



MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

DATE OF MEETING: Friday 26th April 2024
TIME: 11.00 am – 3.00 pm
VENUE: GPA OFFICES, BIRMINGHAM (HYBRID)

PRESENT (In person and online)

First Name	Surname	Officer
Sara	Cameron	ACES President
Dan	Meek	ACES Senior Vice-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
Willie	Martin	Member of Council for Retired Members
Marcus	Perry	Branch Liaison Officer
Jeremy	Pilgrim	Liaison Officer for Strategic Asset Management
Kevin	Moore	Member of Council - Heart of England Branch
Georgia	Cayton	Member of Council – North West Branch
Neil	Simon	Member of Council - London Branch
Ade	Adebayo	Member of Council - London Branch
David	Baird	Member of Council – Scottish Branch
Gerry	Devine	Member of Council – Welsh Branch

Before the meeting commenced, a period of silence was observed following the sad passing of ACES members David Mitchell and Tom Fleming, Past President.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Julie Blight, Lee Dawson, Chris Brain, Simon Hughes, Malcolm Williams, Daniella Barrow, Gillian Boyle, Sam Partridge, Chris Bandy. Paul Edgeworth, Charlie Field, Robert Harkness, Sarah Varley, Kevin Moore and Clive Ball.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19th January 2024 in London (and online) were read through and approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

None arising.

1503 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President reported on her activities since the last meeting.

It had been a busy time since the last meeting with various events and meetings involving RICS, GovProp, Women in Property Scotland, Local Authority Property & Estates Conference and others.

The President is working on fitting in all her branch visits over the course of the next few months along with other events planned for the year. Planning the Conference is high on her "to do" list and more on this later.

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

1504 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 continuing increase in membership numbers which now reached **416** at today's date. This was in the context of a large number of members in arrears which may result in a fall off at some point. Charts were displayed showing the increase in membership over the last 5 years and the number of members by category, showing a corresponding increase in full members.

On subscriptions, the Secretary confirmed that at the time of reporting, over **61%** of invoices sent out in December 2023 had been paid producing an income of approximately **£29,400** out of a total due of around **£48,300**. 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.

Discussion took place on improving the message to members about the value of ACES subscription, particularly CPD, in an effort to encourage speedier payment. It was commented that some analysis of the "themes" of non-payment might help inform targeted efforts. Keith Jewsbury offered to help with analysis of "themes" over the last few years. The Secretary, in response to a suggestion of "withholding services" to encourage payment, confirmed that this was in place where the website system locks out non-payers. Maybe the branches had a role in helping out, naming and shaming etc.

The Secretary also noted that the Treasurer and he had had further 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 in December. A well regarded package called Xero was looking like the front runner and a trial period was recommended. (The Treasurer added to this item in his report to Council).

The Secretary reported on work he had done in progressing support for the National Secretary in the form of an Assistant Secretary. He tabled his report which set out in detail the various and extended roles and duties of the National Secretary with ideas as to how this could be put out to potential support officers.

Discussion took place on the options for an appointment in terms of allocating work and level of support, method of advertising the opportunity and remuneration. General feeling was for an assistant secretary covering all roles would be beneficial for resilience and succession planning. A rename of the roles should be considered.

The Secretary undertook to make progress with the required job description and advertising proposals and this was approved by Council.

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

1505 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 over the last nine months together with a Statement of Financial Position.

The Treasurer talked through the single page format which looked at the last nine 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 significantly exceeded the operating and other costs, 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 payment of the branch subscriptions to branches as some relied heavily on the income. The Treasurer undertook to deal with this in the next four weeks or so.

The Treasurer also made reference to the insurance that had now been arranged to provide cover for the association and its officers and volunteers. Details to be placed on the website and relevant members informed in more detail.

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

1506 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 noted that the President and himself would be attending the UKREiiF event in May and was pleased to see that the "invite only" delegate list included a good number of Chief Executives, Heads of Regeneration, Executive Directors etc., which was really good for networking and exposure of ACES.

Neil mentioned the Public Sector Forum in May and asked all Council members to make an effort to attend or find out who in their organisation is as it was a good demonstration of what ACES was doing in partnership with others.

In discussion around the table, it was proposed and agreed that a brochure for potential Corporate Members could be progressed. The Editor advised that Marcus Macaulay would be able to convert supplied text into a suitable document.

Other key events and items were picked out from the report by the Head of Engagement and full details of ongoing and future issues are published in the report on the ACES website.

1507 CONSULTATIONS

The Senior Vice President reported on 8 consultations since the last meeting. He particularly thanked Chris Brain for his quick and helpful response to a recent CIPFA consultation on LA financial accounting in the UK. He noted that responses had been provided on a number of RICS consultations and, where appropriate, documents emerging from the results of consultations were posted on the ACES website.

1508 ACES' TERRIER

The Editor, Betty Albon, presented her report on a request for an increase in advertising rates for the Terrier. These had not been increased for a number of years and a modest increase was now necessary to maintain the aim of covering the production costs of the journal. The increase is also necessary as a good number of recent Terriers have extended to 100 pages which increases the printing and binding costs. There are nine advertisers in total, most of which had placed adverts in the journal for many years and likely to continue for some time.

