



Fellowship

10th Fellowship Council Meeting Summary

Wednesday 29th February 2012, 13.00-16.30
RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London, WC2N 6EZ

FCMtg29Feb2012ummary

Convenors:

Robert Porrer (Chair)

Irene Campbell (Deputy Chair)

Present:

Andy Gibson
Ann Packard
Bill Gibbon
Clive Harries
Gerard Darby
Gerry Acher
Irene Campbell
Jemima Gibbons
John Elliott
John McMullan
Julia Goodfellow-Smith
Keith Horsfall
Kevin Cahill
Marion Simon
Max Comfort
Robert Porrer
Rosie Ferguson
Tony Colton
Tony Hoskins
Wiard Sterk

Apologies:

Charles Millar
Charmian Love
David Archer (FC Trustee)
David Clarke
David Dickinson
Frances Gallagher
Nick Clifford
Pat Samuel
Paul Buchanan
Ruth Jindal
Tessy Britton
Zena Martin (FC Trustee)

RSA Staff present for all or part of the meeting:

Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive
Michael Ambjorn, Head of Fellowship Networks
Josef Lentsch, Head of Fellowship Services
Vivienne Long-Ferguson, Senior Networks Manager
Lou Matter, Fellowship Networks Coordinator (Notetaker)

Welcome and introduction from FC Chair

Chair Bob Porrer welcomed everyone to the meeting, including a welcome to Vivs Long Ferguson, Senior Networks Manager, who was attending to assist Irene Campbell with the discussion on youth. He congratulated Gerry Acher on his recent knighthood for charitable services and Jackie Elliman on her election to the Trustee Board, and informed the Council that because of her election she has decided to step down from the Fellowship Council. Bob reminded the Council that the other Trustee elected in this round was Keith Read.

Bob highlighted an additional agenda item, with Josef Lentsch giving a brief presentation on the preliminary results of the recent Fellows survey.

1. Apologies

NOTED as above. Explained that unfortunately a late apology had been received from the invited Trustee, Hanif Virji, and that we had been unable to find another Trustee to attend at short notice.

Live-Blogging

Council member Jemima Gibbons would be live blogging the meeting at:

<http://www.monkeyswithtypewriters.co.uk>

2. Summary of 8th Meeting held on 8 December 2011

No comments had been received regarding the summary of the last meeting. No further amendments raised; the summary of the meeting was **APPROVED**.

3. Matters Arising

RSA Wales/Cymru

Bob Porrer noted that a group had now been established and that Andrew Board was acting as Chair for the time being. The group will take forward activity in Wales and set up a new governance structure. Wiard Stark reported that the next meeting would be on the 7th March and that there was much positivity surrounding the new group. Keith Horsfall commented that there had been a very open discussion during the previous meeting and there was some discussion about the length of distance for some Fellows to travel to Cardiff, so it looked likely that a North Wales group might be set up.

Governance Advisory Group

Bob Porrer noted that the GAG had met to discuss implementation of the governance changes and the transitional arrangements for the Regions/Nations and the Fellowship Council. The Trustee Board is expected to approve final recommendations at their March meeting, following which full details will be issued, including a new Regional/National Handbook and details of election arrangements. At this stage, before the formal approval by the Trustee Board, we should note that the GAG accepted the recommendations of the Fellowship Council and the Regional/National Chairs.

The election process for the Fellowship Council will start in the second half of April with a call for nominations for the 35 elected Fellowship Council posts at the beginning of May 2012 and elections would be held from June to July 2012. In addition to the 14 places for the newly elected Regional/National Chairs, there will be a total of 21 Fellowship Council posts up for election – 14 by Region/Nation and 7 “at large” posts. The remaining 5 appointed Fellowship Council posts will be decided after the 16th July, when the election results are announced. All Fellowship Council members and Regional/National Chairs will enter office on 15 September 2012. All present members of the

Fellowship Council will be eligible to stand for election, and Council members have around 6 weeks to consider whether they would wish to do so. Bob pointed out that Fellows can stand as a Regional/National Chair, or as a Fellowship Councillor for their Region/Nation or as an “At large” Fellowship Councillor.

Question: Are the documents available?

Answer: They are not yet in final draft, when they are they will be sent round to all Fellowship Council members and Regional/National Chairs.

Question: Is there any more information or guidance about the “at large” positions?

Answer: There will be wording to ask the person who is standing to articulate what they would bring to the Council, such as experience, specific skills and interests.

Question: How will those without email access be informed about elections?

Answer: The elections will be run as the Trustee Elections were through the Governance department of the RSA and the ERS (Electoral Reform Services) system. Those without email/internet access will receive information and be able to vote by post.

