



**5th Fellowship Council Meeting Summary**

Tuesday 05 October 2010, 13.00-16.30

RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London, WC2N 6EZ

**Convenors:**

David Archer

Zena Martin

**Present:**

Andy Gibson

Ann Packard

Anthony Hoskins

Charles Millar

Charmian Love

David Biggs

David Clarke

David Dickinson

Frances Gallagher

Gerard Darby

Gerry Acher

Helen Westropp

Irene Campbell

Jackie Elliman

John Bale

John Elliot

John McMullan

Katie Moore

Kevin Cahill

Leslie Kossoff

Lopa Patel

Paul Buchanan

Robert Porrer

Rosie Ferguson

Susan Jones

Sybil Crouch

Tessy Britton

Wiard Sterk

**RSA Trustees present:**

Lord Best OBE, Treasurer, Trustee Board, Chair of Board's Audit and Risk Committee

Naaz Coker, Interim Deputy Chair, Trustee Board

**Chair of Australia / NZ**

Paul Vittles

**Apologies:**

Andrew Chidgey

David Young

Emma Harrison

Emma Jones

Graham Sprigg

Jemima Gibbons

Mark Ball

Nick Clifford

Stephen Coleman

Stephen Elliott-Hunter

**RSA Staff present:**

Belinda Lester, Director of Fellowship

Julian Thomson, Director of Projects

Caroline Walsh, Director of House

Michael Ambjorn, Head of Fellowship Networks

Michael Devlin, Head of Fellowship Networks

Josef Lentsch, Head of Fellowship Services

Lynn Broadbent, Fellowship Director, RSA US

Vivienne Long-Ferguson, Senior Networks Manager

Andy Kirk, Networks Manager

Jules Mahmoudi, Networks Manager

Chris Luffingham, Networks Manager

Sam Thomas, Networks Manager

Sarah Tucker, Networks Manager

Alex Watson, Networks Manager

**RSA House Building Surveyor**

Sean Cushing, Mellersh and Harding

**Live blog of meeting available via:** <http://sociability.org.uk/2010/10/05/rsa-fellowship-council-live-blog/>

## Welcome

David Archer, who along with Zena Martin is one of the two Fellowship Council members who sit on the RSA Trustee Board, introduced the session. He emphasised that the meeting, coming a year after the start of the Council, was a perfect opportunity to highlight some of the successes of the Council. It was also an opportunity to thank the out-going and welcome the new Chair and Deputy.

He explained that the main body of the session will be to both profile exciting Fellow-led projects – from Catalyst and other sources – and to focus on ways of improving the number and quality of projects from Fellows.

David explained that a special debate about the proposed changes to the by-laws was convened for after the Fellowship Council meeting and so asked all present to hold questions on that topic until later, when they will have a chance to discuss with Stephen King and Matthew Taylor.

David welcomed a number of new Trustee-appointed Council members who were present:

- Katie Moore from West (region/nation);
- Anthony Hoskins from South Central;
- Leslie Kossoff from international;
- Wiard Sterk from Wales;
- And Nick Clifford from North West who was not present at the meeting.

David also thanked Paul Vittles, chair of RSA Australia and New Zealand, for coming.

David welcomed incoming Heads of Fellowship Services Josef Lentsch and Fellowship Networks Michael Ambjorn and thanked Michael Devlin for his fantastic work as Head of Fellowship Networks.

### Live-Blogging/Twitter

It was announced that the event was being live-blogged by Council member Andy Gibson at <http://sociability.org.uk/2010/10/05/rsa-fellowship-council-live-blog/>

## Trustee Board Feedback Session

Zena Martin set out the three main priorities that the Council undertook in its first year – the Fellowship Charter, encouraging Fellows' projects and regional engagement. She then introduced **Lord Best OBE**, Treasurer of the Trustee Board and Chair of Board's Audit and Risk Committee to give a short update from the Trustee Board.