The Editor also requested a bit of flexibility in setting the final tariffs if some advertisers should wish to negotiate.

It was suggested from the meeting that the rates should be reviewed every three years. It was also commented that we should continue to ensure advertisers get added value from the digital edition of the Terrier as well as the printed copy. There was consideration given to scope for more advertising in the Terrier beyond the typical surveying firms (e.g. ProMap, Tech Forge, CoStar, Energy firms, Concertus, etc.). The Editor referred to a long list of potential advertisers that was maintained and reviewed periodically and this could be looked at again with a view to putting a specific task to a volunteer or indeed grouping this work with exploring means of making the website more valuable for sponsors and advertisers, perhaps part of the new Assistant Secretary role.

The proposed new advertising rates were approved.

1509 CORE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Secretary reported that the Core Management Team had met from time to time 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:

- Approval of financial support (expenses claim in the sum of **£163.13**) for attendance at MiPiM by one of our FACES colleagues. Members will note a detailed article in the Spring Terrier submitted by the attendee.
- Approval of tax payment for 2022/23 financial year in the sum of **£69.92**.
- Endorsement of funding for the Public Sector Challenge event in September to enable ACES to be a supporting partner of the event and gain valuable exposure to other like bodies and to potential new members.

- Approval of basic insurance cover for the association and officers, to reduce potential risk exposure, in the sum of **£188.67** for the following covers:
 - Public and Products Liability
 - Employers' Liability
 - Trustees' and Directors' Indemnity.

The CMT will also give consideration to the benefits of adding cyber cover to the association's insurance.

- Approval of increase in the cost of website maintenance from July 2024 (increasing from £85/hour to £97/hour) subject to further advice from Marcus Macaulay. This has not been increased for some time and is in line with general price increases. Marcus Macaulay has previously advised that it is not cheap as we are locked in to the current website to some degree. In this regard, a renewal contract for no more for a year is proposed, during which we will explore options.

Core Management Team Terms of Reference

The Secretary reported that it was some four years since the Terms of Reference of the CMT were prepared. It was considered that not a great deal has changed in terms of the purpose and activities of the CMT but it was timely for Council to formally approve the Terms of Reference and the proposed financial delegated authority.

Council endorsed and approved the actions taken by CMT and approved the revised Terms of Reference with some minor amendments to the text.

1510 REVIEW OF CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP AND TREATMENT OF INCOME

The Secretary referred to the comprehensive report on Corporate Membership now tabled that had been prompted by the detailed discussions at the last ACES Council.

This comprised a review of the packages available to current and prospective Corporate Members, details of payments made to date and the benefits of taking up the CM packages, and a breakdown of the proposed allocation of funds to support the key priorities of the association.

A number of recommendations for approval by Council were presented particularly with regard to resourcing the future management of Corporate Members and other supporters of the association and the production of packages for Corporate Members for the next three years.

The President noted that she and Neil Webster had had encouraging conversations with the main existing CMs and these would be picked up again dependant on the approval of Council to this report and it's recommendations.

It was re-affirmed that further ACES Officer support was required to pick this matter up working with the Head of Engagement and the Secretary. The Secretary was tasked with refreshing the JD for the Sponsorship Officer (or such other title as agreed) as a job in its own right and bringing this forward for approval and advertising, probably at the same time as the Assistant Secretary. This would run alongside the forward strategy to be picked up by the President.

Council approved the recommendations in the report with an agreement that in item 3 the word "whether" be removed.

A copy of the detailed report is available for members to view on the website.

1511 ACES CONSTITUTION – PROPOSED CHANGES

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

Helen asked for some discussion on the mechanism for approving changes to the Constitution as the document was not clear or reflecting current practice and at risk of delaying decisions to the AGM every time. It was noted that in other organisations, minor changes could be made by special meetings convened regularly. The Constitution would have to be amended to accommodate a shift from special meetings that involved all members of the association having the ability to make changes (the current position) to special meetings of Council members only having the ability.

It was agreed that, notwithstanding the above, full Council should have a standing agenda item to discuss proposed changes to the Constitution.

After a number of attempts to fully understand the complexities and anachronisms of the Constitution, Helen considered that there was a limit to some of the changes she should make without wider involvement and knowledge and indeed a review of the whole document rather than specific elements.

It was agreed a property review of the Constitution should be of the whole document from start to finish and that an experienced and knowledgeable team now needs to be assembled to pick up the task of a thorough review. There was also some consensus that an outside expert (company secretary or solicitor) should be considered to perhaps give a final overall review of the changes proposed by a task team. A well respected fellow of the association was suggested and an approach would be made accordingly.

It was also agreed that the constitutional changes also need to run alongside the review of membership in order to avoid any changes in one review not being compatible with the other, with an aim for joint approval at the 2024 AGM.

