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| Subject | Chair's Report |
| Status | Open Session |
| Purpose | For Note |
| From | Chair |

1. Board Member Appointments

2. Board Appraisals – Chair's Overview

Background

2016 has been a year in which we have seen a number of changes in the Board's membership; we were carrying one vacancy for an appointed member; and two appointed Board members, which included the Chair, left the Board due to the completion of their tenures - one at the end of March 2016 and another at the end of July 2016. Their replacements joined us on 1 April and 1 August respectively. The quadrennial architects' election was also held in early 2016, and while three members were re-elected, the election resulted in four new architect members joining the Board. In addition, the tenureships for two of our appointed members were also due to be reviewed and renewed.

Given the changes, the outgoing Chair undertook the appraisals for the two appointed members, whose tenureships were due to be renewed, as these needed to be undertaken in the middle of the year; in order to meet the requirements of the Department for Local Government's reappointment process. Having taken up the position of Chair with effect from mid-July last year, I then undertook the remaining Board members' appraisals between September and December.

As I will also be leaving the Board in March 2017, I was not appraised at the end of 2016 as would typically be the case for the Chair. I will however, be participating in an exit discussion with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) nearer the time of my departure from the Board. I will also offer the two additional appointed Board members who are due to leave the Board in March 2017 the opportunity of an exit discussion before they leave their roles.

Overall Board Performance during 2016

The Board, despite the changes to its membership, has continued to operate efficiently and collectively during 2016, with newer Board members quickly finding their feet and becoming established in their roles. The Board has continued to deliver its core functions against the background of the on-going Government Periodic Review.

Induction Programme for New Board Members

All of the new members of the Board provided very positive feedback regarding the nature and content of the induction process. While there are still some additional follow up activities to arrange, e.g., visits to practices and schools of architecture, to which Board members are looking forward, Board members commented that they felt well prepared for their roles and are looking forward to learning more about ARB and the context within which it works, during the coming year.

Suggestions for improvement and action points

As well as looking back over the last year, the appraisal process also focusses on the future, including where improvements can be made in the future. Amongst the suggestions were the following:

Succession planning for 2017 onwards

A number of Board members recognised that succession planning would be important given the additional turnover of appointed members in 2017. This has been picked up through the 2017 appointment process and the Chairs of the Committees already have begun discussing the future membership of the Board's committees. Further conversations will be held in the coming months to ensure the committees continue to be populated with the right balance of experience and expertise.

Opportunities to spend more time together

Several Board members commented that they would welcome more opportunities to get to know one another; discuss matters informally and where appropriate develop their learning and understanding of the issues the Board needs to deal with in smaller groups. We are looking at the 2017 programme of pre and post Board meeting discussion sessions to facilitate this; Committee level workshops/briefing sessions will also be arranged throughout the year and where they can be accommodated; the Board will also be taking part in a development day in mid-2017.

Continue to develop the Board's approach to strategic planning

Some Board members observed that they would welcome an opportunity to build upon and continue developing the Board's approach to strategic planning. Given the recent and upcoming changes to the membership of the Board, and given that this is a key function of any effective Board, we will look at making this one of the topics which forms part of the Board's development day agenda. I had hoped that we would start such strategic discussions during February and March 2017. In the autumn of 2016, however, DCLG required that the Board should not commence discussion on access to the profession and routes to registration as the UK approach to future negotiations on the Single Market and MRPQD is still evolving.

Conflicts of interest

This remains an important and live topic. The Board discussed this at its development day earlier in 2016; we will, however, continue to work on this during 2017 so that we can develop further, concise advice and guidance in relation to this area.

Conclusions

Despite the changes to the Board's membership over the last year, the Board has quickly developed into a cohesive unit, with the newer members already making strong contributions. This will stand the Board in good stead for the additional changes to the membership which will take place in April 2017, as well as the upcoming challenges which will include dealing with the outcomes of the Periodic Review and the UK's discussion about departure from the European Union. The support that I have received from individual Board members and the Staff team during the last six months has been immeasurable. I have every confidence that the Board will continue its development as a robust body which is able to deliver its statutory functions effectively and efficiently in the future, and I look forward to handing over to the next Chair.