administrative purposes and that a number of Trustees were in attendance

COMMENTS:

- i. AdCo communication: Query regarding AdCo shared emails - *LI approach to GDPR and to ensure that all members are protected from email misuse. Team to look at options regarding AdCo communications, LI systems etc*
- ii. Branch correspondence: current opt in approach and appears that many members are not receiving branch newsletters etc. Can we have opt out instead? - *members can choose what communications they wish to receive, Rob Hughes (RH) to check options in line with GDPR etc*
- iii. Careers: Need careers packs and support for members going into schools - *the new Head of Education & Careers is reviewing the processes including the Ambassador programme and we should be able to update soon*
- iv. LI website: can AdCo page be updated with photos, summary info etc - *RH to action*
- v. Website improvement: the website is slow, clunky. Can we move to single sign-in - *the ongoing IT infrastructure project (Project Kestrel) is looking to integrate all 19 LI sites and introduce a modern system with simplified processes*
- vi. Project Kestrel: timeline – *due to launch programme in September with an initial minimum 12mth phased programme, will be communicating with the membership during the rollout*

- ACTIONS:**
- 1 Team to look at options regarding AdCo communications, LI systems etc in line with GDPR
 - 2 RH to look at updating AdCo website page be updated with photos, summary info etc

2 Election 2023 Update (Original Agenda Item 3.1)

As the meeting was running ahead of time agenda item 3.1 was brought forwards

Emma Wood (EW) introduced the paper and Appointments & Selections Committee (A&SC) Chair Ben Gurney (BG) spoke in support

Council AGREED that BG should continue as Chair and Michele Lavelle (ML) volunteered to join the committee

CG urged all AdCo members to consider volunteering for the A&SC

- ACTION:**
- 3 EW to email All AdCo for volunteers for remaining 4 A&SC seats

3 Induction training session

Training session led by Chris Rowse (CR) of Russell-Cooke

Highlights:

- i. Royal Charter body and registered as a charity
- ii. Governance structure
- iii. Trustees clear legal liabilities and responsibilities
- iv. Advisory Council advisory, Board decision making
- v. Council has clear decision making responsibility for removal of a trustee
- vi. Charity trustee duties

- vii. Key charitable purpose is public interest, not the membership. The LI is not a trade union and its purpose is not to further the members interests. Members are vitally important but this object often causes tensions in membership bodies
- viii. Public benefit - it is beneficial to the public to have well qualified and regulated landscape professionals
- ix. 5 key trustee responsibilities: Strategy, Scrutiny, Support, Stretch, Stewardship
- x. Managing risk
- xi. Board has delegated authority to a range of other groups (including committees, panels etc)
- xii. Conflict of Interest especially conflict of duty/loyalty. Important that the Conflict of Risk is registered and others decide level and whether to remove from consideration of the conflict issue
- xiii. Charity Commission (CC) is the regulator of charities. Requires reporting of serious incidents
- xiv. CC Safeguarding: *goes beyond preventing physical abuse, and includes protecting people from harm generally, including neglect, emotional abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and the consequences of the misuse of personal data*
- xv. CC note re disputes: *disputes in charities seem to be increasing in volume and ferocity*
- xvi. Crisis of membership organisations:
 - Misunderstanding about the roles of the Trustees and the members
 - Challenges arising from charitable status
 - Wider social trends; electronic communications, culture of polarised debates

Q&A

- i. CC any input to the issues experienced by the LI - *LI has reported issues to the CC but they haven't taken any direct action*
- ii. AdCo role is to advise Trustees, don't have the legal responsibility that applies to Bd - *This is correct, the core legal responsibilities and liabilities lie with the Bd. AdCo have a scrutiny role*
- iii. Confidentiality: there are always matters that should be treated as confidential and these matters shouldn't be shared. Important that Bd and AdCo understand when items are confidential and ensure that they are treated as such. Many ways to manage as appropriate
- iv. Charitable purpose and a membership body, the object is for the public so how does a membership body balance the responsibility to the public and to its members – *education, high qualification standards. Need to be careful how things are communicated with members but the 2 key items are that LI is a charity and its object is public interest. Open active debate. Be clear about roles, purpose, consideration, compromise, nuance and then able to serve both the purpose and the members*
- v. Minutes are published on the website and sometimes this is a bit slow due to needing to be approved
- vi. Striving for open and transparent communication – *yes and need to ensure that the processes are also open to help member understanding and engagement*
- vii. Collectively make decisions and stand by those collectively, believe members are better informed than ever but always room for improvement but need to make sure don't just focus on communication but actually delivering

4 Update to Advisory Council

Confidential item

5 Strategy Sessions 2023

RH stated that it was currently planned to hold a joint in person Board/ AdCo strategy session in November

Neelam Sheemar (NS) gave a presentation on the corporate strategy research brief

HIGHLIGHTS:

- i. Aims
 - To understand our audiences (members / non-LI)
 - Identify the LI's overall direction and positioning both internally and externally
- ii. Outcomes
 - Better knowledge of the environment that we operate in and to inform the development of the Corporate Strategy
 - Find and seize opportunities to strengthen the organisation
 - Increased engagement with members
- iii. Research
 - Competitive benchmarking – help to establish USP
 - SWOT/TOWS and PESTEL analysis
 - Customer journey, personas, segmentation
 - Stakeholder mapping / RACI model
 - Focus groups
 - Content audit (to align with the customer journey)
 - Processes
 - Brand identity

