



**Subject** Update from the Chief Executive  
**Purpose** For Note  
**From** Chief Executive

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### 1. Summary

To provide an update from the Chief Executive on the operational activities of the Executive team.

### 2. Open Session

Open session. Any confidential matters will be discussed in a separate report in the confidential session.

### 3. Contribution to the Board's Purpose and Objectives

This paper updates the Board on key operational developments including progress to delivery our business plan and key strategic priorities.

### 4. Update on Strategic Priorities

#### **Reform of Initial Education and Training**

- 4.1 The survey on the proposals set out in our discussion document "[Modernising the initial education and training of architects](#)" has now closed, with over 700 responses. We have now formed a cross-departmental staff team to analyse all of those responses so that we will be able to report on both the quantitative and qualitative information respondents have provided. A Board workshop will be held in March to discuss the analysis of that information.
- 4.2 We previously updated the Board on our intention to refresh the engagement and assurance mechanisms involved in the development of our policy in relation to initial education and training of architects.
- 4.3 The strategic significance of this work requires regular detailed engagement of the whole Board, both in workshop mode where policy ideas and direction of travel can be tested as well as in formal Board meetings where consultations are considered and policy and standards approved.
- 4.4 We also need to ensure we build our extensive engagement with key stakeholders as we progress with our proposals; to have access to expertise on particular areas of policy, education and practice (and to demonstrate a commitment to meaningful and ongoing engagement), and to provide assurance to the Board as to the progress of this work.

Reference Group

- 4.5 We currently believe that the first requirement may be best met through the formation of a reference group. This group would bring together all stakeholder groups relevant to initial education and training. This will not be a decision-making or assurance body, but will have an opportunity to test ideas and receive feedback on key policy and implementation questions at regular intervals in the project.
- 4.6 Provisionally, this group is likely to include representatives from:
- RIBA, RIAS and RSUA
  - SCOSA
  - APSA
  - Large architectural practices (employers)
  - Architects
  - Students
  - Interested groups (i.e. EDI and sustainability groups)

Although this would primarily be an external reference group we would wish to include at invite at least two Board Members as observers to support assurance.

Expert Advice

- 4.7 We have also identified a need to receive expert advice on key topics. We do not propose setting up groups on each of these areas, as we would prefer flexibility as to how and when we speak to experts and invite them to feed into our work. One-off workshops might be appropriate for some topics, and ongoing bilateral conversations might be more useful for others. What those topics are will be led by the evidence we analyse, but are likely to include:
- The structure of IET requirements, including acquiring practical experience, and funding
  - Specific areas of knowledge and skill, such as sustainability or health & safety
  - Professional ethics

Board Assurance

- 4.8 As described above, we wish to avoid duplication of the work of the reference group and of the Board Workshops so are suggesting that a minimum of two Board members are invited to attend the Reference Group meetings as observers.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme

- 4.9 The proposed legislative amendment to section 9 of the Architects Act 1997, to give ARB the power to require training to be carried out as a condition for continued registration, remains on course to be approved by Parliament in 2022. Those changes are contained within the Building Safety Bill.
- 4.10 In anticipation of those new powers, we continue to design a proportionate and deliverable scheme that will raise the overall competence of the profession, be architect led, and avoid duplication where possible. We have now analysed the 700+ responses we received to our survey on the new CPD scheme, and ran a Board workshop in January to test some of the ideas we have developed as a result of that

evidence. We will now write up a report on the survey and the insights we have gathered from it, which will come to the Board in March ahead of publication in April. We will also hold stakeholder events to share our survey results, one with key senior stakeholders in February, and one larger online briefing ahead of publication.

- 4.11** We will continue to formalise the design of that scheme in the current months, and discuss our proposals with architects, the professional bodies and other key stakeholders. We will bring proposals for a new scheme to the Board in July, with the intention of launching a formal consultation on that scheme in the second half of the year. It is anticipated that we will begin piloting a new scheme in 2023.

### **Strategic transformation**

- 4.12** Significant progress has been made since the last Board meeting. We have:

- Reviewed and updated our procurement policy to ensure risks of challenge are mitigated
- Held the first meeting of the Transformation Assurance Group where Terms of Reference were agreed and we shared details about our procurement process
- We have engaged a procurement neutral service vendor, Constellia, who will enable us to go to market and select an IT Principal Partner for our Strategic Transformation Programme of work.
- We have developed a full set of requirements for the Invitation to Tender (ITT) and we are expecting to issue the ITT by 6 February. Provider briefings will follow shortly after with proposals from shortlisted organisations by 4 March.
- We estimate our new IT Principal Partner will be 'on board' by the beginning of April.

