Board Paper

for Open session

Subject: **Chief Executive's Report**

To note a report from the ARB's Chief Executive on matters relating to the running of the Board's business

Purpose

To provide an update from the Chief Executive on matters relating to the Board's business including progress updates on the Board's five key strategic priorities as well as additional operational issues.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to note this paper.

Annexes

N/A

Author/Key Contact

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1. Open Session

1.1. This item will be noted in the open session of the Board meeting.

2. Background and Key points

Continuous Improvement

2.1 The retention fee period has now concluded and has run smoothly, following changes to the payment process, introduced this year. For instance, over 15,000 architects paid their fee using the new payment options of ApplePay or GooglePay, which constitutes 39% of those who paid. This is a significant increase on the circa 10,000 architects who used to pay by direct debit, and feedback from those who used it has been positive on its introduction.

2.2 There were no technical issues with the card fraud checking service, Worldpay, and the ability to manage risks of payment (from different international locations, or where card details matched those on the Register), meant regularly 99% of payments transactions were accepted, and where there were rejections, the cause of the issue was easily diagnosed.

2.3 A full discussion of the retention fee and CPD compliance processing will be provided at the Board Workshop in January.

Modernisation of Initial Education and Training

2.4 We continue to manage the programme of accreditation visits, and the collection and analysis of data to support Standards for Learning Providers 4 and 5 (Human Resources, and Teaching and Learning Resources). We will complete the collection of all standards for all existing providers by the end of 2026, and will use that as a baseline for future accreditation decisions.

2.5 We continue to review the way we can most effectively and efficiently combine the different streams of accreditation activity (Annual Monitoring, Standards data review, Transitional applications, and New Qualification applications) so that we minimise the time taken at Executive and Accreditation Committee level, which may require some re-phasing of the work. We presented our ideas, based on Committee feedback at the last Board, and we develop them further.

2.6 We will begin the process of planning engagement with Providers on the next Accreditation fee.

Continuing Professional Development

2.7 The 2025 CPD scheme closed at the end of the year, and early indications are that the full compliance levels are at an encouraging level of more than 90% for those who have recorded on MyARB. There have also been a limited

number of architects (<3%) that have been granted with a deferment; the majority of these are due to serious ill-health or statutory parental leave.

2.8   We will be contacting those architects who did not fully comply with the scheme, requiring them to do so within four weeks; those that fail to do so will be then issued with a two-week removal notice. Swift analysis of all 20,000+ records is achievable because of our newly introduced AI tool.

2.9   We are also in contact with our colleagues at the Royal Institute of British Architects to ensure that those architects that have declared that they are recording their CPD on the RIBA platform are also compliant.

Eos Transformation

2.10   We have commenced internal 'validation workshops' to review the requirements for phase three of our CRM development work. This will feed into the 'discovery' phase of work, with our new CRM developer, which is now anticipated to begin in early 2026.

2.11   In the meantime, we have been preparing for the handover of our CRM support contract from the current supplier to the new supplier. We have completed documentation for the retention fee process and reviewed requirements for registration system development, meaning we are ready for CODEC onboarding.

2.12   A full session is scheduled for the Board Workshop to provide a more comprehensive overview of the Programme.

People Update

2.13   Following Board approval in December of the cost-of-living increase for all staff as part of the pay review and performance reward process, pay review letters were sent to all staff on the 19th of December. We will be carrying out an analysis of the pay award process for the People Committee in February and update the Board thereafter.

2.14   As we start the New Year, we will be progressing with our implementation of the Perform Module moving the performance management system online, further updates will be provided in due course in terms of briefing staff and Board members.

International Updates

2.15   We are continuing to undertake due diligence work before determining whether we can begin drafting a recognition agreement with the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP). We will be visiting SACAP and other key stakeholders to gather additional information and intelligence to inform our due diligence work and decision in mid February 2026. We will be using funding secured through the Department for Business and Trade's Ricardo Fund to support the visit which will include an independent external expert.

Governance Updates

2.16   Recruitment for the temporary architect Board member roles, which will need to be filled on 1 March 2026, remains on track and is nearing completion. The Board will be considering the Panel's recommendations regarding the appointments under a later item on the agenda for 21 January 2026.

3. Resource Implications

3.1. There are no specific resource implications arising from the Chief Executive's report.

4. Risk Implications

4.1. Risks relating to each of the initiatives set out in this paper have been considered separately, either as part of specific Board papers and discussions, or incorporated into project, programme or corporate risk registers.

5. Equality and Diversity implications

5.1. There are no specific EDI implications arising out of this paper, however a number of key strategic priorities are either directly or indirectly designed to support and promote EDI.

5.2. Our international work will directly have an impact on the diversity of the registrant population. The same applies to our education reform work, particularly looking at Professional Practical Experience.

6. Recommendations

6.1. The Board is asked to note this paper.