



MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

DATE OF MEETING: Friday 19th January 2024
TIME: 11.00 am – 3.00 pm
VENUE: GUILDHALL OFFICES, LONDON (HYBRID)

PRESENT (In person and online)

First Name	Surname	Officer
Sara	Cameron	ACES President
Alan	Richards	ACES Junior Vice-President
Helen	Stubbs	ACES Immediate Past President
Trevor	Bishop	ACES Secretary
Betty	Albon	ACES Editor
Chris	Hewitt	ACES Treasurer
Neil	Webster	ACES Head of Engagement
Neil	McManus	Member of Council
Andrew	Stirling	Member of Council
Chris	Rhodes	Member of Council
Keith	Jewsbury	Member of Council for Retired Members
Willi	Martin	Member of Council for Retired Members
Marcus	Perry	Branch Liaison Officer
Simon	Hughes	Liaison Officer for DLUHC
Jeremy	Pilgrim	Liaison Officer for Strategic Asset Management
Lee	Dawson	Liaison Officer for Strategic Asset Management
Daniella	Barrow	Liaison Officer for RICS
Malcolm	Williams	Liaison Officer for Post Graduate Courses
Chris	Brain	Liaison Officer for Valuation
Ellen	Atkin	Liaison Officer for Valuation
Andrew	Stirling	Member of Council - Heart of England Branch
Kevin	Moore	Member of Council - Heart of England Branch
Neil	Simon	Member of Council - London Branch
Ade	Adebayo	Member of Council - London Branch

Paul	Edgeworth	Member of Council – North West Branch
David	Baird	Member of Council – Scottish Branch
Gerry	Devine	Member of Council – Welsh Branch

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Gillian Boyle, Sam Partridge, Charlie Field, Robert Harkness, and Clive Ball.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28th July 2023 in Birmingham (and online) were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

None arising.

1486 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President reported on her activities since the last meeting.

It was a fairly quiet period of time since the AGM although lots of invitations to meetings were coming in and filling up the diary. The President referred to the various meetings she had attended including a number with RICS, Eastern Branch and Avison Young and plenty more were in the diary for the next few months.

A detailed report from the President is published on the ACES website.

1487 SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary reported on matters arising during the period since the last Council meeting. He provided the latest statistics on membership which showed a healthy increase in membership numbers over the last 12 months during which we reached the milestone of over **400** members which had not been achieved for several years. There was very recently a slight drop to 408 from the peak of 412 members, this likely due to the membership invoices going out in December.

On subscriptions, the Secretary confirmed that at the time of reporting, over **44%** of invoices sent out in December 2023 had been paid producing an income of approximately **£20,600** out of a total due of around **£46,800**. This was slightly better than the same time last year and the Secretary put this partly down to members being quicker in providing purchase orders and the greater acceptance of online payment.

The Secretary also noted that the Treasurer and he had had detailed discussions recently on the acquisition of a new invoicing system with a view to making things less time consuming for the Secretary and this would be reported for approval at a later date, preferably before the next bulk invoicing.

The Secretary briefly referred to the successful Conference in York last year and feedback from members on attendance again referring to time, distance and cost as influential factors. Mention was also made of the National AGM held in Edinburgh in November. Special thanks were extended to Graeme McGartland who helped enormously with the arrangements and the new President gave an excellent address followed by an enhanced Awards for Excellence ceremony.

Finally, the Secretary confirmed the appointment of Alan Richards as Junior Vice President for the Association.

A detailed report from the Secretary is published on the ACES website.

1488 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Treasurer presented his report on the financial position of the Association.

He tabled an updated management accounts document which showed a Statement of Receipts and Payments together with a Statement of Financial Position.

He talked through the single page format which looked at the last six months so far this financial year. As previously reported the overall picture was healthy with a good mix of income and expenditure, strong financial reserves and a good net surplus from operations, although there was still significant reliance on the SAM Diploma income.

The key headline coming out of the report in this format was that the income from subscriptions, Corporate Membership and the Sam Diploma exceeded the operating and other costs by nearly £20,000 in the last six months, albeit that some expenditure items were outstanding. It was noted again that nearly a third of the total income was derived from the SAM Diploma course.

Questions were raised from the floor on the treatment and allocation of the income from Corporate Members and adding a column to the accounts to show the expenditure and income against budget figures. The Treasurer agreed to look at these items.

Reference was also made to the production of a 3 to 5 year Financial Strategy which had stalled recently. It was noted that the Business Plan drives the financial strategy and this needed to be revisited to determine what the associations priorities were for the future. The president agreed that a task finish group needed to be established to look at this. Neil Webster and Willie Martin volunteered to be on this.

The latest accounts from the Treasurer are published on the ACES website.