Lord Best firstly announced that Vanessa Harrison will join him (subject to approval at the AGM) as another Treasurer in the Trustee Board. She is currently Finance Director for the Old Vic and Young Vic, two successful theatres in central London and will be a great addition to the Trustees.

Lord Best spoke a couple of words about the RSA's finances. The message was that these are incredibly hard times for charities such as the RSA. There is an obvious worry that grants from outside sources will dry up, affecting the funding for RSA Projects. There is also a worry about the House, with many of the quangos that used book rooms now threatened by looming public sector cuts. He noted that Caroline Walsh continued to do a fantastic job in finding new clients.

**ACTION:** Each Council member should be aware of the range of facilities available at the House and contact Carrie Walsh if they or any of their contacts want to find out more information.

In light of this, it is essential to maintain Fellowship numbers and this will only be achieved by continually improving our Fellowship offer. The RSA will undoubtedly survive, and Fellowship have its resources, but we must be aware that the Fellows are lifeblood of the organisation.

Regarding the proposed governance changes, Lord Best noted that he was the most voted-for Trustee elected last time around. However with 600+ votes, it is clear that Trustee elections are not sufficiently engaging Fellows.

Lord Best expressed his excitement about hearing from Fellow-led projects. He looked forward to learning about some of examples of projects helped by RSA Catalyst as well as other Fellow-led projects. He expressed gratitude on behalf of all the Trustee Board for the Council's continued efforts.

**Question:** Have the Fellowship Council priorities for the next year been decided?

*David Archer: Work on the Fellowship Charter, encouraging Fellow-led projects and regional engagement will continue. However, the aim is for other priorities to emerge out of today's and further discussions.*

**David Archer**, Fellowship Council member of the Trustee Board, presented on the Trustee-approved proposals for the transformation of the Great Room.

The Trustee Board has approved designs to transform the Great Room but wants to get input from the Fellowship Council. Fellowship input is needed because the plans have been formulated not only to increase business for the House and to increase the RSA's potential to host world-class thought-leadership events, but also to ensure that Fellows get great use out of the RSA House.

These designs propose to end the single-use nature of the Great Room and to get rid of permanent banked chairs in order to make the room into a flexible space with a flat floor. This will enable us to hold open floor meetings. However portable seats will enable us to host presentations of similar numbers and scale. In comparison, the existing banked floor restricts the room's use. Westminster Council and English Heritage are supportive of the proposals, and were particularly keen to restore the flat floor, closer to the room's original design.

The proposals would also greatly update the technology available in the Great Room. In its current state we would have to pay large daily rates to use certain internet-enabled technologies.

The Trustee wants input from the Fellowship Council as to how the space could best fit Fellows. In particular, they wanted any potential leads on how the space could link to international events.

The current aim is for a 2012 opening of the transformed Great Room. However the extent to which the works on the Great Room are combined with other maintenance works will dictate this.

**Question:** Have the sight lines been considered? Surely these will deteriorate with the removal of banked seating?

*David Archer: The sight lines have been considered and was definitely one of the requirements of a genuinely flexible space.*

**Question:** How much will the works cost? Who is paying for it? What has been de-prioritised as a result?

*David: The extent of combination with planned maintenance works is one of the things that will dictate the exact cost of the transformation.*

*Lord Best: Whilst it is difficult to put an exact price on the works (for reasons David states), the proposals are within our original cost estimate. This is the third set of proposals to come forward to the Trustee Board. The works will be paid for out of the RSA's capital budget and the Trustee Board see it as a business investment. In other words, it is an income-generating project that is not based on an entirely commercial business case. Obviously part of the cost would have to be incurred in any case because of the need for refurbishments.*

**Question:** Why is the Fellowship being taken into account as a vague criteria for the business case of the works?

*Lord Best: Very complex calculations have indeed been undertaken for the relative economic cases of different proposals. However, everyone is clear that any changes must simultaneously meet commitments to the Fellowship and satisfy our charitable status.*

**Question:** What will change to enable us to hold international events?

*Sean Cushing: Installing multiple cameras and technology enabling immediate feedback will increase the potential for events to be live-streamed, or to incorporate internet-based applications into events. Currently these functions have to be bought in for specific events.*

**ACTION:** Suggest what kind of events for Fellows the proposed changes could enable

**ACTION:** Suggest possible international events or organisations with which a technologically-enabled Great Room could engage

## Reports from Working Groups: Education

John Elliott gave a presentation on the progress achieved by the education forum for Norwich Fellows of which he is a co-convenor.

