RECORD OF A MEETING OF THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL
Held on 13th February 2014 at The Building Services Engineering Centre,
Balham, London SW12 9BS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Welcome

George Adams welcomed members to the meeting and drew attention to the Apologies for Absence that had been notified.

PATRONS WORKING MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH CIBSE

Chris Brown, co-ordinator of CIBSE Patrons, informed members that the Patrons Chairman David Fitzpatrick was unable to attend due to a prior commitment. David had taken over from Nick Mead as Chairman last year, and was keen to ensure that Patrons built on its success and worked effectively within the Institution.

Chris Brown went on to outline the membership of Patrons, which included all sectors of the industry as well as one or two recruitment companies, communications organisations and insurers. Prospective Patron companies were expected to explain how they wanted to contribute to the Scheme, beyond the financial cost, as the engagement of Patron companies in the work of the Institution was the prime objective.

The Scheme was set up to support the work of the Institution, and the key focus was on bringing young people into the industry and supporting YEN to keep young talent within the industry. Many activities had been focussed on education, with the majority of support channelled through CIBSE, but with some outside initiatives also being supported. The Scheme worked closely with the education and membership team, and with other staff and volunteers within the Institution.

Attention was drawn to the support given by Patrons to the Knowledge Portal, with a portion of the Patrons subscription going directly to this activity. The Patrons were keen to provide more technical input to the Knowledge Portal, with the opportunity for CIBSE to draw on the wide range of technical knowledge held in Patron companies.

CIBSE Patrons had also provided £10K, and technical input, towards the cost of developing BIM templates as part of the Institution’s overall BIM activities. A Technical Placement Scheme had also been introduced to provide developing engineers with the opportunity to gain experience in different parts of the industry, such as with consultants, contractors and manufacturers. Placements lasted up to 6 weeks, and four or five such placements had so far been facilitated. Arup, Atkins, Hays, Imtech and Ruskin were the companies currently involved, and Nick Mead (Imtech) confirmed that their experience of the scheme had been positive. It was hoped that more companies would become involved, and Council members were invited to consider this within their own companies.

In conclusion, Chris Brown stressed the commitment of the Scheme to work positively within CIBSE and encouraged those seeking Patrons support to look for a positive collaboration, rather than purely a request for financial assistance.

The President welcomed the presentation, and in particular the development of the Technical Placement Scheme. It was suggested that this could be promoted more widely by CIBSE itself, and that this might help address the fears of some companies that there could be a danger of staff being recruited elsewhere. It was noted that there were systems in place to deal with this concern, and it was pointed out that the commitment required by companies to accept placements was not as much of a problem as it might appear. It was suggested that this could be a suitable item for an article in the Journal, and that this would be suggested to the Editor.
It was suggested that some other European associations had placed much focus on their links with companies, and generated much more income and input through this channel. The role of manufacturers in creating innovation was pointed out, and the value to CIBSE of developing its links to manufacturers and increasing their input to the Institution was stressed. There was an opportunity for real strategic benefit, both financially and in terms of engagement.

GUIDE TO THE OPERATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

David Hughes addressed Council, referring to the historic importance of technical publications within the Institution, and to the more recent development of the Knowledge Portal as the primary vehicle for the delivery of technical knowledge.

He went on to outline the committee structure, with the KMC having overall responsibility, supported by the Knowledge Delivery Sub Committee – which oversaw the delivery of the programme of work – and the Knowledge Programme Sub Committee, which reviewed the core content of the Knowledge Portal and developed a programme of work for its renewal.

He went on to outline the role of the Higher Education Sector Working Group, which sought to further develop relationships with universities for the benefit of both the academic Institutions and CIBSE. This sought to encourage the production of technical material for use in a variety of ways, including BSER&T.

The work of the KPSC Working Group, which was concerned with the transition from traditional publishing to dynamic content delivery, was also explained.

Nick Peake then outlined the publications produced during 2013, noting that some had been produced through newer quicker systems. This needed to be developed, as the programme for 2014 included a much enlarged number of publications, and this was expect to continue as expectations for knowledge delivery continued to grow.