1489 REPORT OF HEAD OF ENGAGEMENT

The Head of Engagement talked through his detailed report on matters arising during the period since the last meeting.

He updated Council on a number of matters including the Public Sector Forum with the Estates Gazette which was a good outward facing initiative and looking for good examples from members of public/private developments; a call to arms from members for good examples of public office developments that have been part of regeneration schemes; the next away day under the FACES initiative and other events that are being arranged where member assistance is being sought – volunteers requested please.

Neil also made reference to the Social Media work he was leading on and the news that the current assistance was falling away (due to a job promotion). This meant that the President was, by default, our social media guru for the time being. Again, Neil put out a request to members for ideas for future resourcing of the social media management role as it was considered worthwhile for the organisation.

The detailed report from the Head of Engagement is published on the ACES website.

1490 CONSULTATIONS

The Senior Vice President was not able to attend the meeting but the President advised that Dan was working on a rural consultation and that he would report further on this due course.

1491 ACES' TERRIER

The Editor, Betty Albon, reported that the latest edition of the Terrier had just gone out for printing but she had nothing further to report at the present time (in other words, all going extremely well as usual).

1492 CORE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Secretary reported that the Core Management Team had met a few days previously to discuss items to bring forward to Council for notification or for approval as necessary.

The following actions and decisions had taken place requiring endorsement or approval of Council:

AGM 2024

The SVP had given good early consideration to this event and it was proposed that London should be the location and probably RICS HQ where a previous AGM had been successfully held. He will make contact with the London Branch for assistance and ultimately then approach the RICS for cost indications for approval of Council.

Data Management

CMT noted that the association held a lot of data on members and others such as CM's, Terrier contributors and supporters and more recently, individuals from the FACES community following Neil Webster's successful roll out and non-members that have joined webinars that ACES have organised with Corporate Members for example. It was recognised that the association needed to comply with GDPR across all its databases, and other records, including information held by the ACES Branches, and achieving a single, well managed central database should be the ideal target. In this context, the Secretary, Treasurer and Head of Engagement were tasked with exploring improvements in our data management system to ensure continuing compliance, security and member accessibility to their records.

Social Media

As noted above, the person appointed to look into our social media operation was no longer available and CMT confirmed it was appropriate to re-appoint a person to continue the work.

Future Invoicing

Again, as noted above, in view of the inefficiencies of the current invoicing systems, particularly for membership subscriptions, CMT agreed that the Treasurer and Secretary should continue to explore a new invoicing package to cover everything we do, for subsequent approval.

Secretary's Workload

The Secretary had reported to CMT his increasing workload and had started to look at individual packages of work that could be put out to an "assistant secretary". The most obvious element of work that could be done autonomously was Conference Co-ordinator (as it had been put out previously) and CMT authorised the secretary to develop this further and particularly to ensure, where possible, that "double counting" was avoided.

Council endorsed and approved the actions taken by CMT.

1493 REVIEW OF CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP AND TREATMENT OF INCOME

Discussion took place on this item which had been raised at the AGM in Edinburgh.

Details were requested about the current make up of CMs, the income received, the packages available and how the income was allocated. The current package of benefits derived from Corporate Membership were displayed for information and the Secretary talked through the key elements of the agreement. It was noted that the resourcing of dealing with matters had been made difficult in the absence of a dedicated Sponsorship Officer. The Head of Engagement however, undertook to prepare and circulate a more detailed report on the situation together with appropriate documents (updated as appropriate) as soon as possible to give members time for further consideration prior to the next meeting. It was proposed from the floor that the report should include a review of the packages to ensure they are current, a spreadsheet showing what each Corporate Member is paying and what they get in return and a breakdown of the proposed allocation of funds to support the key priorities of the association.

It was re-affirmed that an officer was required to pick this matter up working with the Head of Engagement.

1494 ACES CONSTITUTION – PROPOSED CHANGES

The Immediate Past President, Helen Stubbs, advised on progress being made with the proposed changes to the Constitution.

Comments were requested after the report to the AGM and a number of responses prompted further consideration of additional changes. However, for personal reasons Helen was not able to fully review and proof read the changes in time for this meeting. She undertook to pick up in the next few weeks with a view to presenting a fully considered report and revised constitution to the next Council meeting.

1495 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

The President advised on the latest position with regard to the 2024 Conference. The primary location is intended to be Norwich and the President has made enquiries of Norwich City Football Club amongst other venues. It was accepted that decisions on venues needed to be made at an early stage.

Initial conversations have been held with speakers and Corporate Members and the theme is focussing on Decarbonisation and Net Zero. Discussions are also in hand with the Eastern Branch in terms of support and making presentations on their ACES Awards for Excellence successes in 2023.

The President is also particularly keen to include the FACES cohort in the event.