The aim of the project was to engage a full range of Fellows, not merely education professions, to build an RSA Fellows education policy forum.

The first steps of the project were to speak with both Tessy Britton, then Fellowship Council Chair, and Becky Francis, Director of Education. It was agreed that the forum should be piloted in a specific location. Given that the East of England committee had long looked for a way to engage Fellows in Norwich, with links to local education institutions already established, this was chosen as the location to pilot the forum.

The first meeting of the group occurred with a dozen Fellows on 29<sup>th</sup> September (with a further dozen interested but forced to send apologies) and the group agreed on ten proposed foci for the project. Cue East have emerged as a possible partner and have agreed to set up administrative arrangements for a future meeting.

The group agreed to prioritise:

- Identifying and understanding the community factors, which impact on educational outcomes.
- Tracking and understanding levels of aspiration and social capital, where it exists, and creating structures and networks whereby genuine democratic consultation can take place.
- Understanding how “power” operates in hidden and non-accountable ways within the Norwich area.
- Planning to effect change through using and enhancing the resources “natural” communities can draw on and access.

To take the above forward the group will:

- Review existing relevant research;
- Create close links with CUE EAST and other local projects as sources of “evidence”;
- Support a series of parallel investigations and actions within social groupings in Norwich.

## Reports from Working Groups: Review of “Regions”<sup>1</sup>

Bob Porrer, Chair of the review group reminded the Council that the group’s fundamental aim was to improve the engagement of Fellows in the regions. A recent survey of members of Regional Committees/Panels had just been completed and had produced a balanced response which represented a wide range of views. Rather than simply rehearse ratings and statements from the survey the group was using it to identify key points for consideration, such as:

- How do we ensure that Regional Committees/Panels and Network Managers work together seamlessly towards shared aims?
- How do we align the objectives of all committees/panels, groups and staff and ensure better communication and coordination?
- How do we redefine and establish support needs for activities within regions and ensure appropriate support (finance, infrastructure/systems support and staff support) for Regional Committees/Panels?
- What is the role of FC members vis-à-vis regional activity and Regional Committees/Panels?
- How do we recognise the plurality of means of engagement, accepting some overlap but discouraging inappropriate “competition” and clashes?

The Review group would be considering these and other key points and adding to them from other consultations with Fellows around the regions.

The work of the review group had taken longer than expected, but the group was concerned to ensure that through consultation it had identified all the key points for consideration. Over the next two months the group aimed to start pulling together a framework of principles on which could be based more detailed proposals for regional support. He hoped that at least an outline draft proposal would be ready for discussion at the January 2011 Council meeting. Whatever structures are proposed would have to be flexible and recognise the different geography and needs of each region. The relationship between all the elements of support - Regional Committees/Panels, Network Managers, staff and the FC would be a prime focus, as would the need to ensure proper governance and democratic representation.

In answer to a question from Frances Gallagher, Bob Porrer confirmed that the group would be considering whether the “Nations” (Scotland, Wales and Ireland) should be treated differently from other regions.

**ACTION:** Please email Bob Porrer if you have any questions about regional engagement

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<sup>1</sup> Owing to the scheduled communication with Catalyst projects from other locations, this update was actually given after both the ‘Reports from Working Groups: Catalyst’ session and the ‘Working Session: Fellows’ projects: Focus on Fellows’ projects’. But for simplification this meeting summary presents the order of sessions as was originally set out in the agenda.

## Reports from Working Groups: Catalyst

Gerard Darby presented on behalf of the Catalyst Working Group.

