

CHARTERED TRADING STANDARDS INSTITUTE

Extraordinary Council Meeting

Minutes of Meeting held on 31 January 2024
Via Microsoft Teams

Present J Munro (Chair), D MacKenzie, T Lindsay, T Keohane, A Farrar, K Tillett, T McAuley, L Crompton, N Smith, E Butterfield, D Bensley, E Boucouvalas, J Hamilton, I Savill, G Green, S McCluskey, L Mallon, A Farrar, C McNamara, F Osman, R Pinchen, A Wilson, J Rawling

By Invitation J Herriman, C Levoir, S Ruddy, P Owen, J Guerreiro, C Armstrong, S Adams

<u>Minute</u>	<u>Comments/Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>
2342	Welcome (Agenda Item 1) J Munro welcomed everyone to the meeting and clarified that if a vote was needed only voting members of Council would be eligible to vote.	
2343	Policy and External Affairs Update (Agenda Item 2) D Stephenson advised that it had been an exceptionally busy start to the year with a number of successes including the recent Government announcement in relation to vaping and the banning of single disposable vapes. The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill is currently in Committee Stage in the House of Lords, thanks were extended to Lead Officers, Sylvia Rook and David MacKenzie, who have input into this, with the Department for Business and Trade taking on board a number of their suggestions. The Head Office Update which was due to be sent out that day would contain a link to the Member Survey, all were encouraged to complete this and feed back any suggestions on what is going well or where improvements are needed. The Lead Officer review has been completed, some final feedback is expected from Lead Officers, the action plan will include recruiting more lead officers and diversifying the talent pool as well as increasing the number of portfolios. The following week was National Apprenticeship Week and the team has been working with CSA and Babbingtons (training providers) to promote a career in trading standards via apprenticeships. CTSI will be partnering with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) for the annual Conference for day three and two sessions on day two. All who had contributed to the CTSI manifesto were thanked for their input, this will be published late February and will underpin forthcoming policy work. Policy Committee – The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the new Policy Committee had been presented to Council at its meeting in October. There had been some questions around the composition of the Committee and also that the length of tenure, these had been addressed in the amended ToR.	

A discussion took place regarding the revised ToR. It was agreed to include a representative from SCOTSS on the Committee as well as a non-local authority or business member; in section 4 – Main Duties – to include the wording “tactical oversight”. **It was agreed** to approve the Terms of Reference for the new Committee. These would be reviewed by the Committee, once established, and any amendments would come back to Council.

It was agreed to note the report and acknowledge the good work of the Lead Officers and the head office team.

2344 Conference Update (Agenda Item 3)

D Stephenson advised that the Conference Advisory Group has been established and includes representatives from the Branch, Race & Equalities Working Group, College of Fellows, as well as J Munro, G Green, T Keohane and Gareth Walters. Any suggestions for Conference can be fed back via the Group or to head office. D Stephenson had previously committed to advise Council of the prerequisites for a suitable Conference venue and would forward this via email.

Plans are underway for this year’s event with some sessions and speakers booked. A new delegate booking system has been introduced.

It was agreed to note the report.

2345 Code of Professional Conduct Procedures (Agenda Item 4)

Council had discussed the Code of Professional Conduct Procedures at its meeting on 7 December 2023 and a revised document had been circulated prior to the meeting. Suggestions from the previous meeting had been incorporated with the exception of including mediation as one of the possible sanctions as it was felt this could complicate the process if the mediation failed. The Appeal Committee remains being made up of the President and Vice Presidents until this can go to an AGM to change the Regulations.

The procedures would ensure that investigations are carried out appropriately and thoroughly. A report will be provided to Council on a six-monthly basis on the number of complaints and the outcome, although this will not identify those involved, nor will it contain details of the complaint. A quarterly report also goes to the Board regarding all complaints received at head office which will include those under the Code of Professional Conduct.

It was agreed to approve the Code of Professional Conduct Procedures.

2346 Race and Equalities Committee (Agenda Item 5)

F Osman gave an update on the Terms of Reference for the new Race and EDI Committee and the history of the group which had been set up by T Lindsay. The Terms of Reference have been strengthened to move this into a Committee of Council and will include other protected characteristics alongside race. There remains discrimination within the profession, in relation to race, sex, disability, neurodiversity etc. The group has also been looking at unconscious bias training to roll out.

The Committee will work within four strategic pillars – engagement, education, active monitoring and governance & policy.

The proposed Committee will be made up of 17 members with representation from all four nations, branches, sections and head office. F Osman added that whilst fair representation was important if every branch was represented the Committee would be too big.

E Boucouvalas suggested that the list of regional representative committee members included the names of the branches covered by that position.

T Lindsay believed that all branches should be represented and advised that sub groups would be formed to cover areas such as women's equality, race equality and disability. T Lindsay added that education for minority businesses was equally important.

It was suggested that acronyms are spelled out. K Tillett requested that London had its own representative on the group and highlighted an inconsistency regarding the removal of members from the Committee. K Tillett felt that more emphasis should be given to the Race at Work Charter and suggested the term "death of George Floyd" was replaced with "murder of George Floyd".

C Armstrong felt that after being established for four years the Group in 2.3 scope and output of the Committee would grown in time and suggested this change to rapidly group. He agreed with K Tillett that London should have its own representative and questioned who the Founding Member was. It was confirmed that this was reserved for existing members to continue to contribute.

