

CIPR Council Meeting, Thursday 2 March 2023, 1000-1230, Zoom

Attendees:

Donna Castle, Rachael Clamp (Vice-President), Teela Clayton, Paul Compton, Alison Gallagher-Hughes, David Hamilton, Ruth Jackson, Binu Jacob, Matthew Knowles, Hayley Mace, Paula McNulty, Arlene McPhillips, Claire Melia-Tompkins, Rhian Moore, Rachel Roberts (Vice-President), Sarah Salter Nash, Steve Shepperson-Smith (President), Tim Walsh and Martyn Williams.

Apologies:

Naj Modak, Donald Steel, Jennifer Stirton, Crispin Thorold, Ben Veal and John Wilkinson.

In attendance:

Andrew Chamberlain (Elevated) for item 6.

Staff:

Claire Bloomer, Sukhjot Grewal, Sarah Ion, Alastair McCapra and Eva Mota.

Items

1. President's welcome

Steve started the first official Council meeting of the year, welcoming attendees and the new Council. He commented on Finance Committee notes, Appendix G, that we made a loss last year, which was unexpected, and will be discussed in detail by Board later. Alastair explained that this was really a management problem rather than a finance problem, and better forecasting was needed to obtain accurate figures in the future.

Steve reported his meeting with Alastair and Justin Green, the head of the Global Alliance this week. It was useful to understand more about how our relationship with Global Alliance worked, with activities, events and opportunities across both organisations. About updating the Global Capabilities Framework (GCF) to take account of AI, Steve said he would talk to Anne Gregory who both leads on our AI work, and also wrote the (GCF). Steve also mentioned his LinkedIn post earlier in the week about democratising the Sir Steven Tallents medal, welcoming suggestions for a medal recipient by the end of March.

2. Apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Ben Veal, Naj Modak, Donald Steel, Jennifer Stirton, Crispin Thorold and John Wilkinson.

Paul Compton declared that he was serving on the National Committee of FirePro, which is the membership body for fire rescue communicators, a not for profit body. He is no longer the chair and will be stepping down fully from the committee at the end of March.

3. Approval of 13 December 2022 meeting minutes

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the last meeting. David Hamilton proposed and Paula McNulty seconded.

4. Actions and Matters arising from December meeting

Matters arising

- a) Recommendations relating to the recruitment of Assessors – Council noted Jon White's paper and had no further comments on it.

Action Eva Mota to thank Jon White for the paper on behalf of Steve and Council.

b) Shirley Collyer introductions with Sukhjot Grewal

Action Sukhjot Grewal will be speaking to the International Committee in early April and will follow up with Shirley re introductions.

5. Proposals for governance change

Steve opened the discussion and Rhian observed that the role and purpose of the President still needed more clarity. He also shared Crispin's comments on whether 'President' was the right role description, and whether we were looking for a board chair who has less of the external public facing responsibilities and more focus on the governance responsibility.

Rachael Clamp suggested referring to the charter for focusing on direction and strategy.

Claire Melia-Tompkins observed that as all groups had a budget and a cost, but were not included in the paper.

On amendments for the governance paper circulated, Council agreed to put a note in 3.2 that we want to bring the Presidency in line with the overall planning framework.

Council also agreed to have Donna Castle, David Hamilton, Claire Melia-Tompkins, Paul McNulty and Jennifer Stirton join the CIPR Governance Working Group.

Action Governance Working Group to work further on the governance paper and clarify the role of the President.

6. Strategy Exercise led by consultant

Andrew Chamberlain, Chief Development Officer from @Elevated, joined Council for a strategy exercise. He split attendees into 6 groups and each one discussed one of the 6 bullet points from the CIPR Royal Charter.

Group 1: To promote for the public benefit high levels of skill, knowledge, competence, and standards of practice and professional conduct on the part of public relations practitioners.

Comments: Bringing Strategy and its development into a modern day meaning is key for our purpose going forward, and being clear about the fundamental purpose of the CIPR. First it is about promoting skills, knowledge and confidence; second is about standards of practice and conduct, which is the reason professional bodies exist - to make sure that those who are in the profession are doing it with good value the right way.

Group 2: To promote the study, research and development of the practice of public relations and publish or otherwise make available the useful results of such study and research.

Comments: The importance of chartership, that unique quality that shows that not just anybody can do this role; the importance of the study, research, and development of the practice to make that clear. We have low barriers to entry, so commitment to self-development and chartership help us ensure the most positive possible impact from our work, and help us confront external threats.

Group 3: To promote public understanding of the contribution of effective public relations in encouraging ethical communication and in enhancing the efficiency and performance of all sectors of the economy.

Comments: We are both the salesperson for, and guardian of, the profession, as well as providing support for the PR practitioner and community, and thinking about our place in wider society and within the economy. These roles are important because they help create a market for our work that benefits the PR professional.

Group 4: To act as an authoritative body of the purpose of consultation in matters of public and professional interest concerning public relations.

Comments: It is a very privileged position to be the chartered body, because there's only one such body in any sector. Due to this position, it's very common to be consulted by government and businesses. We really felt that we really need a drive to get as many individuals as possible and members chartered.

Group 5: To represent the interests of members in all public fora.

Comments: We started with the fact that even the definition of that objective is written in Latin; we need to start communicating in plain English, embracing more modern ways of communicating would be good. Also looking to act as the authoritative body on public relations to the external world.

Group 6: To advance the interests of members and to provide facilities and services for members.

Comments: Why would people join? It's about pushing forward, momentum, change, and it also gives us a goal for future growth plans. Apparently only 10% of our industry are currently members. Their interests give us a reason for our decisions on how we support our members, and it also gives us the opportunity to scale, focusing on the member relationship. And finally, it gives us the opportunity to define what interests, facilities and services are relevant for us.

7. AOB

Council agreed for the Governance Working Group to meet first and then set up guidelines to start conversation and progress.

Action Eva to add CIPR Values discussion to the June's agenda.

Action Eva to send Andrew Chamberlain a recording of his session.

Next Meeting Dates for 2023 (all virtual via Zoom)

- Thursday 15 June 2023
- Thursday 21 September 10am
- Thursday 7 December 10am

AGM: Thursday 13 July evening (virtual)