He set out his belief that this is a very important project for the RSA. And the support and encouragement of Fellows' projects is exactly what the RSA is about and this is one of the key mechanisms for that.

He set out how the process works to award small grants to help kick-start Fellows' projects. Applicants fill out a form with six sections and the panel meets monthly to decide between applications. Fellowship Council representatives sit on the panel which decide not only whether projects are strong enough to receive funding, but also whether money will be the most useful thing. In many cases the panel suggest ways in which the projects can mobilise expertise in the Fellowship via the skills bank, targeted invitations to groups of Fellows to participate or awareness-raising. The process has had very strong buy-in from the RSA staff.

Alex Watson introduced some information from the Catalyst process to date. He distributed a regional breakdown of all the Catalyst applications and grant awards, as well as skills bank registrations and matches. And a list of all the projects awarded grants and other substantial support to date, including a brief description of the project. This information is available at [www.thersa.org/fellowship/catalyst-fund/catalyst-news](http://www.thersa.org/fellowship/catalyst-fund/catalyst-news).

## Working Session: Fellows' projects: Focus on Fellows' projects

Gerard introduced Sharon Turner who was awarded a Catalyst grant to help start a volunteer-led arts academy in Chattanooga, Tennessee. [Being streamed in by Skype, Sharon was visible on the main screen, although the audio quality was not ideal.]

Sharon set out the project, the Saturday Arts Academy that her and a couple of other Fellows along with a group of local residents had started. The project took place out of a local state school, Calvin Donaldson, where there was no visual arts component in the curriculum. The school was in a neighbourhood recently voted the 10<sup>th</sup> most dangerous in the US. The project has got a number of local artists, parents and residents to teach pupils and get them producing art.

The Fellowship Council saw a number of examples of the work that the students had done.

**Question:** Did the project involve other local educational institutions?

*Sharon Turner: Trying to work around and circumvent the local formal authorities. This is because there is a culture of mistrust between local citizens and the local government, who are viewed as "holding pens".*

**Question:** You have painted a fairly bleak picture of the neighbourhood, were there no social networks to work with?

*Sharon Turner: This is a community that has been destroyed by crime and drugs over the last decade. This has meant that there are very few institutions and social networks that are opportunities to work with. The project is obviously working hard to be one of those relied upon social networks.*

Sharon said that thanks to a Catalyst grant the group had subsequently raised further match funds of a 10:1 scale. This will help sustain the project for an estimated further three years. Thanks to the project the school was genuinely becoming part of the community. Sharon is obviously keen to hear from Fellows who can scale out the initiative across the country.

Gerard then introduced Heather Wilkinson who has set up Breakout Media.

Heather runs a social enterprise Striding Out which gives young people training in business development and online marketing, the graduates of this training then start up new businesses or train new recruits. One of the graduates was an ex-offender who had been given a great boost in employability by going on an ex-offenders training scheme Summit Media.

In April Heather worked with this employee [now a Fellow] to start a new training scheme Breakout Media. Breakout Media trains young ex-offenders in online marketing to improve their employability. The Future Job Fund was able to pay a wage to the apprentices for their training.

**Question:** How many people have you trained?

*Heather Wilkinson: The first batch of 5 apprentices started their 6 month training programme in August. We have now received further funding to expand the programme, having proved the successes of the first batch.*

Heather thanked the Fellowship for the Catalyst grant. She stressed how difficult it was to get funding for capital equipment for a project like this, without which the training wouldn't be going on right now.

Gerard then introduced Paul Vittles, chair of the Australia and New Zealand Fellows.

Paul set out about the series of 'big ideas for breakfast' and 'evening enlightenment' meetings that had taken place. These were not purely social nor business networks, but regular meetings aimed at stimulating conversations about what people are passionate about.

The aim is to direct the Fellows along the course of passion, proposal and progress. By firstly stimulating conversations about their passions, encouraging them to work this passion into a proposal for activity or project and then to progress the proposal into being. Around £1,250 is available to projects through the 3Ps seed fund for Australia and New Zealand Fellows.

