

CEO INTRODUCTION, COUNCIL REPORT FEBRUARY 2021

I ponder looking through the window on the last few months as CIBSE responds to the challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic – we are now in Lockdown 3 and for most of us the Balham offices are a distant memory and the events that were such a vital part of the Institution on hold until some sort of new normality is established. I can think of no better example than at this Council meeting where we are having a 'virtual' Awards Ceremony, an essential substitute for the glitz and bonhomie of the AGM and Presidents Dinner. Indeed, what strange times we are living through and yet I suspect it will be a defining moment in all our lives, as we make new choices and revise our values on what is important.

Since the last Council meeting, we have held some outstanding virtual events, with Build2Perform over four days and also our Young Engineer Awards; we shall hold our Building Performance Awards on the 25th of this month - again virtually. We are anticipating that the AGM and Presidential Address on the 6th May will again be virtual but should the guidance change and people wish to travel, then we shall hold it at Balham where we have the technology to have a blended meeting of face-to-face and virtual. What I do need to say is that all these virtual events require a huge amount of preparation and planning. Quite simply the work of the staff in such difficult circumstances has been outstanding – a huge thank you to them all.

The technical knowledge is the glue of the Institution that allows us to thrive and the downloads of our Ventilation advice is over 65,000 and is also referenced formally by the Health and Safety Executive. The demand from Government for advice and support has been significant and with the draft Building Safety Bill, the emerging Building Safety Regulator and the challenges to solve the 'cladding issue' have put CIBSE at the forefront. I also need to highlight the evidence that has been presented to the Grenfell Fire Public Inquiry - if ever there was a time for CIBSE standards, it is now!

It is tough times as we seek to maintain the cohesive spirit of the staff. In the body of this report, you will gauge the broad scope of our activities. I would highlight two aspects 1) financial performance in the circumstances has been significant. Almost uniquely compared to our peers, we have not drawn down any funds from reserves and although in Management Account terms, at one stage we did think we were contemplating a £300K deficit, we have, subject to audit, delivered a £27K surplus – a huge effort for everyone. 2) Membership. We have seen a slight decrease in students and affiliates, but corporate membership is up slightly, bucking the trend and this all bodes well for the future.

I hope you will forgive me a little nostalgia as this will be my last Council Report. I hardly imagined that I would last this long in July 2006 when I arrived at CIBSE. Looking back, it is the people that make it special; yes, there have been some huge challenges and milestones – Knowledge Portal, YEN, Technical Symposium, CIBSE Services, bringing the Journal in-house, Building Performance Awards etc. However, more importantly, CIBSE has arrived – we are a serious and relevant Institution with a reputation for professionalism, agility and a 'will do' attitude. I have gained my rewards by seeing not only CIBSE develop but also the people – staff, volunteers, trustees and even Presidents! CIBSE allows people to develop and grow. I hand the baton over with a first-class staff team, not job done but with much more to do that will be exciting and rewarding.

In March 1973 when I marched-up the steps of Old College, RMA Sandhurst, to the tune of Auld Lang Sine, into a profession as a soldier and engineer, I could not have imagined the rich, varied and rewarding life that lay ahead. The Sandhurst motto is "Serve to Lead" something that was drummed into us – service to others, self-last. I hardly thought Service

would be so important at CIBSE; serving Society is at our core, as staff we serve our Members. I believe my first duty as Chief Executive is to serve the Trustees and staff – it is in Service that you are able to Lead – if CIBSE serves it can also lead. We are at the centre on so many key issues that currently faces Society: Climate Change, Net Zero Carbon, Building Safety, Diversity, Indoor Air Quality, setting and improving Professional Standards and so the list goes on. Fortunately, CIBSE has some exceptional people, thus my hope is that CIBSE will continue to serve and lead the world. Thank you and adieu.