COMMENTS

- i. Regarding focus groups: is there a different experience for members in SME vs dept within large multidisciplinary (Arup, Aecom etc)
- ii. Clear consistent branding message very welcome
- iii. Segmentation is key
- iv. Non LI - what motivates people to be or not be a member
- v. Perhaps focus on opportunities to collaborate with other organisations rather than viewing them as competitors
- vi. Very difficult and slow process to register practice - *NT is reviewing the onboarding of RegPs, recognise that there is too much red tape at the moment*
- vii. Timescale - *within next 6mths*
- viii. Ecologists are scientists not designers but they are named in the planning requirements. Developers are increasingly using Ecologists for landscape planning and planting detail.
- ix. Any charity is also a business and it's important that we define our mission and that goals are clear
- x. Drive for membership, broadening and growth

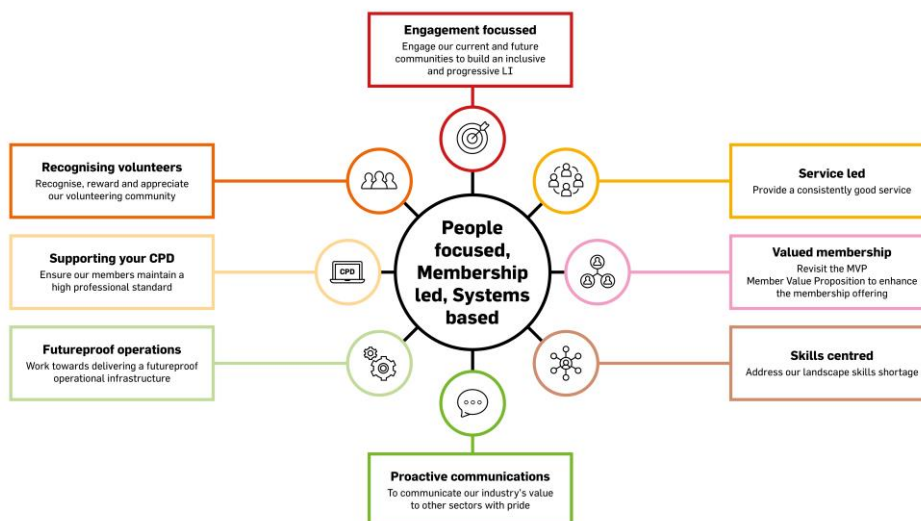
6 Membership Survey 2023

Head of Membership Services Naomi Taylor (NT) and AdCo member John Clay (JC) gave a presentation on the Membership Satisfaction Survey

HIGHLIGHTS:

- i. Overall satisfaction 39% down from 64% in 2021
- ii. Key stats:
 - 44% proud to be a member.
 - 41% do not feel connected to the LI
 - 37% believe LI acts in the public interest
 - 37% members stated wouldn't be a member if it weren't a requirement of their job

- iii. Focus on engagement, have recruited a Membership Engagement Manager
- iv. Reviewing Member value proposition to enhance the membership offering
- v. Working to address the culture of CPD
- vi. Will present the research findings and action plan to members at a webinar 18 July 2023
- vii. Committed to take positive action to address the issues the research has raised
- viii. Pledges have been developed with member input:



COMMENTS

- i. Is this to be communicated with the membership - *Yes the webinar is open to all members to attend, it will be recorded and available on LI Campus. The results are important for all members and it is also important to highlight that the LI is actively committed to change*
- ii. Diversity of membership and ability to measure: is it possible to work out which members qualified in landscape design, soil science other? Would be helpful to future reference – *Survey asks for services provided and main service so could possibly create a subset in that way. We don't currently have that specific information in the CRM, when we have a new CRM in place we will be asking members to confirm their specialisms*
- iii. Broadening the membership: also have the experience route and this needs to be explored with a broader range of specialisms

RH recorded his thanks to John Clay for all his support and input to the project

7 Priorities and Tactical Plans for 2023/2024

RH gave a presentation outlining LI Mission and vision priorities and looking ahead for 2024 and beyond

HIGHLIGHTS

- i. Transition to understanding the membership, identifying needs, delivering service and benefit
- ii. Foundation development year as we focus on stability
- iii. Financial accountability and team purpose, with 50% staff team leaving the LI business continuity seriously impacted
- iv. Realigned commercial focus
- v. Key areas for immediate focus

COMMENTS

- i. Longer term view of the role of branches - *This is part of the more detailed business planning which will be made available soon*

- ii. Considering the significant staff turn over do we now have buy in from the staff team both in terms of connection with the membership and welfare - *This is a key focus for this year staff activity day, investing time and focus*
- iii. Education is not just about the younger and next generation its for everyone
- iv. Professional staff team and must recognise and respect the team and the work they do to support the LI and the membership

8 Any Other Business

- i. Request for a current staff organogram - *RH final draft to be available soon and circulated to AdCo asap*

ACTION: 4 RH to circulate staff organogram when finalised

9 Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 1659