Resourcing Fellow Activity and Engagement across the RSA

The Trustee Board has established a Resource Review Group; a copy of a background paper and Terms of Reference were sent round prior to this meeting. The group has had its first meeting and is currently collating a range of information on resourcing and will next look to gain input from others. Bob reflected that when the group is looking at resourcing it is not necessarily just about monetary resources but a wider context of resourcing across the RSA and Regions/Nations.

Use of “closed’ NING to facilitate communication and business of the Fellowship Council

Bob outlined that this process is still being tested and would not be launched until there was complete confidence in its being a useful system for Fellowship Councillors to use to communicate.

Question: Is there any advance on the access to Fellows emails/contacts in regions so that Fellows can communicate more effectively?

Answer: The Trustee Board’s Audit and Risk Committee will report back on this Data Protection issue at the next Trustee Board meeting, so hopefully there should be some decisions on this by the next Fellowship Council meeting.

Membership of Fellowship Council Working Groups

A list of current groups had been compiled by Lou Matter and circulated with the papers for this meeting. Bob asked that Lou be made aware of changes/additions to these groups so that an up-to-date list could be held.

Question: Can the International Working Group be added to the list?

Answer: Yes, Lou will update.

4. Trustee Board Strategy

Matthew Taylor thanked the Council for the continued support and time they give to the RSA. He outlined that although the strategy was for the next three years (up until 2015) the process of delivering it will be an evolutionary process. The strategy assumes the RSA will continue delivery on the basic

elements of the organisation to continue to maintain numbers of Fellows; carry on the popular and busy ideas platform; the high quality profitable House business; the respected and primarily externally funded Projects team; keep budgets balanced and risks managed.

He highlighted that it is important that the RSA is the kind of organisation the 21st century needs with a relevant and broad mission; independent both financially and politically; innovative in form and content; and focusing on problem solving and impact.

It is important to keep a clear view of what the RSA is; an independent organisation, innovative both in form and content. The RSA is not a professional association or learned society, it does not fulfil the role of an NGO or Thinktank, it is perhaps best described as a 'civil association', an organisation that achieves change because of what it is.

The results of the recent Fellowship survey will become an embedded part of the development process for the RSA. He gave a number of quotes from the survey reflecting Fellows' views on becoming and being Fellows of the RSA.

The Fellowship is essential to what makes the RSA different and the aim is to strengthen the Fellowship; improve the recruitment process and move away from mass marketing; and to re-establish the Fellowship as being an elite status but being based on the individuals attributes of being innovative, engaged, connected and philanthropic. It is also key to develop the Fellowship journey, so that becoming a Fellow is the beginning of a journey of development and growth and where Fellows can obtain status, recognition, and privileges which reflect and incentivise their contribution to the Fellowship and the charitable mission of the RSA.

Within RSA Projects it is important to remind ourselves of the progress that has been made and the press coverage that recent reports have received, all of which raise the profile and influence of the RSA. The three areas to take forward in the next three years are; to be associated with successful front line interventions; to be seen as having powerful capacity for problem solving deriving from the RSA's broad mandate and unique organisational form; and that the RSA has a recognised, consistent and deepening account of how to understand and enhance human capacity.

The External Affairs team has ensured the RSA brand is known to millions through tools such as RSA Animate and the challenge now is to continue to grow and stay ahead and to add to the overall RSA engagement and problem solving offer, to make ideas accessible and come alive.

Within RSA Operations the challenge is to be in the Sunday Times best 100 places to work by 2012. The RSA needs to be magnet for talent and to attract people to come and work for the RSA.

The full opening of the RSA House in July 2012, will show that the House is the physical embodiment of the RSA's mission and ambition, a place where ideas happen.

The one fairly new strategic priority and an area where other organisations are ahead of the RSA is working within the international arena. The RSA has a number of Fellows overseas and the strategy identifies the importance of developing the organisation to become much more international. The RSA will appoint someone to undertake a strong feasibility study into how best to work internationally and move forward in this arena. There are already projects out there already with the likely launch of the US Student Design Awards later this year and the aim will be to build and extend such projects.

In summing up, the House will fully re-open in July 2012, but it has been decided that the launch will take place in September 2012 in order to avoid clashes with the Jubilee and the London Olympics. The opportunity of the Summer re-opening is to stress that with the RSA the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, it is unique and we need to look at ways to reinforce this.

Bob thanked Matthew and asked what assistance the Fellowship Council can give to support the achievement of these aims. Matthew asked for the Fellowship Council to advise how we can make the strategy happen.

Question: How will you recruit Fellows in order to stop the Fellowship becoming an “old boys club”?

Answer: We do not send out mass mailings to recruit Fellows, we undertake detailed research to identify people of drive and expertise within their field who it is considered should become Fellows

Question: How will you recruit those who are under-represented in the Fellowship like women and people in the BME communities?

Answer: One powerful way we have to recruit Fellows is through the Fellow get Fellow scheme and research will have its part in the future as well. We will be asking Regions/Nations how they are actually recruiting people in their area, and developing strategies through this information.