We have recruited a Project Manager who is supporting us with the procurement phase and with Business Planning and developing our approach to Programme and Project Management at ARB.

### **People Strategy**

- 4.13** We rolled out the revised annual review process in November and now a majority of the staff have completed the process. We plan to seek feedback and refine the process. Our plan also includes a linked but separate policy for the senior leadership Group and Chief Executive. The next steps are now to set objectives for 2022 with each team member.
- 4.14** All job descriptions have been reviewed externally with positive feedback being that they are clear and reflect the tone and level of responsibilities that they see within other organisations. We are therefore in a position to roll these out to each person as final versions and we will look to do this over the coming couple of weeks. Where there may be any outstanding questions or feedback on job descriptions, we will address these via individual team meetings.

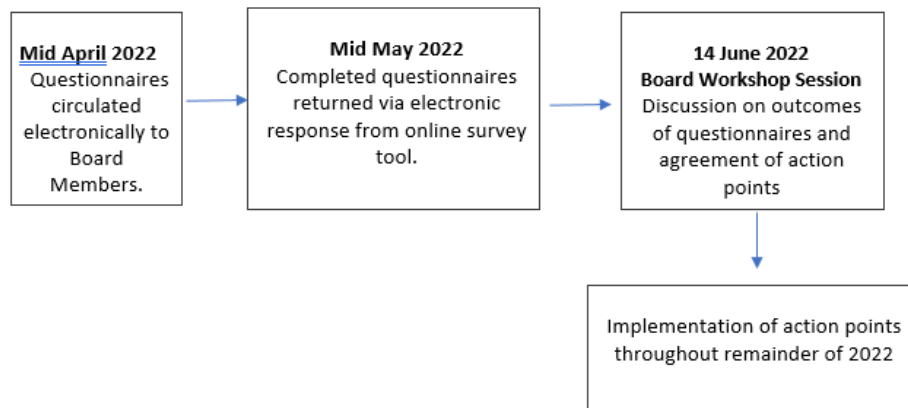
- 4.15 Work is ongoing to establish new pay bands. We do not expect this to have an impact on the job descriptions, however, there may be some very minor tweaks to the competencies in a few cases, but we see this to be of minimal impact.
- 4.16 The external pay and job role benchmarking exercise has been completed. Time is being taken to review and consider the information, but the headline information is positive in that majority of our roles are pitched at the market rate. Once we have considered the information in more detail we will share more information with the staff. A key part of this work will be to finalise the pay bands that we have previously mentioned and the way in which this will support career progression across ARB.

#### **EU Exit/International Routes**

- 4.17 We have been progressing the developing of our new international routes; in late October 2021, we published a consultation document setting our intended direction of travel. We ran a small roundtable event for interested parties and sought feedback more widely through our consultation. We are currently analysing the consultation feedback and will be bringing further information back to the Board in the Spring.
- 4.18 The next phase of the development will involve developing new rules, procedures, systems and processes to support the new international routes. Work in relation to the mutual recognition agreements (MRA)/memoranda of understanding (MOU) we are working on with our counterparts in the USA, Australia and New Zealand, the EU and Hong Kong is continuing to progress positively.

### **5. Board Effectiveness Reviews 2022-2023**

- 5.1 The primary purpose of our Board Effectiveness reviews is to help the Board reflect on, and where necessary improve, its own performance, which in turn helps it to contribute towards the continuous improvement of the performance of the organisation.
- 5.2 The last Board Effectiveness Review was undertaken in 2020. Good practice for the effectiveness of boards is that an externally facilitated review should be considered at least every three years, with internally facilitated effectiveness reviews taking place in each intervening year.
- 5.3 Further to discussions with the Chair, it is proposed that an internally run, light touch Board Effectiveness Review takes place during the Spring 2022. Board members will be asked to complete an online survey, which asks them to rate each statement according to their views, as well as providing them with the opportunity to offer feedback and make suggestions for improvements. We will also approach the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to seek feedback from their perspective. The Executive proposes to circulate the survey in April 2022. Responses will be collected by the Executive and collated for anonymised reporting, so that the Board can discuss the outcome and agree a collective improvement plan at its June 2022 workshop session. Action points will then be taken forward over the remainder of 2022. The following illustrates the proposed timetable for this year's effectiveness review:



**5.4** We also propose that the Board Effectiveness Review in 2023 should be conducted by an external consultant. This Review will likely include gathering feedback from Committee members as well as a small number of external stakeholders. We will bring back further details to the Board in relation to the 2023 Board Effectiveness Review later this year.

