

Transport Planning Society

Meeting Date	6 May 2021
Report Title	Chair's Report
For Decision or for Information?	For Decision
Decision Sought	Approval for revised TPS Chairs advisory council proposition.
Report Summary	This report summarises the activity of the chair since the last board meeting.

11 March AGM and Transport Planner of the year lecture

I was elected chair following the last board meeting on 11 March. Immediately following that I chaired the 'Transport Planner of the Year' lecture by Sally Gibbons from the DfT. I thought Sally gave a fascinating presentation, offering a unique insight into her front row seat for what has been a tumultuous year in the industry. You can view the recording here: [Annual Transport Planning Society lecture 2021, webinar | Institution of Civil Engineers \(ice.org.uk\)](#)

I was particularly pleased that we had good engagement from the audience (127 participants) and were able to field a large number of questions, which Sally in the most part engaged with enthusiastically, only dodging one or two of the more political!

Activity since AGM

In the period since the AGM, I have focused on getting to grips with the current in-tray of the Chair, and also engaging 1:1 with all board members (including welcoming our five new recruits!).

I'm pleased to say I have managed to speak to all board members in the last six weeks and have got a really good idea of the current resource availability across the board, and also people's respective areas of interest. During this period we have managed to fill all the gaps in our organisational structure, and also ensure that all members are contributing to at least one of our working groups. I was impressed at the enthusiasm of everyone I spoke to, and there appears to be a real desire to roll up sleeves and get involved in delivering actions that offer value for our members.

I will try and repeat this exercise next year, but of course I welcome anyone with ideas or concerns relating to the Society to pick up the phone at any time.

18/03/2021 Meeting with CIHT

One of my first calls as chair was with Sue Percy, chief executive of CIHT. CIHT is a key relationship for us given our close working arrangements with them around skills and professional standards.

We had a wide ranging conversation around the future aims and objectives of our two organisations and where the opportunities were for future collaboration. Some areas that stood out:

- Continued work on representing shared industry concerns around appraisal process, planning white paper and
- Potential role on CIHT decarbonisation taskforce
- Potential role in developing an EDI charter for the sector, linking to our theme for TP Day

We also discussed how institutions can work together to address low morale and fatigue in the industry after a bruising 12 months. We agreed to discuss these matters again shortly.

15/04/2021 Meeting with CILT

As part of my ring around board members I had an extended discussion with David Parker-Klein in his role as Policy Director for CILT as well as a TPS board member. We agreed to explore how we can better collaborate on transport planning and policy issues, including undertaking an audit to understand which CILT panels had TPS members on them already and to understand if there were any gaps.

13/04/2021 ICE Transport & Mobility Community Advisory Panel

ICE have recently reorganised the structure of their various committees into Community Advisory Panels. TPS, as one of ICE's 'specialist knowledge societies' was invited to participate in the Transport and Mobility panel, chaired by Rand Watkins of Atkins.

The first session was focused on introductions and definition of potential areas for further investigation. There is a focus on delivering a couple of topical research reports (potentially around active travel and inclusive street design), agreeing the theme for a longer term horizon scanning piece and setting up some quick best practice sharing 'TED Talk esque' events.

Some of the areas I said should be of interest for further exploration by the Institute:

- Appraisal, uncertainty and how to fast track decarbonisation
- How do we engage society in that agenda – Easy bit is building, but how do you get the people on-board. Where is the best practice in the engagement of public, particularly seldom heard groups?
- Understanding governance structures and their role in determining outcomes for infrastructure priorities

I promoted the work we were doing on Transport Planning day and there was support for working together on EDI themes and appraisal points in particular, potentially as part of a joint event.

Next meeting is due in July.

RTPI

I have reached out to RTPI Chief Executive Victoria Hills and have requested a meeting in the coming months.

25/03/2021 Launch of TPP professional standards refresh

I provided an opening address alongside Martin Tugwell, president of CIHT, at the re-launch of the revised Transport Planning Professional standard. Full detail of the revised standard was then covered by Professor Glenn Lyons who led the review on behalf of TPS and CIHT. Some of the key changes to the updated guidance relate to strengthening the requirement for candidates to consider constructive challenge back to their clients around scheme rationale, and to better acknowledge uncertainty when providing briefings to decision makers on scheme impacts.

Further information (including a video of proceedings) here: [New Guidance for TPP candidates published \(tps.org.uk\)](#)

TP Day 2021 Organising

A lot of my time over the past 6-7 weeks has been spent on developing the proposals for this years TP Day campaign, as the lead board member for this. This work is covered in the separate report to board.

23/03/2021 CIHT Manual for Streets 3 – Practitioner Workshop

On behalf of TPS I attended a workshop to understand practitioner perspective of the use of the current Manual for Streets, and what should be included in the refresh. Given this was a document I always found very useful in assisting in the design (and sometimes defence) of public realm schemes I was surprised to find out that the document was considered to be poorly utilised within the profession. A range of further engagement is planned. The revised Manual for Streets (bringing together MFS 1&2) is expected to be published in Jan 2022.

21/04/2021 CIHT Active travel Implementation Advisory Group

CIHT are developing a project looking at best practice in delivery of active travel schemes. On behalf of TPS I attended this advisory group session which has been set up to guide the development of this guidance. Guidance is expected later in the year.

TPS Advisory Council

Following the last board I continued to work with Stephen Bennet on the proposal for a TPS Chairs advisory council. The revised ToR for the council, taking on feedback from the board, is provided as Annex A to this report for comment and approval. A key change is that this has been widened to include senior representatives from all stakeholder members. Stephen and I also drafted the suggested agenda for the meeting which we welcome comment on:

- 1) Introductions
- 2) TPS Chair
 - a. Welcome
 - b. Purpose of the Advisory Council

- c. Agenda and format for the event
- 3) Update on TPS activities
 - a. Chair and/or Board member update on each area of the Society
 - b. Highlighting any key questions, challenges or opportunities they want the Council to discuss
- 4) Roundtable from Advisory Council
 - a. 2-3 mins from each representative on a structured set of questions provided in advance
 - b. For example: role and connection to TPS, general thoughts on the role and importance of the Society, general trends/areas of critical focus for the transport planning profession, key topic(s) to focus on for the next year, what can TPS do to address trends/topics, what can they do to help this (influence, contacts, support, etc).
- 5) Discussion
- 6) Close – will summarise in report shared with Council and TPS members

Assuming support for the board we will look to arrange this in June.

Contracts for TPS staff

A key task in the in-tray for the Chair is sorting out formal employment contracts for our paid staff, and also to commence the tendering for the new business managers position. Good progress has been made on the latter since the last board - following an open Expression of Interest process via our bulletin and social media we are now awaiting tenders from interested parties.

Appointment of Vice Chair

Following our call for expression of interest in the vice chair position after the last board, I'm pleased to say we have appointed Laura Putt to that position. Laura has provided a separate report setting out her proposed approach to the role for comment and feedback.

Mark Frost, TPS Chair
April 2021