The format is likely to be similar with a one day conference event, formal dinner the night before and an informal evening meal on the conference day to close the conference.

1496 AGM 2024

In the absence of the Senior Vice President, the Secretary referred to his earlier comments on progress being made with the arrangement for the national AGM this year.

1497 ACES AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE 2024

Discussion took place on encouraging members to submit entries to the RICS awards, in order to raise the profile of the public sector, and as a precursor for submissions for the ACES awards this year. It was also noted that social media (primarily LinkedIn) was being used to promote the 2023 winners and again prompt ideas for 2024 submissions. It was also

understood that the SVP was considering further extending the range of awards for the AGM in 2024.

1498 ASSET MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Malcolm Williams updated members on the SAM diploma course which continued to go very well with the help of the ACES members carrying out the presentations in a professional manner.

Malcolm advised that at the time of writing, 182 students will have taken the Diploma Course to date.

Applications are now coming in for the next iteration which starts in February and interest is modest so a bit of a push for candidates will be required.

Discussions are ongoing with CIPFA to broaden the market for the SAM Diploma Course and look at modifications of the course to capture different levels of learning. Contact is also being made with the NHS to understand their needs and consider a new offering of a similar course accordingly and one that is not already being provided to the NHS.

1499 RACES/HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE (IHOPE)

The Secretary reported that whilst some tentative interest had been expressed in taking over the iHope initiative from Derek Rowell, a definite volunteer was still being sought from the membership. It was noted that the proposal remains to establish a task team to take this on rather than an individual. It was considered by the President that someone from FACES could assist with some research on iHOPE and the Head of Engagement agreed and suggested the Award for Excellence winner as a possibility.

1500 CO-ORDINATORS, BRANCHES & EXTERNAL WORKING GROUPS

Liaison Officer and Branch reports were received, and these have been published on the ACES website for the information of all members. Once again, thanks went to the Liaison Officers for their efforts in producing detailed and topical reports which are appreciated by members and to the Branches for submitting reports on their activities.

It was noted that it was still early days with regard to the Liaison Groups that had now been set up and how these would work together. The Secretary will pick up this matter.

Daniella Barrow provided information in liaison with RICS and said that relationships continued to improve with new personnel at RICS. Key areas being addressed with RICS are the Public Sector Forum, early engagement of people into surveying, healthy buildings and diversity, inclusion and sustainability. Following the appointment of Marcus Perry as Branch Liaison Officer, it is proposed to share details of branch meetings with RICS so that they can tap into them through regional contacts. There was a general agreement around the table that relationships with RICS had improved particularly at the regional level. There was however an expectation that better engagement with the RICS would lead to tangible benefits for members and the public sector in general. The President, Daniella and Neil will continue to feed back on this, particularly following the Public Sector Forum.

Chris Brain gave a verbal update on valuation matters and the Treasury consultation on non-investment valuations in the public sector. This proposes some changes to balance sheet valuations in the future. Chris asked if members wanted to respond to this now or wait for the revised CIPFA code later in the year. It was agreed to leave it until later in the year as most members were approaching year end. Ellen Atkin from the VOA offered to liaise with Chris at an early date in any event as they had been doing quite a bit of work on the consultation recently and Chris was grateful for the offer.

A number of Branch updates on key matters were provided at the meeting and late entries were added to the main report which is published on the ACES website. The status of missing reports did indicate that some branches needed more help than others and Marcus Perry was on the case.

The President thanked the Branches for their reports and verbal updates as appropriate which always gave interesting insights into things going on in the regions.

1501 FUTURE MEETINGS

ACES Council Meeting	26 th April 2024	Birmingham
ACES Council Meeting	12 th July 2024	Preston
Annual Conference	19 th September 2024	Norwich
ACES Council Meeting	October 2024	Online Meeting (TBA)
Annual Meeting	15 th November 2024	London

1502 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Daniella Barrow referred to The Public Sector Challenge on 6th September which involves scaling the “Yorkshire Three Peaks”. The event was in support of Cancer Research. It was considered good for ACES to put together a team and a number of volunteers tentatively raised their hands. Details to be circulated by Daniella.

Andrew Stirling referred back to changes to the constitution. He felt more mention should be made of the many initiatives introduced by the association over the last few years. It was also asked whether a review of membership categories was being considered. Helen confirmed a membership review was in the pipeline, particularly as a result of the developing FACES initiative, and the changes to the constitution were likely to take place in stages by way of an iterative approach. Helen also agreed to aim to bring “terms of reference” for a membership review to the next Council meeting.

Neil Webster advised that because so many issues were being looked at presently, we should put together a forward plan to ensure items that impacted on other matters, such as the constitution, were dealt with in the correct order and subject to a timetable culminating in major decisions at the AGM.

CPD: 3 hours informal.