

## Minutes of Board Meeting held on 15 September 2016

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Location	Present	In Attendance
8 Weymouth Street London W1W 5BU	J Bill, C Bernstein, P Coe (Chair), A Jago, R Levenson, G Maxwell, S McCarthy, R Parnaby, S Roaf, D Walker, S Ware , N Watts, A Wright, N Zulfiqar	K Holmes (Registrar) E Matthews M Stoner S Howard S Ison R Jones S Loukes (Minutes)

Note

Action

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### Open Session

#### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jagtar Singh.

*(Carol Bernstein was delayed in joining the meeting.)*

#### 2 Members' Interests

No members' interests were declared.

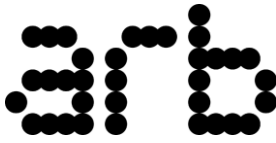
#### 3 Minutes

The Board approved the Open Session minutes of the meeting held of 14 July 2016, subject to the amendment regarding the seconder who supported approval of the Open Session minutes of 13 May 2016. It was agreed that Nabila Zulfiqar would second the proposal that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May be approved rather than Jagtar Singh on the basis that Mr Singh had not been present at the meeting held on 13 May 2016.

Proposer: Richard Parnaby

Secunder: Neil Watts

The recommendation was agreed unanimously.



#### 4 Board Resolution

**The Board approved the resolution regarding the updates to the membership of the Board's committees.**

**Proposer: Alan Jago**

**Secunder: Neil Watts**

**The resolution was agreed unanimously.**

#### 5 Matters Arising

*Carol Bernstein joined the meeting at this point.*

The Head of Qualifications and Governance was asked to provide a brief update on the status of the planned post-Board discussion on European matters/European notifications. It was noted that the post-Board discussion had been paused a number of times due to the availability of relevant speakers/other equally important issues arising which warranted discussion. The Board was reminded that the Prescription Committee received regular updates about EU matters, although it was noted that there was a good case for ensuring that all Board members were provided with the same information. It was agreed that a briefing/discussion session on Europe would be organised for all Board members following a Prescription Committee meeting later in the year. Board members were asked to provide details of areas they wanted to form part of the discussion.

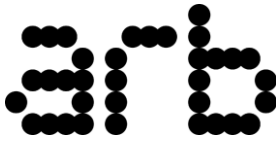
#### 6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised he had been settling into his new role which involved catching up with Board members and meeting with the Registrar and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) officials.

The Chairman advised that he had written to the Minister to introduce himself as the new Chairman of the Board and suggested they also meet in person.

The Chairman also informed the Board that he would be meeting the RIBA with the Registrar in early October 2016 for a liaison meeting.

The Board was also advised that the DCLG's appointment process for new Board members would begin in October and that there would be an information evening for prospective applicants after the November Board meeting; Board members



would be advised further when more information is available.

The Chairman advised the Board he would also be providing a written report in future.

## **7 ARB's Operational Activities**

The Operational Activities Report was noted by the Board.

A Board member asked about the briefing session with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The Head of Qualifications and Governance confirmed the briefing session had provided an update on the QAA's revised role and remit. The QAA had been made aware that the Board would be looking at its UK Routes to Registration and, given that the ARB, the QAA and the RIBA held the Criteria/the core of the Subject Benchmark Statement for Architecture in common, all parties will be invited to any discussions involving the Criteria.

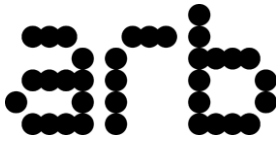
A question was asked about ARB's proposed work with the Architects Benevolent Society (ABS); the Registrar advised this would involve signposting to the ABS where applicable, who offered a wide range of support to individuals in the architectural profession.

## **8 Management Accounts 2016**

The Head of Finance & Resources presented this paper. The Management Accounts were noted by the Board.

A Board Member asked why the training of examiners had been moved from October 2016 to early 2017. The Head of Finance & Resources advised this was because ARB was currently recruiting for new Examiners and Independent Examiners therefore it was considered more appropriate to train everyone together. The Board was advised this would not affect the capacity of dealing with prescribed exams.

A Board member queried the rent negotiations and the Head of Finance & Resources confirmed the rent for the next 4 years had been agreed. The Operational Management Group was congratulated on the conclusion of the negotiations and the good value they had achieved which was at the lower end of the budgetary scale.



## **9 Periodic Review Update**

The Registrar provided an update from the DCLG regarding the Periodic Review. The DCLG had advised that the report was being reviewed following the Referendum and that it intended to publish the report in the autumn.

A Chairman asked the Board to feedback any information they had about the impact that the Referendum outcome was having on architects/the profession to the Registrar.

