arb

Board Meeting   18 May 2022
Agenda Item   8

Subject	**Update from the Chief Executive**
Purpose	**For Note**
From	**Hugh Simpson, Chief Executive and Registrar**

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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

Modernisation of Initial Education and Training

4.1   We have now analysed the results of the survey in which we set out our vision for the future of the Initial Education and Training. Those results will be discussed at this Board meeting, and published soon after.

4.2   Given the overwhelmingly positive reaction to our vision, we now have a mandate to develop those ideas further. We have identified three discrete but connected workstreams which will required progression. They are to:

1) Develop a new set of outcome-based competencies that an individual must have in order to register as an architect, and the learning objectives that must achieved at the end of a student's initial period of education and training.

2) Consider what changes to our regulatory approach can be made to allow more flexible routes into the profession, without compromising on quality. This will include considering the stages at which ARB should prescribe, how professional practical experience can best be acquired, the role that vocational learning should have in becoming an architect, and the impact of funding on all of these elements.

3) Reforming the way that we accredit qualifications by establishing a new set of standards for institutions, and putting in place a leaner, more effective method of quality assuring education and training being provided by schools of architecture.

4.3 We are establishing agile Expert Advisory Groups to help us test and develop policy in these areas, and have engaged a technical author to assist with the drafting of competencies and outcomes. We have also had the inaugural meeting of the IET Reference Group – a small group of our key stakeholders (and Board members who wish to observe) – that have agreed to consider information and provide challenge as we develop policy ideas, before they are brought to the Board and formally consulted on.

4.4 In addition to the Expert Advisory Groups and Reference Group, we intend to hold two participative events to bring a wider group of stakeholders together to feed into our policy development. These will include:
- An online event on 30 June, which would focus on contributions from attendees on two topics: i) the points in education and training at which ARB should set / prescribe learning outcomes, and ii) how the requirement for practical experience can be improved.
- An in-person symposium in the autumn, at which we'll revisit our vision and introduce our ideas for a new structural model to deliver it, with workshop conversations to help develop the proposals for consultation.

4.5 The timing of these events are scheduled to ensure we mitigated the risk that those working in academia would not be able to attend (during the long summer break) and to ensure were able to gather further feedback in advance of the Board Workshop in September which will be critical in providing the executive with a clear direction of travel as we develop final proposals for consultation. We remain on course to develop this work throughout 2022 with a view to launching a consultation at the start of 2023 on our proposals.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme

4.6 Since February our current focus for the CPD project has been defining the scheme framework, testing the proposed ideas for the scheme and building stakeholder engagement.

4.7 We have held the following meetings and events to build stakeholder engagement and to test the scheme proposal:

Event	Date
CPD Stakeholder Briefing (representatives of SCOSA, RIBA, RIAS, RSAW and RSUA)	11 March
RIAS meeting	25 March
Webinar briefing on CPD survey report	20 April
RSAW	22 April
RIBA meeting	5 May

The CPD survey report was published 21 April. As of April 26 this has been downloaded 900 times

<u>Scheme Development & Engagement</u>

4.8 To assist with the next stages of the scheme development, we want to test our ideas directly with architects. We will hold online focus groups with architects from different-sized architectural practices, drawn from survey respondents and members of the Architects Engagement Group, as well as a new Employers Discussion Group* that we intend to set up. The focus groups will invite architects to discuss the practicalities of our ideas so that we can refine them and how they would be implemented in advance of our consultation. Topics we discuss and invite architects to help shape will include:

- the scheme's potential focus on activities, with discussion about i) how we can define them, ii) whether / what minimum should be set and iii) whether it is appropriate not to set a mandatory format;
- the potential for mandatory topics to be set by the Board, and the process for determining them;
- how architects can record and report their activities, including how we can avoid duplicating the effort of recording CPD for other schemes and requirements.

The outcome of the focus groups will feed into the development of the scheme. When we propose the detail of the scheme to the Board, we will be able to explain how our proposals have been shaped by architects who attended the focus groups.