Comment: The selection of Fellows needs to be linked into the notion of the RSA as a “civil association” and the linking of Fellows with projects is really encouraging, this needs to be processed further into linking RSA Projects with Fellows much more.

Response: We are working hard to encourage Fellow Networks to become more ambitious and encouraging staff in Projects to become more open to Fellows.

One of the outcomes from the Engagement Working Group was how the Fellowship Council could be a conduit between Projects and Fellows.

Comment: I am concerned about the term “civil association” if you are focused on having a succinct title to describe the organisation it needs to be clear, especially if you are looking to expand internationally.

Response: Open to suggestions on this, recognise that it is easier to define what the RSA is not than what it is. It is not a membership organisation or pressure group, we make change happen by what we do ourselves.

Comment: What kind of organisation the RSA is, is defined in the Royal Charter.

Response: It was ensured that all strategy discussions were clearly related to the Royal Charter. The Charter was re-worded in 2008 so that it was more accessible and that so the RSA was able to focus on human capability more widely.

Comment:

It is correct that we want the Fellowship to be an elite status but using the word elite is problematic as people think it is therefore elitist, so please do not use the wording elite.

Concerned that the RSA may move again towards being a “safe” organisation, please ensure that this does not happen.

Really would like to see RSA taking the lead in working with prisons and working to transform reoffending rates.

Don't worry about being involved in the Times 100 Best Employees, it will create a lot of work and is unnecessary. Also don't worry about losing staff, it just means there will be more RSA ambassadors out there.

Response:

We understand “elite” may not be the right word in this context, but it needs to be got across that the Fellowship is for people of real standing and commitment.

The RSA is not turning into a “safe” organisation, the satisfactory schools report was controversial but ended up in a change in government policy.

We hope to maybe have some work with prisons in the offing.

Most staff who leave the RSA become Fellows and a lot remain engaged with the work of the RSA.

With the International work it is important to learn from past mistakes and this is why the feasibility study will take place, in order to move forward slowly and sensibly.

5. Attracting and Engaging Younger Fellows

Irene Campbell introduced a session to discuss younger Fellows, particularly in light of the work currently being undertaken by Matt Lent in this area. At the moment there are 400 Fellows under the age of 30, out of 27,000. She asked Fellowship Councillors to discuss the following questions in groups:

- are we interested in engaging people under 30?
- if we agree we want to attract younger Fellows, what is our offer?
- what could younger Fellows bring to the table?

Each group fed back a couple of key comments to the rest of the Council. Including:

- Key to think when you organise Fellow events, what a young person would feel when they walked into the room and consider how to make events relevant to young people.
- Possibly target young people for the additional posts in the Fellowship Council.
- RSA bursaries – give 4 year Fellowships to a number of young people, to assist with their development and give them an opportunity to engage with the RSA and Fellows, when they probably wouldn't be able to in any other way.
- How do you get young people to start thinking about Fellowship, be innovative in how to target them.
- “Careerability” – social networks offered by the RSA are a huge resource and would be beneficial to younger Fellows, how to highlight this to them.
- Need to run projects that are relevant and of interest to young people in order to attract them to the Fellowship, you also need to ask young people what they would want from the Fellowship.
- We need to appeal to people from all walks of life, the most important thing the RSA can offer is credibility, provide people with ideas a platform to speak.

- Would like to also see the RSA consider inviting more Fellows with learning disabilities.

Irene thanked the Council for their comments, which she and Vivs will collate and forward to Matt Lent for future discussion.

6. Report from Chief Executive

Bob asked if there were any questions around the Chief Executives report, and said Matthew would be around to answer any questions in the break. The report was **NOTED**.

There was a 10 minute break.

7. Preliminary results from the Fellowship Survey

Preliminary results of the first RSA Annual survey were presented to the Fellowship Council. Most importantly, the survey found positive developments of key indicators in comparison with the March 2011 pilot survey (increase in expectations met, increase in Fellows wanting to engage). Similarly positive, the survey identified high levels of engagement, satisfaction and loyalty amongst the RSA Fellowship. Among the identified opportunities were the potential to facilitate even more collaboration and engagement, and the potential to further improve Fellowship experience, particularly through the uses of technology. A report with more detailed analyses will be provided by April and will be an item for the FC's 22 May 2012 meeting.

8. Report from the FC Trustee Board Members

There were no comments or queries to the report. The report was **NOTED**.

9. Engagement of Fellows Internationally

Gerard Darby outlined the progress from the Group. The members of the Group are; David Clarke, Ann Packard, Gerard Darby, from the FC with Jamie Cooke, Matthew Mezey and Michael Ambjorn from the staff.

