**SCQS Council Meeting 6 December 2016**

**President’s Report**

I have been involved in two principal areas of activity as President of SCQS during the last quarter. These are

* **The Civic Building of the Year Award (CBOY) ceremony organised by SPACES in Manchester.**

Martin Kent, the SPACES current president, invited me to attend this in my capacity of President of SCQS as his guest at the SPACES annual dinner on 4th November. The CBOY annual award had been made by SCALA for a number of years and traditionally was seen primarily as an architectural award. While architectural merit remains one of the key judgement criteria, there is now a much broader focus on other delivery factors such as completion on time and within budget, as well as consideration of how the nominated building has helped to transform the delivery of public services in that area.

Awards were made for a variety of categories of public buildings and celebrated excellent engineering, building surveying, construction management as well as design. The SPACES yearbook contains details of the nominated and successful buildings and copies will be made available to SCQS members if they have any difficulty locating one.

It was a very enjoyable evening and, despite all of the gloom and doom associated with public spending problems, was good to see the public sector being proud of the work that it has done over the last 12 months. Something like £25 billion is spent across the public sector annually on providing new or refurbishing existing properties. There are many examples of excellent public buildings being provided which have a massive local impact on service delivery. SPACES is keen to hear from any authority which has delivered a good building on time, within budget and which is helping to transform services locally.

Latterly some authorities have become reluctant to trumpet “quality” building projects which they may have delivered as award winning buildings have risked being seen as wasteful at a time when resources were scarce. However, by focussing more on successful delivery and service benefits it is hoped that more authorities will willing to nominate their successes. All SCQS members should be encouraged to look at the projects delivered by their authority over the last 12 months and consider nominating the best for an award. Being recognised nationally for the “right” reasons will potentially improve the standing of both the authority itself, and the delivery team.

* **Development of Closer Working Between SCQS and SPACES**

Council will recall that following the discussion at the September meeting it was agreed that we should not pursue the option of SCQS joining SPACES yet but would instead explore practical ways in which the two organisations could work more closely together. If this proved to be beneficial the option of merger could be considered later.

To this end I have had a number of discussions with Martin Kent and also attended the SPACES Board meeting in London on 25th November. SPACES is keen to closely with us and we have provisionally agreed the following practical actions

* + SPACES meetings in the regions of England and Wales, (these are referred to as Hub meetings), will be centred around completed projects. Members will be invited to visit these buildings for analysis and discussion. This will also provide wider networking opportunities and a chance to share information on “hot topics”. SCQS members will be welcome at these meetings.
	+ In Scotland SCQS offer to lead on organising regional meetings was gratefully received as SCQS is much more active and organised than SPACES in this region. We will need to liaise with Leslie Morrison from SPACES but this represents a good opportunity to develop the cross-discipline agenda in a practical way.
	+ The SPACES Study Day in 2017 will be in June and most likely in Manchester at the school of architecture. SPACES has agreed that it would be a good idea if SCQS organised one of the parallel workshops in the afternoon. Delegates would be able to choose which of the workshop sessions they attended, so the format not only attracts people from a wide variety of professional backgrounds but also does not limit their learning to a single discipline.
	+ The President of SCQS is invited to SPACES Board meetings so that the full professional perspective can be applied to issues. Obviously this is in a non-voting capacity but my personal experience of this has been that there is a real desire to be fully inclusive. I also think it is useful to see the enthusiasm and commitment from SPACES Board members at first hand.
	+ SCQS has been invited to produce occasional articles for the SPACES technical publication that goes quarterly to its membership.
	+ Discussions are on-going about the composition of the judging panel for future CBOY awards. The current suggestion is that the old panel of “insider” experts should be replaced with a new panel comprising people from outside the organisation. SCQS would be represented on this wider judging panel along with other construction related professions. This is the clearest signal yet of the commitment to move away from CBOY being an architectural award.
	+ It has been suggested that all SCQS members should receive a free copy of the SPACES yearbook.

I believe that these proposals will enable SCQS members to benefit immediately from closer working with SPACES professional networks and strongly recommend that Council endorse and commit to this approach. I also firmly believe that there is more likely to be a broader appetite for merging the societies if this were to be based on 12 months’ positive practical experience.

**Next Steps**

On the assumption that Council endorse this approach we will need to

* Formally respond to SPACES
* Communicate the changes to the wider membership
* Develop a programme for the Study Day workshop including identifying speakers
* Develop lead contacts for the regions, particularly in Scotland where SCQS has to be very proactive
* Consider how SCQS best fulfils the wider roles of SPACES Board membership and possible CBOY judge.
* Identify suitable topics and authors for SCQS based articles.