F Osman agreed with all comments that had been made and stressed that the Group is on a journey.

T McAuley questioned the purpose of the networks, who would be the secretariat and how would they be set up. T Lindsay advised that guidance had been written for Branches to establish EDI networks and this would be circulated. T Lindsay stressed the importance of inclusivity and wide representation on the Committee.

T McAuley questioned the removal of members in exceptional circumstances and this needed to be expanded upon.

J Herriman was pleased to see the new proposed Terms of Reference for the Committee and this would build on the good work of the Race and Equalities Working Group. Further work will be undertaken to support the setting up of sub groups. J Herriman reiterated that the Institute was mindful of the principles of the Race at Work Charter. A new principle had been introduced recently in relation to supply chains and work will be undertaken on this shortly at head office in relation to tendering for work.

L Crompton raised a question regarding voting rights of the Chair of the new Committee at Council. J Guerreiro clarified that in the Terms of Reference it states that the Chair and Vice Chair would become members of Council and it was envisaged that this would work the same way as Branches and Sections, with either the Chair or Vice Chair attending the meeting with one vote for the Committee.

F Osman asked if there were any questions or suggestions to contact him, Lewis Collantine or T Lindsay.

The Terms of Reference will be brought back to the Spring Council meeting for approval.

2347 Conflict of Interest Policy (Agenda Item 6)

Although there had been no policy a process was in place with declarations of interest being declared by Board members on an annual basis as this is a legal requirement, and at the start of meetings. The new policy had previously been discussed by Council and it had been suggested that this covers the Board and Council and did not extend to Branches, Sections or Lead Officers.

The Register of Interests will be more widely shared with Board and Council and consideration will be given to publishing this on the website.

S Ruddy confirmed that Board members do identify any potential conflicts at the start of Board meetings and will withdraw from discussions where there is a potential conflict. J Guerreiro maintains the Register of Interests which is shared with Board papers, this can be extended to Council meetings.

T Lindsay felt that the policy should be extended to Lead Officers. J Herriman believed there was an overlap with the Policy Committee in relation to Lead Officers and work that D Stephenson is doing. D Stephenson advised that as part of the Lead Officer review guidance and a code of conduct for Lead Officers will be produced and will cover representing the Institute.

C Levoir suggested that this is scaled out to Council members initially and can be reviewed as to whether or not it extends further at a later date.

F Osman believed that some conflicts may lead to reputational risk and felt that Council should be more involved in decisions around potential conflicts. J Herriman reminded Council that any concerns around potential conflicts could be referred to the Ethics and Standards Committee.

It was agreed to approve the Conflicts of Interest Policy and to review the scope of this as part of an initial review.

2348 Finance Update (Agenda Item 7)

C Levoir went through the finance update paper highlighting a change to the financial year from January-December to April-March, the current financial year which started in January 2024 will extend to end of March 2025. The financial audit for 2023 will commence on 11 March 2024 and is likely to be completed by the end of April.

The consolidated budget for 2024 shows a £110K surplus against a £102K budgeted surplus for 2023. There will be a reforecast of the budget taking into account the actuals from January to March and a budget from April 2024 to March 2025 to account for the 15-month financial year. There has been some additional new income in the last few months which will be included in the new budget.

The legal entity restructure is progressing. The novation paperwork is with the Government in relation to novating an outstanding grant, there is no capital gains tax to pay in transferring the head office property between organisations, and a consultation has started regarding the Local Government Pension Scheme.

At the last meeting R Pinchen had raised a matter in relation to the reserves fund which is currently set at 9-months, given the budgetary year has increased to 15 months, he suggested reserves of 18-months capital is considered. C Levoir advised that the reserves policy had previously been agreed and this would be reviewed once the legal entity restructure has been completed.

C Armstrong questioned whether the surplus for 2023 was still circa £200k. C Levoir advised that at the end of last year this was around £180k but could not confirm this until the January month-end was completed, but it was likely to be in this region.

Thanks were extended to C Levoir for all her work in this area.

2349 Board Recruitment Update (Agenda Item 8)

J Guerreiro had circulated information calling for expressions of interest to join the recruitment panel for a Non-Executive Director and up to two Associate Directors on the Board. The interviews will be held on 19 March. The recruitment pack and advert was being finalised and would be shared with the Race and Equalities Group for any input prior to advertising. The closing date for applications would be around 6 March. The Non-Executive Director vacancy will be open to non members as well as members and will be advertised widely.

J Munro advised that Julie Sampson had resigned last year and had sent a letter to the Board which raised some concerns about various aspects which the Board had considered at its meeting in December. A response from the Board was sent which elicited a further response from J Sampson; this was currently being considered by the Board. One point raised had been raised in relation to EDI issues; the members of the R&EWG have been involved regarding this.

S Ruddy advised that the two Associate Director posts provide an opportunity to offer new experiences to candidates who might otherwise not want to apply for a full Non-Executive Director position which potentially could increase the diversity of the Board. S Ruddy added that we had not previously specifically advertised for Associate Director roles which was an interesting and positive approach.

T Lindsay reiterated the need for more inclusivity and diversity, both on the Board and Council, as well as on the recruitment panels. J Munro emphasised the importance of recognising hidden characteristics also.

All were thanked for attending the meeting, for their support for Council and for the Institute.