

WHY IMPLEMENTING GOVERNANCE REVIEW BRINGS GREAT OPPORTUNITIES



Paul Sheffield

In December last year ICE past president David Orr presented to Council the final report of review into the ICE's governance, a review commissioned by Council after a Special General Meeting in 2018, called in the wake of governance changes that led to the creation of a Trustee Board with Council becoming an advisory body.

Council and the Trustee Board have agreed the findings in full and the Trustees have directed that those findings which do not affect the Institution's by-laws should be implemented as fast as possible.

As a consequence, ICE Council has already reshaped its agenda to be much more outward facing, looking at how civil engineers can address the issues about which society cares passionately. Council has set in train work around sustainability, the route to net zero, and to investigate what will be needed of the civil engineer of the future.

It will discuss all of this in April and will also host a series of talks which will be open to the membership and interested parties to attend, debate and discuss. I think this is a huge and exciting step forward and I would hope that we can replicate this approach wherever ICE members meet.

Similarly, the Trustees are very conscious of the need to engage with our membership, wherever they may be, and also to ensure that the processes used to run the ICE in this modern age must be even more transparent and inclusive than in the past. We never communicate as well as we think we do and it is really important that we raise our game with this across all channels, to suit all members. I have asked Liz Waugh, a trustee and a professional communications expert, to lead a new ICE Communications Committee to do just this and her team will start this month.

The way in which we select our trustees provoked the most comment during the Commission's hearings. The Commission was impressed by the evidence of the chair of

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the Nomination Committee. But to address concerns raised, the Trustees have asked ICE Audit Committee chair David Porter, working with past chair of ICE Scotland Lawrence Shackman and Council member Kate Cairns, to oversee the production of new procedures whereby the Trustees, Nomination Committee, Council and the membership work together to select the ICE trustees.

But to implement the findings in full we need to make changes to the Institution's by-laws, and we can only do this if we, the membership, agree to the changes.

Therefore, we shall hold a ballot in June 2020 to seek agreement to the changes. If the membership agrees, and I strongly commend the way ahead recommended by the Commission, I shall seek to implement the changes by November 2020. I, Trustees and Council members shall be meeting many of you over the next few months and we will be happy to explain the opportunities we believe these change will bring.

The Institution owes David Orr a huge debt of gratitude for such a detailed, measured and wise report. With skill and forbearing, he has set the Institution up perfectly to look now at the real global challenges of population growth, climate change and delivering the UN Sustainability Goals. These must be our focus in the future and for that to be the case we must be outward facing and unified.

● Paul Sheffield is President of the ICE