



**Subject** Increase to Staff Headcount  
**Purpose** For Decision  
**From** Registrar and Chief Executive

If you have any enquiries on this paper, please contact Karen Holmes at [karenh@arb.org.uk](mailto:karenh@arb.org.uk) or on 020 7580 5861

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### 1. Summary

To request Board agreement to an increase in the staff headcount to strengthen corporate support at ARB.

### 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- i. Agrees to increase in headcount from 22 fulltime equivalent posts to 23 fulltime equivalent posts with immediate effect.
- ii. Agrees the increase to the staff budget by £53K for 2017, which will be taken from the surplus income forecast for 2017.

### 3. Open Session

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

In delivering the Act, ARB's objectives are:

Protect the users and potential users of architects' services. The smooth functioning of the office is integral to meeting this objective. Having this post will ensure that Operational Management Group (OMG) can fulfil its role in confidence that affairs such as accommodation and contractual negotiations are taken care of. The holder of this post will also ensure the accuracy of the ARB website so that users of architects' services have access to the information they require.

Support architects through regulation. As well as the reasons outlined in relation to the first objective, the holder of this post will also improve the effectiveness of ARB's contract management, thereby ensuring that architects get the best possible value for their retention fee.

## 5. Background

- i. Board members have previously raised concerns with the Registrar that capacity within the organisation was stretched. They raised concern about staff development, workloads, capacity and resilience within the organisation.
- ii. The Registrar has agreed to look at the current staff structure and ascertain if any additional resources are required on a permanent basis, over and above the autonomy she has within the overall staff budget.
- iii. Following the interim appointment of the Registrar in 2015 and her permanent appointment in July 2015, an organisational restructure has been undertaken to reflect the ongoing needs and development of the organisation.
- iv. As part of that restructure, the Deputy Registrar role was discontinued and the size of the Operational Management Group reduced, with each member of the Group undertaking an expanded role. Each role has been revised to ensure appropriate oversight of ARB's key functions, and to suitably challenge and develop the individuals concerned. A new role was also created at this time to meet the organisation's communications needs.
- v. As a small organisation we must be alive to the limitations in career advancement that can be offered to staff, and so to retain key individuals they must be offered the opportunity to develop their career skills and experience internally. In accordance with that aspiration, a number of other amendments and enhancements have been made to job specifications and areas of responsibilities. These more formal amendments sit alongside the "One ARB" ethos and approach we have adopted. In essence this means that irrespective of the role each member of the team plays, we have a collective responsibility to deliver all the functions of the organisation, and to ensure the core work, business plan and priorities are delivered. This approach has not only been very successful for the organisation in terms of delivery, but also in terms of staff morale and retention. It is an ethos that encourages individuals to become involved in areas outside of their normal working environment, and 2016 has seen a number of cross-team working groups to facilitate problem solving and delivery of projects.

### The new role

- vi. Despite this commitment shown across the organisation and the additional funds available within the overall staff budget to bring in temporary members of staff, an area requiring additional permanent resources is that of corporate support.
- vii. While efforts have been made to cover this area of work through a combination of temporary support (using internal and external resources) and ad hoc use of OMG resource, this has not proven to be a satisfactory solution either in terms of effectiveness or use of staff time.

- viii. We currently have a Team Secretary post in this area. The post provides administrative support for the Registrar and other members of the OMG. The current request is to increase the level of corporate support by adding a more senior staff member to this area, who will take management responsibility for the Team Secretary and as well as overall responsibility for this area of work.
- ix. This post will take responsibility for a number of activities, including: office management and procurement, higher level support to OMG, the ARB website, information management, and quality assurance across the organisation. The individual will also have responsibilities to ensure that action points arising from Board and committee meetings are followed up, that recommendations made by the internal auditors are delivered, and for the facilities management of the building.
- x. While the need for this role was identified some time ago, it was originally envisaged that it could be resourced by reducing the headcount in the Registration Department. The Board will however, be aware of the unprecedented increase in the number of architects registering in recent years, and so to reduce the staff numbers in Registration is deemed too great a risk at this time.
- xi. As well as providing greater resilience for ARB's functioning generally, the creation of this post will increase flexibility for the current management team by releasing them from these duties, and allow greater scope for projects to be delivered effectively. An extra staff member will ease the current pressure on capacity and enhance the smooth running of the organisation.

#### Resources

- xii. In addition to the request to increase the headcount in Corporate support, the Board are asked to note that resources continue to be monitored in all areas of the organisation, as demand for the organisation's services continue to rise.
- xiii. The Board are also asked to note that funds have previously been ring fenced to support the Routes to Registration project, the Review of Section 14 (disciplinary review) and any additional resources needed once the outcomes of the Periodic Review are known.

#### Government expectations

- xiv. The Board will be aware of the DCLG's expectations in relation to increases in headcount. The Registrar has discussed the request with DCLG who are of the opinion that it is within the Board's remit to manage staff costs and headcount independently but responsibly.

## 6. Resource implications

£53k will be required to fund the post (salary and associated costs), to be funded from the 2017 budget surplus, which is estimated to be £315k for 2017.

## 7. Risk Implications

Concerns surrounding the capacity, resilience and morale of staff members have been raised at Audit Committee meetings through the organisations Risk Register and through discussions at Board meetings. The additional post will assist in mitigating the resource risks identified.

The risks associated with accepting the new role are that there will be an additional member of staff in a role that previously did not exist, at an additional cost to the organisation. Unless the Board is satisfied that there is a genuine business need for this post, the organisation could be criticised for its use of funds.

The risks associated with rejecting the new role is that members of the Operational Management Group will continue to spend a disproportionate amount of time handling matters outside of their core roles, which leads to an ineffective use of their time.

As the demands on the organisation grow, both in terms of capacity and expectation, a failure to expand human resource will increase pressure on existing staff, slow efficiencies, and hamper ARB's ability to continuously improve the service it offers to the public and profession.

## 8. Communication

The demands on ARB are growing, both in terms of the size of the Register, an ongoing increase in the number of institutions seeking prescription and the number of major projects that must be delivered. It will be the responsibility of the new post holder to ensure that the Operational Management Group are freed up to focus on the organisation's key priorities, whilst also improving the efficiency of ARB as an organisation.

## 9. Equality and Diversity Implications

There do not appear to be any direct Equality and Diversity implications relating to this recommendation. ARB will however need to ensure that Equality and Diversity is considered at every step of the recruitment process and that reasonable adjustments will be offered to any candidate who requires them.

Equality and Diversity data will be collected from candidates applying for the post. The post will initially be advertised internally; however if external recruitment is required we will discuss with our external human resources provider how we might reach a more diverse audience.

**10. Further Actions**

If the post is approved we will seek to fill it as soon as possible.