One of the successes of the seed fund has been the Sustainable Communities Centre. The community, in Port Macquarie, has reduced carbon emissions by 48% and around a half of the food supply comes from local supplies. The project has recently received an award for environmentally sound development, which then enabled the project to go further.

Paul found that it is getting the passion into an application that is the really difficult thing. Many of the Fellows have come to meetings full of passion but getting conversations to focus on things that they are trying to achieve is the difficulty. To this end Paul has organised a series of visionary workshops with Fellows specifically aimed to help them produce applications. The latest application to come out of this is for an aboriginal reconciliation organisation.

**Question:** What is the maximum grant award?

*Gerard Darby: Currently, the maximum grant is £2,000. However the Council Working group recently agreed to use money originally set aside for growth to both boost the pot going to <£2,000 grants, and to introduce grants of up to £5,000. The timeline for this is currently being finalised.*

**Question:** What sort of return on our investment do we demand?

*Gerard Darby: The outputs measured are different in each case. The application form asks projects to identify how its social impact is measured, and the panel takes this into consideration. We then ask projects to self-evaluate themselves against these measurables upon completion of the Catalyst stage of the project.*

**Question:** Why are we funding projects in the US? Are there not valid problems to tackle here in the UK?

*Gerard Darby: Catalyst resources are open to all Fellows. Of course we want to encourage more projects in inactive regions in the UK. But the panel can only decide between applications it receives.*

**Question:** To what extent is there an opportunity to replicate these projects throughout the Fellowship network?

*Gerard Darby: Of course this is something we hope to happen, and why we are doing our best to highlight Catalyst winners through the website, ning, newsletter and Journal. However, we hope to get some ideas from all of you in the working session as to how to improve this.*

**Question:** Can Fellows apply to both their regional funds and Catalyst? To what extent is there link-up and sharing of information between the two? Why haven't we heard from the Scottish Venture Fund?

*Belinda Lester: The Catalyst webpage ([www.thersa.org/fellowship/catalyst-fund](http://www.thersa.org/fellowship/catalyst-fund)) clearly says that Fellows are welcome to apply to both. It is one of the priorities of the Networks Manager for Catalyst to keep up to share information with regional/national funds. We will definitely be keen to profile some of the Scottish Venture Fund winners next time.*

**Question:** Having listened to those projects, is there not a danger that projects – whilst they are well-intentioned – are not harnessing the expertise that resides within the Fellowship? How many Fellows must be involved in the project for it to get a grant?

*Belinda Lester: Fellowship involvement is one of the criteria we rank applications against. The panel take into account both how many Fellows have been involved to date and to what extent the project can, in the future, harness expertise from the Fellowship. There is no set threshold.*

*Gerard Darby: We appreciate that the take up for the skills bank has not been as great as it could have and we are doing everything we can to rectify that. But this is also where the Council need to step in and use contact with Fellows to encourage registration in the skills bank.*

*Alex Watson: Heather Wilkinson did not have a great deal of time to set out all the features of her project. But through the skills bank, a targeted invitation to Fellows working in online media in London and a profile in the Journal, we have managed to help the project with half a dozen Fellows who have had skills vitally needed for the development of the apprentices.*

**Question:** Is sustainability of the venture in the criteria? Surely the projects need to be holistic and evaluated in respect of the extent to which they fit into larger work that goes on in the particular community?