## 6. Policy and Communications update

### Engagement with stakeholders

Date	Meeting Details	SLG member/s in attendance	Board Members in Attendance
22 Nov 21	CIPFA Internal Audit Project- Focus Group	MS	
23 Nov 21	BEIS Trade Technical Meeting	EM	
24 Nov 21	Professional Indemnity Insurance Roundtable	HS, SH	
25 Nov 21	BEIS/DLUHC/ARB – EU MRA Discussions	EM, Rob Wilson	
25 Nov 21	Meeting RIBA- Education Review Engagement	RRH	
26 Nov 21	SCHOSA Liaison Meeting	EM, SH, BJ	
29 Nov 21	Meeting with Frances Kirwan & Christopher Barrett from DLUHC	HS	Chair
30 Nov 21	ARB Engagement Event & Networking- Developing Competencies for Tomorrow's Architect #1: Environmental Sustainability	RRH, SH	Elena Marco
2 Dec 21	ARB/AACA/NZRAB MRA Meeting	EM, Rob Wilson	
3 Dec 21	Meeting with RIAS-Education committee meeting - Modernising Architectural Education and Training	HS, SH	
3 Dec 21	ACE – Board Secretaries Forum	EM	
6 Dec 21	Professional Body Catch up meeting with RSUA	HS	Chair
6 Dec 21	Professional Body Catch up meeting with RSAW	HS	Chair
6 Dec 21	Working Group 7 Meeting	SH	

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9 Dec 21	ARB Engagement Event & Networking- Developing Competencies for Tomorrow's Architect #2: Professionalism and Ethical Behaviours	HS, SH, RRH	Teri Okoro
14 Dec 21	BEIS Trade Technical Meeting	EM	
14 Dec 21	RIBA Liaison Meeting- Initial Education & Training	HS, SH	
15 Dec 21	Professional Body Catch up meeting with RIAS	HS	Chair
15 Dec 21	Introduction meeting with CIAT CEO	HS	
16 Dec 21	ARB/DIT/DLUHC/FCDO – NCARB MRA	EM, Rob Wilson	
20 Dec 21	Transformation Assurance Group meeting	HS, MS, BJ, Robert Ellis	Elena Marco, Teri Okoro
10 Jan 22	Meeting with BEIS- Regulated Professions Research	EM, Rob Wilson	
10 Jan 22	MRA Meeting with AACA/NZRAB	EM, Rob Wilson	
10 Jan 22	Working Group 7 Meeting	SH	
12 Jan 22	ARB/NCARB – MRA Meeting	EM, Rob Wilson	
14 Jan 22	SCHOSA Liaison Meeting	SH, BJ	
19 Jan 22	Challenge Panel- Architects Review	HS	
19 Jan 22	ARB/DLUHC/BEIS – EU MRA Meeting	EM, Rob Wilson	
19 Jan 22	Meeting RIBA - EDI	RRH	
19 Jan 22	ARB/DLUHC/DIT/FCDO – NCARB MRA	EM, RRH, James Farrar, Rob Wilson	
21 Jan 22	CIC Climate Action Plan - WS1 Education & Qualification	EM,SH	
27 Jan 22	BEIS Trade Technical Meeting	EM	
28 Jan 22	Meeting RIBA- Education Review Engagement	RRH, SH	

### 7. Resource Implications

Resource requirements for the delivery of the strategic plan priorities were included as part of the Budget process for 2022.

### 8. Risk Implications

There are no additional or specific risks to report. Each of the major projects set out in the corporate strategy for 2022-26 will have a project risk register. These will feed into the strategic risk register agreed by Board and reporting through the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

### 9. Communication

There are not specific communications implications arising from this paper.

**10. Equality and Diversity Implications**

None directly emerging as a result of updates in this paper.

**11. Further Actions**

These are referred to within the key points set out above.