Report from the Chair of the Board of Trustees meeting held 11 March 2025

Trustees Present:	**Staff in attendance:**
Carolin Göhler (CG) - Chair/President	Rob Hughes (RH) - CEO
Noel Farrer (NF) - Vice President *(from 1447)*	Rowena Lovell (RL) - Board Secretary
Adam Barker (AB) - Non-Chartered Trustee	Jonathan Ellis (JE) - Director Membership & Professional Standards
Chris House (CH) - Education & Membership Committee Chair	Belinda Gordon (BG) - Director Policy & Public Affairs
Ian Phillips (IP) - Policy & Communication Committee Chair	Steve Randall (SR) - Head of Finance
Jane Clarke (JC) - Independent Trustee	Yvonne Matthews (YM) - Leadership EA
Marc Norden (MN) - Independent Trustee	Emma Wood (EW) - Governance & Regulation Manager
Helen Oldfield (HO) - Independent Trustee *(to 1454)*	
Apologies:	**Guests:**
Mark Smeeden (MS) – Hon Secretary	None
Mat Haslam (MH) - Hon Treasurer	

The meeting was quorate with those present, and apologies as detailed above. The start of the meeting focused on the following two areas of business:

- Ensuring no Trustees had any potential conflicts of interest to declare in relation to the items on the agenda for discussion.
- Agreeing the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2025 as an accurate record of discussions of the Board.

1. Business Plan 2025/26

The Board noted an update from Rob Hughes, CEO on the 2025-26 Business Plan which builds on the lessons learned and achievements of 2024-25 including that:

- 2024-25 was a year of implementation focussed on core delivery, digital transformation, New Ways of Working and financial discipline.
- The appointment of two new Directors was aimed at maintaining, developing and supporting a strong stable staff team and leadership in two key work areas.
- Overarching lessons learnt from 2024-25 are:

- The importance of project management and collaborative approach and the need to roll out this out across the organisation.
- The importance of our People Strategy in building an inclusive and stable environment.
- The imperative of business and budget monitoring.
- The importance of demonstrating and communicating progress to our members
- The need for the Board to have more strategic oversight.

- Key work around education policy and influence driven by the new Corporate Strategy
- All work in the Business Plan will be aimed at achieving the strategic outcomes.

The Board noted an update on the proposed business areas:

1. Increased Influence:

- A more focussed, proactive approach to policy influencing based on focussed policy priorities and plans covering the 4 nations.
- Formulation of a clear narrative and messages about the essential role of landscape professionals and the value of landscape through the Corporate Strategy and the additional landscape led development document.
- Member led work through the new Standing Committees.
- Refreshed brand and website.
- Work to update technical guidance for members and support membership business area.

2. Strengthened Education Offer

- A more strategic approach to education and careers, supported by the new Standing Committees,
- Work with universities to help build the business case for existing and new landscape courses, and support student recruitment.
- Refreshed approach to careers, including a review of Choose Landscape resources.
- Review approach to recognition of landscape courses
- Ensure quality in the delivery of the Level 3 apprenticeship and seek new providers.
- Secure a provider for Level 7 apprenticeship.
- To initiate a review and update of the Competency Framework.
- Complete the re-accreditation of LI courses in 2026.
- Develop our approach to EDI in the landscape profession.

3. Strengthened Membership

- Deliver a refreshed member value proposition.
- Support and develop branches – building on the first phase of the Branch Review.
- Providing an improved member experience, unlocked through the digital transformation programme with a specific focus on the Pathway to Chartership (P2C).
- Secure membership growth.
- Improved member engagement and volunteer offer - expanding opportunities for members to get involved and recognising contributions.
- Provide updated technical guidance for members.

- Deliver impactful webinars and masterclasses that meet member needs.
- Deliver efficient assessments for membership grades enabled by the digital transformation.

4. Organisational effectiveness

- Strengthening relationship with Council, embedding the new Standing Committee structure and ensuring alignment with branches
- Continued implementation of the New Ways of Working programme.
- Undertaking 1st phase of Governance Review to focus on Professional Conduct and Discipline.
- Recruiting a new Chair of the Board.
- Continuation of the digital transformation journey. Pre-launch with user testing and post launch in September 2025, commencing the 1st year of implementation.
- Continuing with culture programme, improving internal comms, creating a 'great place to work' culture and building frameworks.
- Strengthen and develop leadership equipping them to lead, motivate and inspire.
- Monitoring and reviewing commercial income to ensure Landscape Services Limited supports the charity with its trading activities whilst also increasing the effective use of the partial exemption for VAT.
- Improve regularity of finance reporting combined with analysis to support performance and decision making.
- Strong and defined approach to 2025/26 income with exploration for new income revenues.

The Board unanimously approved the 2025-26 Business Plan and associated budget.

2. Report from Finance & Risk Committee

- The Board received the draft minutes of the Finance & Risk Committee meetings held on 12 February 2025 and 20 February 2025.
- The Board noted the January MMR and that there has been a real turnaround. It hasn't been an easy and a lot of discipline and control has been required but the picture this month is incredibly positive and incredibly good news.

3. Report from Governance Committee

The Board received the minutes of the Governance Committee meeting held on 25 February 2025 including that:

- Jane Findlay, FLI, PPLI has been appointed as the Interim Chair of the Knowledge & Practice Standing Committee and will be an observer on Board for the duration of that role.
- The planned next phase of the Governance review will focus on conduct and discipline which will include a review of the Complaints process.

In addition, the Board discussed and agreed the following as recommended by the Committee:

1. President role description

- The new role description has been drafted following the previous decisions made to:
  - Separate the role of President from that of Chair of the Board but to retain the President being Chair of Council.
  - The President Elect and the Vice President roles being to support the President in relation to their representative, advocacy and influencing role.
  - The Vice President to deputise for both the President and the Chair of the Board.
- The Council has supported the decision to separate the roles.
- This role description will apply to the 2025 Elections due to launch on 26 March 2025 and will be seeking a President Elect to be both President and Chair of the Council, as from the 1 July 2026.
- The current President will remain Chair of the Board and Chair of Council until 30 June 2026.
- A new Chair of the Board will be recruited over the next year in a process that is independent of the elections.

2. Regulations

The following changes to the Regulations in relation the role of President and Chair of the Board:

- **Reg 8.1**: No change as any general meeting is a meeting of members and an opportunity for them to express views and ask questions of the Board of Trustees and staff team. Therefore, general meetings should continue to be chaired by the President.
- **Reg 13.5.8:** No change as elections are a members vote and therefore President, or Vice President, should retain the casting vote.
- **Reg 18.5**: To be revised and 'Chair of the Board' added.
- **Reg 22.3:** To be revised and that the President or Vice President must be present for a Board meeting to be quorate.
- **Reg 22.4:** New Regulation to be added that the Chair of the Board to be appointed by the Council as an independent Trustee. Definition of Independent Trustee as set out in the By-Laws.
- **Reg 22.5**: To be revised that the Chair of the Board to chair all Board meetings.

4. Recommendation for Fellowship

The Board approved the award of Fellowship to Ed Ilken.

The next meeting of the Board will take place on 10 June 2025.

Carolin Göhler

Chair of the Board / President, The Landscape Institute