He went on to describe the success of the Knowledge Portal, drawing attention to the number of visitors and downloads, and it was noted that use of the portal continued to grow. The new CMS system would further enhance the value of the Knowledge Portal, with greater transparency and better engagement with the membership to make their contribution to the work of the Institution more effective. It was also hoped to encourage wider engagement with the Knowledge Portal, with people able to provide feedback through the Portal on CIBSE’s publications, which would itself become a source of knowledge and prioritisation for the Institution’s activities. The new CRM system would allow better collection of members’ areas of interests and specialisms would allow more to be learnt about willingness to volunteer and priorities for development.

David Hughes referred to the need to obtain more input from the membership, and pointed out recent successes in engaging with members from other parts of the world to support publications development. In particular, it was felt that Fellows of the Institution, being the most senior grade, could be very effective in contributing and reviewing publications. Carilyn Clements also referred to work being done to engage better with Fellows to draw on their knowledge and experience, and there was close liaison between KMC and this initiative.

The need to make CIBSE’s processes and committee structure more transparent on the new website was acknowledged, and the importance of input from the membership, and particular Fellows, to the peer review processes. The KP would effectively allow peer review to become a near continuous process, with feedback being provided in response to publication on the Knowledge Portal. This feedback would inform later revisions of publications. It was stressed that the status of publications would be presented in a structured way, with the distinction between peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed publications being made clear.
It was pointed out that universities had a need for good topics for projects at MSc level, and that the output of such work could inform CIBSE publications; examples were given of where this had occurred successfully.

It was noted that much exchange of information occurred on LinkedIn, and that this was technical information elsewhere in the CIBSE website, for example from the Technical Symposium, which could usefully be included in the Knowledge Portal. CIBSE monitored activity in the LinkedIn group, but there was a limit to the ability to bring in information from outside networks. This was being considered in the CMS and CRM project, and the integration of Social Media was a key issue that was being considered and addressed by all potential suppliers of the new CRM. It was noted that the new Website and CMS would go live in the first quarter of 2014, with the new CRM to be introduced late in the current year or early next year.

Regarding the schedule for updating peer reviewed information, the need to have a clear timeline for updates, particularly for expert witness work, was stressed. It was confirmed that this issue was appreciated, and there would be a date stamped archive so the status of guidance at different times would be clear. For urgent updates, a quicker route to updates, such as addenda, would be considered. The reliance of government regulations on CIBSE guidance had been a positive development, but this made the need for clear timelines important, and also the need to draw members’ attention to changes in guidance.

RIBA COLLABORATION

George Adams informed Council of developments in collaboration with the RIBA, which had been seen as a priority for the Institution. Stephen Matthews had regular contact at Chief Executive level, and George Adams had met a number of times with the RIBA President Stephen Hodder covering a variety of issues.

Three key areas for progress had been identified being Sustainability, Future Cities and collaboration. The first two needed further thought, but collaboration was being taken forward with a meeting of a range of built environment professional institutions held earlier in the week. An opportunity had been identified to offer a ‘virtual institution’ for those overseas, to bring together our collective knowledge on sustainability for the benefit of other countries. A further issue was BIM, and discussions were continuing on collaboration over a digital plan of work.

A number of other subjects had been identified for future work and collaboration.

Stephen Matthews confirmed that at the top level of RIBA, there appeared to be a clear desire to work more closely with the engineering profession and recognition of the vital importance of engineering in the modern world, as indicated by the comments of Mike Davies of Richard Rogers Partnership at the Building Performance Awards. The scope for contact and joint meetings at regional level was also pointed out.

INDUSTRY GROWTH / DIVERSITY

George Adams referred to the increasing focus on the issue of climate change and the adaptation of cities to meet future circumstances, as they became more complex and faced increasing populations.

As it appeared that climate targets were unlikely to be met, and that a global temperature increase above 2% was likely, there was a need to give serious consideration to dealing with the impact of climate change and in particular in terms of the existing building stock. In addition to global warming, the microclimate of cities was an increasingly important issue and there was a clear need to deal with increasing temperatures within cities. He did not believe that a way forward had yet been identified, and that there was a need for collaboration and for solutions to be identified by all professionals working in the built environment.
He drew attention to predictions of the cost of climate change impacts if no action was taken, which were extremely substantial, with one topical example being the impact of flooding. He invited views on how CIBSE could improve its commitment and advice, and strengthen its voice on the impact of climate change and strategies to deal with it.