### **MATTERS FOR DECISION**

## **10 Attendance Allowance and Travel Subsistence**

The Chair of the Remuneration Committee introduced the Report and reminded Board members the Agenda item had been deferred from the July Board meeting. It was reported that the DCLG had since provided benchmarking information which had been considered by the Remuneration Committee.

A number of Board members were concerned with the lack of transparency over the recommendation to introduce reading allowance and it was suggested that if the reading time was to be introduced then it should be made clear that it is an interim measure.

### **The Board agreed that:**

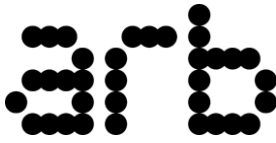
- i. There would be no change to the attendance allowance rates for Board members, Committee members, Panel members and Advisors for 2017.**

**Proposer: Richard Parnaby**

**Seconder: Guy Maxwell**

**11 Board members supported the recommendation, 2 Board members voted against the recommendation and 1 Board member abstained.**

- ii. A pay and job specification review should be carried out for all ARB roles undertaken (non-staff), including exploration in to the possibility of introducing Dependant Carers Allowances.**



**Proposer: Suzanne McCarthy**

**Secunder: Sue Roaf**

**The recommendation was agreed unanimously.**

- iii. The existing reading time policy for Board members should be extended, as outlined in Annex A, with effect from 1 October 2016.**

**Proposer: Richard Parnaby**

**Secunder: Danna Walker**

**9 Board members supported the recommendation, 2 Board members voted against the recommendation and 3 Board members abstained.**

- iv. Reading time for Examiners and Independent Examiners will be introduced in Annex A with effect from 1 October 2016. The Prescribed Examination fee paid by applicants should continue to be self-financing, with the savings identified in the areas of training and recruitment for 2016/2017 to be used to fund the additional costs for the remainder of 2016 and 2017.**

**Proposer: Richard Parnaby**

**Secunder: Guy Maxwell**

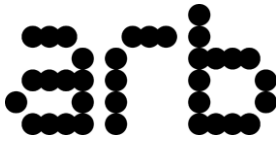
**13 Board members supported the recommendation, no Board members voted against the recommendation and 1 Board member abstained.**

- v. The travel and subsistence policy will remain the same, pending a review of the policy and rates, any recommendations to amend the rates and policy will be brought to the November meeting.**

**Proposer: Suzanne McCarthy**

**Secunder: Nabila Zulfiqar**

**The recommendation was agreed unanimously.**



## 11 Investment Policy

The Head of Finance & Resources presented the paper to the Board, which recommended diversification from the Board's current equities portfolio to include Europe and the USA markets. The recommendation was made by the Board's Investment Broker in order to lower the risk within this part of the Board's overall portfolio.

The Board raised a number of concerns about the economy within Europe and the USA, especially around currency fluctuations and the forthcoming Presidential Elections. The conversation focused on the UK economy and concerns around the impact of Brexit.

The Board discussed their responsibilities in relation to investments. A number of Board members stated that they did not think it was appropriate for the Board to speculate with the monies it held.

One member raised a concern as to why the Board wanted to go against the recommendation of a Professional Investment Advisor.

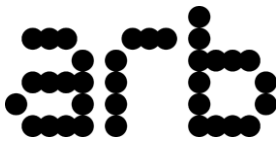
The Head of Finance & Resources confirmed he had been guided by the advice of the Broker who had advised that the equities portfolio is not high risk.

A Board member made the point that it was important to establish whether part of the reserves should be used for investment or whether the funding should be ring fenced under the lower risk strategy.

A Board member said that the investment strategy should not be looked at in isolation and that the Board should also be linking the decision with the Business Plan and on-going priorities.

After further discussion the Board concluded that the level of risk they were currently taking within the policy, which is Lower/Medium, was too high. The Board voted to change to remove point 2 of the Investment policy, to achieve growth within the capital, with lower to medium risk.

The Board requested that the Head of Finance and Resources explore options with the Investment Broker, based on the revised strategy, and report back to the Audit Committee on the risks associated with the change and potential options for lowering the risk. The Board requested that a report be brought to the November Board meeting, where the Investment Broker would be in attendance.



**The Board agreed that changes should be made to the Board's current strategy and its approach should be:**

- **Protect the real value of capital; and**
- **Maintain required liquidity**

**The Head of Finance and Resources would inform the Board's Investment Broker of the Board's decision; the impact of the change in strategy should be discussed by the Audit Committee. The final recommendation would then be brought back to the Board in November for a final decision to be taken.**

**Proposer: Sue Roaf**

**Secunder: Alex Wright**

**12 Board members voted in favour of the recommendation, no Board members voted against the recommendation and 2 Board members abstained.**

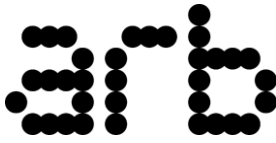
## **12 ARB Statement of Priorities 2017 – 2020 and 2017 Business Plan**

The Registrar introduced the paper and advised the Operational Management Group had taken on board the feedback received from Board members since July/ following the informal budget briefing discussions and made adjustments to the draft documents accordingly.