The international element adds a valuable dimension to the RSA and to the Fellowship, already International Fellows make up 7/8% of the Fellowship, but they do not have the same opportunities that UK Fellows have, so we need to consider what they are offered through the Fellowship. There is a target of recruiting 40 overseas "connectors" and 10 have already agreed to this. There are two specific pilot areas being targeted for growth; Germany and Poland. The US Student Design Awards are an exciting example of work going on internationally. There is going to be a meeting of 30 potential Fellows in Vancouver next week, a recent meeting in Helsinki recruited 60 Fellows and there is a new network been recently formed in Brooklyn, New York.

Gerard asked that if anyone knew of a person that might be a connector to let him or one of the Group know and also if anyone has any ideas for the network to let the Group know.

Comment: There is a new network currently working in Japan.

Response: Yes, Matthew Taylor recorded a message for the group this week.

10. Review of the nature of FC Working Groups

Bob highlighted the previous discussion at the Fellowship Council following which it had been decided to invite FC Working Groups to review their Terms of reference. The Terms of Reference from the Digital Engagement group had been circulated and Bob thanked Jemima for putting it together and commented that it gave a very clear statement of the Groups purpose, its potential contribution and how it can work effectively, both as a group and in support of staff who would be developing a range of digital systems.

The Council **APPROVED** the Terms of Reference for the FC's RSAd Group and other Groups were invited to review and update their Terms of Reference over the next few months.

11. Establishment of new FC Working Groups

Following previous discussions Bob proposed that two new Fellowship Council Working Groups be established in anticipation of the new governance arrangements. The Working Groups would focus on Regions/Nations and a Working Group on Thematic and Freestanding Networks. These Groups would receive reports and offer guidance where appropriate, reporting back progress at each Fellowship Council meeting. This was **APPROVED**. Bob asked that anyone interested in joining the Regions/Nations Working Group contact him and anyone interested in joining the Thematic and Freestanding Networks Group contact Irene.

12. Regions/Nations

There will be a meeting of Regional and National chairs in May. The draft Handbook is being finalised at the moment and waiting for final confirmation at the next Trustee Board meeting.

13. Reports from FC Working Groups

Jemima Gibbons reported that the Digital Engagement Group felt that it was not being adequately involved in the development of the new Fellowship Platform, especially considering the platform is supposed to be a user-centric design. Bob noted that, as FC Chair, he wished to be kept informed of developments with the new platform. The FC's concern that its representatives should be kept in touch with and consulted over developments was **NOTED**.

Catalyst/SkillsBank is a continuing success, the map that was circulated with the papers was highlighted as showing where catalyst bids had been made and successful bids.

Comment: There needs to be some planning around regional/national funds and how Catalyst fits with these. People don't necessarily know which to apply for and there is not a consistent message coming from RSA House.

Response: Agree, this is something the Resource Working Group will be looking at. There is a clear need to look at the regional/national dimension of Catalyst, the involvement of Regional/National Teams in promoting, advising on and assessing bids and the integration of Catalyst with Regional/National Venture Funds.

Comment: The quality of the applications to Catalyst is very high and therefore the rounds are increasingly competitive. It might be worth having a session about submitting bids and general fund raising available for Regions/Nations.

Comment: It was frustrating to have an unsuccessful bid and communicating the context of the bid to the panel was difficult and good projects outside of London are not given adequate publicity.

Response: Even if projects do not get financial help from Catalyst they are given support and linkages with other Fellows.

ACTION: Details of successful Catalyst bids should be sent round to Regional/National Chairs. The relationship between the central Catalyst scheme and similar schemes in the Regions/Nations, and the involvement of Regional/National Teams in the Catalyst processes need to be developed.

Youth – Rosie Ferguson has recommended that the Youth group would be better working as a Thematic Network, with the FC lending its support to the work on younger Fellows being undertaken by Matt Lent. This was **AGREED**.

14. A.O.C.B.

Bob reported that he had recently visited Leeds University with colleagues from the RSA Yorkshire Committee to discuss the Edward Boyle annuity and it has been agreed to use it as an annual prize programme for the University's Undergraduate Research and Leadership Programme.

Question: Are other Regions/Nations working with universities?

Answer: Yes, for example there is a lecture series in Suffolk organised by Fellows and University College Suffolk. Such partnerships are to be encouraged.

Question: Matthew Taylor asked if the length and breadth of his Chief Executives report work for the Fellowship Council.

Answer: The general response was that the level of detail was appropriate, but that detail on Catalyst could be omitted since this was covered in a separate report.

Question: What is the RSA doing to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee?

Answer: This will be investigated and the Fellowship Council informed.

15. Future Meetings for 2012

Dates for FC meetings in 2012 are as follows:

- Tuesday 22nd May 2012 (*last meeting of current Council*)
- Thursday 20th September 2012 (*first meeting of new Council*)
- Wednesday 12th December 2012

Bob Porrer thanked the Fellowship Council and closed the meeting at 4.12pm.