*Gerard Darby: Sustainability is another one of the criteria we rank applications against (available via [www.thersa.org/fellowship/catalyst-fund/criteria-and-eligibility](http://www.thersa.org/fellowship/catalyst-fund/criteria-and-eligibility)). We do not want to require Fellows to fit holistically into all the work that goes on in their particular community, since these are relatively small amounts of resource being given to projects that are either new or in their early stages so the application process must not be too burdensome to potential applicants.*

**Question:** If the project application fails to receive a Catalyst grant is it simply passed to the Networks Manager?

*Belinda Lester: Networks Managers are involved in helping nearly all of the projects, not just the ones that do not receive funding. There are very few applications that 'fail' in the sense of benefiting from neither grants, Network Manger support, RSA Projects, or the panel's feedback.*

**Question:** I was part of the working group which set out how Fellows' projects and RSA Projects staff projects could come through the same integrated process for review, development and Resourcing. What happened to this work, and why has nothing been communicated since the last meeting? I hope it has not been abandoned as this is very important for the Fellowship.

*Charles Millar: There is certainly a commitment to it, and by no means has it been abandoned. Indeed, as a trial, last month's Catalyst panel reviewed ideas from RSA Projects staff.*

*Julian Thompson: We have to acknowledge the difference in the current way that staff-led projects are currently conceived and Catalyst projects are. Convergence is certainly the aim, but we've only just started the journey. Feedback from this pilot is still being gathered and will be communicated.*

**ACTION:** Alex Watson will coordinate the feedback received from RSA staff on the Encouragement process and circulate it to the Fellowship Council working group

## **Working Session: Fellows' projects: Table exercises**

**Fellowship Council divided into groups of regional/national/international suitability. David Archer set the Council the following objectives for the working sessions; to come up with ideas for:**

- A. how we can increase the flow of ideas into Catalyst or other venture fund pipelines**
- B. how we can increase the number of Fellow offering non-financial Support (in order to bring this as a resource to Catalyst and other Fellow-led projects)**
- C. how we can encourage people to use Catalyst ideas and implement them in another (part of the) country**

**David also encouraged the Council to set itself targets, such as for how many Catalyst applications Council members should help bring forward from their regions**

### **South Central and South East**

- A. The solutions would lie primarily in improving communications, not enough people know about it:
  - having a news wall where all Catalyst applications are shown, successful or not, and Fellows allowed to offer comments and support. The ning could possibly be used as a starting point, but ultimately something with a far greater amount of functionality is required.
  - Regional meetings and AGMs should have fixed Catalyst slots on, to broadcast the message of what is available to the maximum number of Fellows as possible.
- A. Encouraging Fellows to use RSA events to discuss local needs is often a good starting point rather than pressing for Fellows to launch a project immediately.
- A. Getting people to talk about their skills (and therefore registering for the skills bank) is a great way to get people aware of the kind of resources that could be available to any project idea they had. Similarly, explaining that you could support a project by getting involved not as a project leader might increase the number of ideas that are generated.
- A. Rejected the idea of a target for Catalyst applications, it is better to get one good project than a large number of poor ones.
- B. Targeted emails to particular Fellows who have expressed an interest in a given subject area, carefully explaining how they could support a particular project.

### **International**

- A. Finding out what the particular local passions are is a great first step, this bottom-up nature of bringing project ideas forward is crucial. The capacity of Fellows to involve themselves in a given location varies so project scale should be flexible to this.
- A. In the US the problem is more ensuring that all projects can receive support. Therefore increasing the flow of ideas into Catalyst is not necessarily desirable, when Catalyst might not be ready to handle all the ideas that are out there.

### **Scotland, Ireland, North East of England**

- A. Digital engagement is obviously crucial in reaching out to large numbers (see South East and South Central).
- A. Numbers are not particularly important, what is more important is the quality of the projects.
- B. Fellows who received Catalyst funds then take responsibility for helping similar projects in order to build on their idea, perhaps their Support registration should be mandatory.
- B. Must have a skills exchange on the website to make people's support more easily accessible and recognised. The technology must improve for this to happen.
- B. Council members, Networks Managers and regional committee members should send personal invites to those who they believe might be interested in registering.
- C. Self-evaluation of projects by project-leaders should form the basis of dissemination of the Catalyst projects.