It was suggested that collaboration was vital and that tools beyond traditional engineering, such as urban planting, were needed. The timing was right to raise the profile of this issue, noting the current flooding problems which now carried a greater risk than that of terrorism. Energy policy was also a key and problematic issue, as were energy costs. It was also becoming a health issue as well as one of carbon and energy.

It was noted that for cities such as London, the potential economic cost if these issues were not tackled included transport issues as well as a potential loss of inward investment. It was suggested that the Building Services profession was not always good at tackling issues that required master planning, due to the focus on individual projects; however there was much scope for improvement through strategies such as district heating. It was suggested that there was scope for involvement through the Heritage Foundation, and interest was expressed in following this up.

It was suggested that CIBSE should have a public message on this subject, possibly with the engagement of others such as RIBA and it was agreed that this would be appropriate and would be considered further with the involvement of Think Tank, the PR agency used by the Institution.

KEN DALE TRAVEL BURSARY

Carilyn Clements outlined the background to the Ken Dale Travel Bursary. Three awards had been made in 2013, to Kayley Lockhead, Katie Wallace and Angela Reid, due to the high calibre of entries, with extra support from the Richard Tully Fund.

Angela Reid had visited Beijing to look at the development of the athletes’ village from the 2008 Olympic games, which had involved a range of sustainability strategies and technologies. She then travelled to Sydney, Australia, where she visited a number of developments designed to set new world class sustainability standards, and finally to Vancouver to visit highly successful developments there.

Katie Wallace had investigated heat recovery systems in supermarkets, and had visited a conference in Washington, DC, followed by visits to Denmark and Switzerland, where there was a substantial focus on sustainability with Coop Switzerland being a world leader in sustainable technologies. Her final visit had been to Sweden.

Kayley Lockhead had visited Africa, including Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, attending conferences and visiting renewables projects, and investigating how energy poverty contributed to overall projects and how renewable energy could help.

Each bursary winner had written a substantial report, which were available on the CIBSE website, and all had expressed their appreciation of the opportunity provided. All the winners were potential presenters at regional meeting, and other ways of using the material were being considered.

Members were encouraged to let colleagues know about the Travel Bursary, and to promote applications for the 2014 award.
MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

It was noted that the issue of encouraging more input from Fellows had been raised and discussed earlier in the meeting under the Knowledge Management Committee item.

Stephen Matthews introduced Adam Firbank, the new CIBSE Director of Marketing, who informed Council of his background within marketing in the construction industry.

Regarding training for future leaders through the Young Engineers Network, George Adams reported that two one-day workshops had been arranged. One had taken place earlier in the current week in London with ten attending, and a further session in Leeds was arranged. The feedback received had been very good, and the principle of engaging with the potential future leaders of the Institution and the profession was considered to be highly important. Employers had been supportive of time being taken to attend the training.

Regarding the number of members who lapsed each year, it was suggested that members in their first year might be limited in their downloads from the Knowledge Portal however this was considered challenging and it was not clear that the Portal was being exploited in this way. A considerable amount of effort had been made to address this, and it was noted that a high proportion of lapsers were at the Student and Affiliate levels. It was noted that the Engineering Council annual data had recently been released and was yet to be fully analysed, however CIBSE appeared to be on one of only two Institutions performing strongly in terms of corporate members. It was however suggested that thought might be given to ways of tying members in more effectively. The potential for members to promote membership to their colleagues was also pointed out. It was also agreed that the number of lapsers should be analysed by grade, and it was noted that free membership for students inevitably involved a higher lapsing rate.

Stephen Matthews expressed the thanks of Council to George Adams for his chairing of the Council meetings held during his presidential year. It was noted that Peter Kinsella would become CIBSE’s first overseas President in May, and discussions were continuing as to how the chairing of Council would be undertaken for meetings which he could not attend in person.