<u>Future Activity</u>

4.9 Future work on the project will include:

- Final draft proposal for consultation
- Consultation of the proposed scheme
- Analysis of consultation and amendments to scheme
- Development of rules, guidance, standard operating procedures
- Establish IT platform and support systems
- Recruitment of human resource
- Pilot
- Implementation of scheme

Activity	Completion Date
Board consideration of CPD proposals	July 2022
Consultation on CPD proposals	December 2022
Analysis of CPD proposals consultation	January 2023
Board decision on proposals	March 2023
Publish report on outcome of consultation	March 2023
Consult on detailed CPD rules, procedures and guidance	May 2023
Publish detailed CPD rules, procedures and guidance	September 2023
Run 6-month pilot scheme	December 2023
Complete IT solution	May 2024
Launch 'live' system for usage and testing	June 2024
Mandatory CPD scheme commences	January 2025

EU Exit/International Routes

4.10 We have been continuing to progress the development of our new international routes. Following the consultation we ran in relation to our intended direction of travel in late 2021/early 2022, we have completed the analysis of the responses we received, and further to Board approval in March, we have now published a follow up report on our website.

4.11 Now that the Professional Qualifications Bill has received Royal Assent, we are developing our new rules, procedures, systems and processes to support the new international routes at pace. We will be bringing further documents setting out the new rules and the UK Adaptation Assessment process to the Board for consideration and so that these can also be issued for consultation.

4.12 Whilst some further supplementary legislation needs to be passed before our powers to sign mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) are switched on, our work in relation to the MRAs/memoranda of understanding (MOU) we are developing with our counterparts in the USA, Australia and New Zealand, the EU and Hong Kong is continuing to progress positively. We have been keeping key stakeholders updated and published a process update in tandem with our USA partners as well as a joint statement with our Australian and New Zealand partners.

Strategic Transformation

4.13 We have formally appointed a new Information Technology Principal Partner (ITPP) following a competitive tender process using the Constellia procurement framework.

4.14 The Discovery phase of the Transformation Programme has begun and our ITPP, Intergence, is now reviewing our workstreams and has begun work on site focused on two key workstreams: Business Analysis and a Technical workstream.

4.15 As a priority the ITTP is reviewing the priority projects previously discussed and considered by the ARAC and the Board. As part of this initial phase they will be reviewing any significant vulnerabilities in relation to cybersecurity, as well as any opportunities to delivery immediate improvements, for example, the End User Compute workstream (which is looking at desktop functionality for staff)

5. People Strategy: Hybrid Working Policy

5.1 We have recently launched our new Hybrid working Policy to the staff team.

The way in which all organisations are operating is changing all the time. Covid has been a massive disruptor and not all of it bad (e.g. the ability to engage stakeholders over zoom without having to ask them to travel from different parts of the UK). But we also don't know the full impact of remote and hybrid working and with this in mind we will want to keep this policy under review and as a minimum will look at it again before the end of December 2022. We also recognise that hybrid working requires slightly different management skills and we are looking into training for managers.

5.2 We continue our journey to develop modern working practise to ensure we can continue to attract and retain the best talent. We believe our workforce is most productive and can deliver our strategy and business plan when you can achieve a

healthy work-life balance. A healthy work life balance will look and feel differently to us all and so we want our staff to be able to have more control over where and how they work whilst ensuring every member of staff feels connected and part of a team. We want our staff to adopt a flexible, collaborative working style which supports the delivery of our functions and effective customer service whilst offering our staff flexibility in how they work

Assurance/Technical/Working and Reference Groups

6.   **6.1**   In December 2021, the Board noted that the Executive were expanding the number of groups to support the delivery of some of the key strategic projects. It was also noted that there were numerous names for these groups such as Assurance Group, Technical Group, Working Group and Reference Group. The Board confirmed that it would be helpful to have clarity around the terminology and governance structure for these groups. We have set out further details of the types of group we will be using to support our work in **Annex A** of this report. The definitions are not intended to be a rigid structure and for externally facing groups, we would expect there to be overlap in some of the functions from time to time.

Update on Approach to Board Meetings

7.   **7.1**   In September 2021, the Board agreed to support a revised approach to the cycle of Board and workshop meetings and this revised approach has been operating from 1 January 2022, i.e., Board meetings now fall into three categories, formal Board meetings, Prescription Matters meetings and Workshop meetings. Although there are more meetings, and occasionally workshop or Prescription Matters meetings are used to deal with urgent and formal Board business, we have determined that standing items such as minutes, matters arising updates, CEO reports, Chair's reports etc., will only be dealt with at formal Board meetings. This is so that the Executive can keep track of the relevant documents, and so that the use and effectiveness of Board time can be maximised to support and achieve the organisation's ambitious programme of work.

8.   Resource Implications

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

9.   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.

10.   Communication

There are not specific communications implications arising from this paper.

11.   Equality and Diversity Implications

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

12. Further Actions

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