The Treasurer raised the possibility that some changes to the Constitution were time critical, such as Barclays' interpretation of governance, and may need a special meeting before the 2024 AGM. It was agreed that these need to be addressed urgently.

There was also reference to the approval of the 2023 AGM that some modest changes to the Constitution that were presented to the AGM by Helen at the time, were delegated to ACES Council.

It was agreed and approved, therefore, that those items delegated to Council at the 2023 AGM are agreed by this Council and that a working group be commissioned to do a full line by line review of the Constitution and include appropriate future proofing for the next few years. This then to be reported to the 2024 AGM for approval.

The Immediate Past President also referred to the proposed Membership Review which, as noted above, needs to be conducted alongside the review of the Constitution. She reported on progress made to date with developing a Terms of Reference which was now tabled at the meeting. She proposed to chair a review panel which would comprise a diverse selection of the membership (ideally UK wide but not including the CMT) to thoroughly review the issues in the ToR and report to Council. There would be appropriate updates to Council before bringing back proposals to a full meeting.

1512 FORWARD PLAN 2024

The Secretary displayed a graphical document that had been jointly produced with Neil Webster to provide a visual representation of all the important tasks that need to be completed in chronological order and brought together before the 2024 AGM. This will be developed and updated and hopefully be used as an additional management tool.

1513 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

The President advised on the latest position with regard to the 2024 Conference to be held on 19th September. The primary location for the one day Conference was now confirmed as Norwich Castle and that the formal dinner on the evening before was proposed to be held at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich.

Detailed conversations had now been held with speakers and Corporate Members and the theme was focussing on Strategic Asset Management through a Net Zero Lens. Discussions were also in hand with the Eastern Branch in terms of support and making presentations on their ACES Awards for Excellence successes in 2023. The presentations and panel sessions will offer 6 hours CPD.

It was noted that a financial plan needed to be brought forward very soon now together with proposed fees for the conference day (including early bird discounts) and formal dinner so that members could understand the financial impact. This would also enable early “hold the date” communications. In view of the next Council being in July, a special Council to approve the financial plan was likely to be convened.

The President confirmed that her next main action would be to make arrangements for hotel accommodation, as well as any necessary transport to venues, which had been assisted by very helpful pre-visits to Norwich by Marcus Perry. The preference would be to select one or two hotels and arrange pre-bookings. A small number of defined hotels would also assist delegate networking.

The President also advised that it was her intention to use Eventbrite for the delegate bookings process as this had been used extensively in Eastern Branch and would take some pressure off the Secretary!

Marcus Perry provided brief details of the Social Programme, with an informal meal planned for the Thursday evening, he had started to put together and the President appreciated his assistance.

The Senior Vice President advised that he is looking at location options for the 2025 Conference with a view to giving members good advanced notice at the close of the 2024 Conference.

More details of the event are contained in the President’s Conference report on the website.

1514 AGM 2024

The Senior Vice President reported on progress being made with the arrangement for the national AGM this year and gave huge thanks to Neil Webster for his assistance in locating a venue at reasonable cost. All being well, the likelihood is Fieldfisher’s Offices in London. Other options were very expensive.

1515 ACES AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE 2024

The Senior Vice President reported on progress. He noted that this had now been formally launched and an additional Award had been added to the 2023 collection. Dan thanked the Editor for her help in bringing forward some examples from the Terrier and it was intended that communications and encouragement to submit nominations would be regular in the monthly E-briefings, LinkedIn, Branch Meetings etc,

1516 ASSET MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

In the absence of Malcolm Williams, the Secretary 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.

The President advised that she took the course earlier in the year and affirmed that it was an excellent course.

Council confirmed approval to the modest increase in the course fee from Autumn 2024 and that the reference to an “option” in the recommendation be removed.

1517 RACES/HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE (IHOPE)

The Secretary reported that, regrettably, little progress has been made in securing a volunteer from the membership to pick up this initiative.

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.

1518 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.

The Secretary referred to the helpful reports submitted by Gill Boyle on Regeneration/Housing and Sam Partridge on RICS Liaison.

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.

Dan Meek gave a verbal update on Rural Branch matters and the various meetings that he had attended during the year. Dan was pleased to have the opportunity to welcome the President and Marcus Perry to the meeting at Stoneleigh in May. A written report will be added to the main online report.

Neil Webster provided an update on matters taking place at the London Branch since the last Council meeting.

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

1519 FUTURE MEETINGS

ACES Council Meeting	12 th July 2024	Preston
Annual Conference	19 th September 2024	Norwich
ACES Council Meeting	16 th October 2024	Online Meeting
Annual Meeting	15 th November 2024	London

1520 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Willie Martin referred to the funeral of Tom Fleming and to let him know if any members wished to attend. Betty Albon advised that she was pursuing with Tom's family the possibility of live-streaming the funeral.

The President referred to the RICS Matrix Surveyor of the Year awards and asked members to consider nominations, particularly for any of our FACES cohort.

Alan Richards requested continuing marketing of the Public Sector Challenge in September via branch meetings and other means.

CPD: 3 hours informal.