The Registrar noted that the Board may wish to defer consideration as to whether to separate out a review of its approach to Section 4(1)b from the main Routes to Registration review as a context session was being delivered following the Board meeting. If after the session, the Board felt it appropriate to separate out a review of its approach to Section 4(1)b of the Architects Act, it was suggested that an updated version of this particular part of the Business Plan could be brought back to the Board in November for further consideration and debate.

One Board member suggested the ARB Purpose and Objectives statement should be reviewed and redrafted as the text regarding professional integrity was lost in the further two statements. The Registrar confirmed that she had noted the comments and the statement would be looked at in due course, perhaps at a Board Development Session.

A Board member made the point that section F of the Statement of Priorities 2017-2020 regarding Key Performance Indicators focused primarily on outputs; it was felt that this missed out some important details about the impact of ARB's work, which should also form part of the monitoring of the achievement of the Business Plan and Statement of Priorities'.

**The Board :**

- i) agreed the statement of priorities 2017 – 2020;**
- ii) agreed the 2017 Business Plan**
- iii) noted that the Business Plan may need to be reconsidered if the Board decides to prioritise a review of Section 4(1)b of the Architects Act and**
- iv) noted that a review of priorities may be required once the outcomes of the Periodic Review are known.**

**Proposer: Suzanne McCarthy**

**Secunder: Danna Walker**

**The recommendations were agreed unanimously.**

### **13 2017 Registration Fees and other Fees**

The Head of Registration presented this paper and outlined the fees structure for 2017. It was agreed that the table for 4(a) Reinstatement to the Register after non-payment under two years required adjustment due to some miscalculations.

**The Board agreed:**

- i) no change to the current fees, as illustrated in Annex A**

**Proposer: Ros Levenson**

**Secunder: Soo Ware**

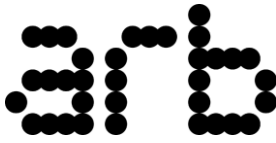
**The recommendation was agreed unanimously.**

### **14 2017 Budget, Reserves and Annual Retention Fee**

The Head of Finance & Resources presented this paper. The Board was advised the proposal was to hold the retention fee at the 2016 level of £107 which was discussed in detail at the budget briefing sessions and the one to one sessions. He went on to explain the budget reflects the conversations and feedback from Board members at the budget briefing.

One Board member asked if ARB could assist architects going through financial hardship. The Registrar confirmed ARB could not offer financial assistance and confirmed this was a matter that would form part of on-going discussions with the Architects Benevolent Society.





One Board member asked about the forecasting process and was advised by the Head of Finance & Resources that this was based on the information that ARB had available at the particular point in time.

**The Board agreed:**

- i) agreed to hold the annual retention fee at the 2016 level of £107.00; and**
- ii) agreed the budget for 2017 as shown in Annex A, column 5.**

**Proposer: Richard Parnaby**

**Seconder: Neil Watts**

**The recommendation was agreed unanimously.**

**MATTERS FOR NOTE**

**15 Review of Routes to Registration**

The Head of Qualifications & Governance confirmed there was nothing to report.

**16 Communications Annual Report**

The Registrar introduced the report and the Communications Lead was available to answer any questions.

The Board commended the Report and considered the progress made in this area a real success. The Board also referred to how helpful they found the Communications Round Up and Press Cuttings which were circulated on a weekly basis.

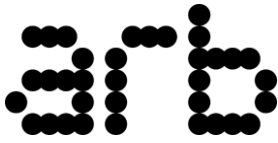
One Board member said that it would be beneficial to use the e-bulletin to inform registrants of the reach ARB has achieved in this area.

Some discussion followed about the communications tools used and the consideration which is being given to monitor impact rather than simply reporting outputs.

**17 Minutes**

The Board noted the draft minutes of:

- i. Remuneration Committee Meeting 24 August 2016



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**18 Any other Business**

One Board member raised the results of the recent AJ Survey of UK architects and students needing to seek help regarding wellbeing/mental health issues, including workload and debt.

Some discussion followed concerning ARB's potential to provide assistance in this area, including interaction with universities and undertaking research to ascertain what other organisations do in this area. It was agreed to refer the matter to the Prescription Committee for further consideration.

**19 Date of next Board Meeting**

Thursday, 24 November 2016