### London and East of England

- A. Agree that the focus on quality is all-important rather than targets for numbers.
- A. Fellows need some longer guidelines about how to come up with a project idea rather than just guidelines of how to fill out a form.
- A. Need to have some Catalyst champions, in the form of a few clear case studies. We should have a template for winners to fill out once they have completed the Catalyst stages of their project.
- A. We should look to target organisations who have individuals starting off projects and who would directly benefit from Catalyst resources. We can then use Catalyst as a recruitment tool.
- B. The skills bank should link to the Fellowship Directory. Asking people to fill out their profiles again with a skills bank pledge would be a quick and easy way. Staff are not all up on the Directory and nor are Fellowship Council.
- B. Some sort of a regular mentoring network might be.
- B. Agree that direct ask from peer is best.
- C. Looking to spread the models developed by Catalyst projects is of course the aim, but this must be based upon whether the need is there in a given locality.

### E. Midlands, North West, Yorkshire

- A. There should be greater integration with the work of the RSA and national policy initiatives its Projects are pushing, which should flow from the core USP of the RSA. Local activism is only relevant if it serves our corporate purposes. Catalyst projects should therefore flow more directly from the essential purposes of the RSA. Whilst at the moment the policy is to let a hundred flowers bloom there should be stricter criteria evaluating project outcomes against the strategic outcomes of the RSA.

**Question:** Is it not the essence of the RSA to let a hundred flowers bloom? Is cross-disciplinary experimentation and pollination the RSA's strength?

**ACTION:** David Dickinson to circulate minutes from 16 March Council Working Group meeting to define 'an RSA project' so that the Council can reacquaint itself with this debate.

### West and South West England, Wales

- A. There must be an online list of Catalyst projects where they are easily found. Having such a database, of projects of all shapes and sizes is crucial.
- B. Should ask all new Fellows in particular to list their expertise in the Directory. And use this for mentoring and project support.
- B. Should ask specific individuals to register. Having a few high-performing individuals would be fantastic.
- B. Should open up the Directory to university students, which could possibly act as a pull factor for more Fellows to offer their skills.

## **Confirming new chair and deputy chair**

David Archer announced that after a year the time had now come to confirm the new chair and deputy chair of the Council.

Zena Martin thanked out-going chair Tessy Britton and out-going deputy-chair Paul Buchanan for their hard work and presented them with a small token of the Council's appreciation of their work.

Incoming Chair Bob Porrer gave a few words on behalf of himself and Irene Campbell, incoming Deputy Chair. A few of the key themes are summarised as follows:

- Our role is to facilitate a more constructive dialogue and synergy between Fellows and John Adam Street. We will aim to work with the Council, staff, Trustees and Fellows in an even-handed way in order to achieve this and resolve conflicting visions. . In all this the future role of the FC will need to be developed to meet the needs of Fellows, as will communications with RSA staff and the Trustee Board to ensure that that Fellows, through the FC, can have a genuine influence on RSA operations and strategy. Alongside this we will have to consider ways to make the Council more representative of the regions, moving quickly towards a fully elected Council.
- We aim to make the FC more visible by visiting regional meetings countrywide and via a higher profile considering all communications channels – the newsletter, website, Journal and nings
- We need to be realistic about what the Council can achieve over the next year; we are committed to moving forward, inter alia, on the Review of “Regions”, Charter and digital engagement but we must be realistic about time pressure among Council members and staff.
- Most importantly, we want to ensure that the FC is looking forward, not back. That does not mean we should not learn the lessons of past history, but equally we need make sure that the past does not inhibit open and constructive discussion of the way forward. There are some important principles to be debated and new ways of working together to be established.

## **Dates of next meeting**

It was agreed that Council meetings next year would not all be on Tuesday. Instead each of the three meetings would be scheduled for a different weekday. The first meeting will be scheduled for January - date to be notified.

In response to a question the Chair and Deputy chair said that the FC should consider holding some meetings outside London. Whilst keen to make it happen, they noted that meetings outside of London can be expensive and actually more difficult for people to reach by public transport.

## **Closing**

The Council thanked David and Zena for convening the session.