

**Subject** **Communications Annual Report 2018**  
**Purpose** **For Note**  
**From** **Kate Howlett - Communications Lead**

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## 1. Summary

To note the Communications Annual Report 2018.

## 2. Open Session

## 3. 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
- Support architects through regulation

ARB's previous *Communication Strategy*, applicable to 2018, featured Communication aims and areas of focus. It was agreed by the Board at its meeting on the 12 February 2014.

Communication objectives were also agreed as part of the *2017/2018 Business Plan*.

This report focuses on the delivery of Communication aims and objectives in 2018 in order to demonstrate how these objectives were met. The *Report on Delivery of 2017/2018 Business Plan* will give details of all of ARB's activities in 2018.

## 4. Key Points

- i. Effective communications support our reputation as a trusted, independent regulator of UK architects and source of public information. It is an important part of the success of the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and integral to some of our organisational priorities.
- ii. Prior to 2018, the Communications Lead role was a part-time position. In February 2018 a new individual joined the ARB team as Communication Lead, to take forward the role in a full time capacity.
- iii. Despite the change in personnel and unanticipated demands on wider organisational resources, communication outputs such as our social media content,

Annual Report and periodic eBulletins have been maintained.

- iv. The Communications function has also supported significant activities such as Brexit and the recruitment of our new Board, and is leading on the Stakeholder Research project initiated last year and ongoing in 2019.
- v. There has been increasing focus on the profession and our activities. We need to be able to respond effectively to this increased scrutiny and ensure ongoing public, professional and governmental trust in our activities.
- vi. Looking forward, it will be important to be clear on how Communications align with ARB's strategic objectives and for us to have a robust understanding of our stakeholders. We need to build a strong operational and procedural foundation for the function, where internal roles are clearly defined, impact is routinely measured and decisions are evidenced based.

## **5. Resource Implications**

Communications objectives are included in our *Business Plan for 2019* and have been factored into the 2019 budget.

## **6. Risk Implications**

The reputation and success of ARB is impacted by what we deliver as well as how we communicate and engage with those who have an interest in its work. Inadequate or inappropriate communication presents a strategic and reputational risk.

## **7. Communication**

In addition to an Annual Report, regular updates are provided to the Board at each Board meeting via the Operational Activities Report. Policy and strategy documents related to the Communications function are available in the Publications section of our website and/or staff handbooks.

## **8. Equality and Diversity Implications**

Our communications will support ARB's broader Equality & Diversity activities and will continue to be based on the principle of promoting equality of opportunity, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion, belief system, sexual orientation or age.

## **9. Further Actions**

A session on Communications will form part of the Board's induction plan and will cover the *Communications Strategy 2019*.