STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING



Next year, 2023, will be the last within the PWI's current five year, 2019-2023, strategic plan. 2023 will also be the year in which the PWI develops its successor strategic plan, which will run from 2024 to 2028 - and beyond. So, why do we need a strategy?

Whilst the term ***strategy*** can induce a degree of scepticism in some people, I can only point to the growth and success of our Institution over the last 10 years; through two successive 5-year strategic plan periods. The PWI's achievements, delivered through the focussed pursuit of well-thought-out strategies, include:

- gaining our Engineering Council licence - the ability to award professional engineer status to our individual members;
- through corporate membership, enabling industry bodies and companies to play a direct role in the life of the Institution;
- growing our support for the electrification engineering community;
- expanding our education and training programmes;
- our membership of the Joint Board of Moderators;
- the new PWI website and Knowledge Hub, and;
- our recognition of decarbonisation and climate change adaptation, and diversity and inclusion as critical areas of policy and practice.

Without these achievements the Institution today would be less relevant and less capable of giving its members the support they require and deserve. To be delivered effectively and efficiently, continued improvements in the support and services the PWI offers its growing membership must be underpinned by an updated strategy.

The PWI has changed significantly since 2018, the year the current plan was created: it is a larger organisation; the volume and scope of its activities have grown; it has many more members, both individual and corporate; and it exerts greater influence, within both the railway industry and the wider engineering community. The process for developing our strategy must reflect these changes and the PWI Board is particularly keen that the strategy is developed in consultation with all the Institution's stakeholders.

This article is the "opening shot" in our plan to ensure that members and others involved in supporting the PWI have opportunities to contribute to drawing up this strategy. I have outlined below the development process we intend to follow, highlighting those opportunities, and inviting stakeholders to contribute their perspectives and ideas.

DEVELOPMENT OF PWI STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2024 – 2028 & BEYOND

PHASE 1

September 2022 – November 2022

Develop briefing pack.

Set up programme of structured consultation events.

PHASE 2

December 2022 – June 2023

Hold consultation events.

Use output to determine outcomes, development actions, and priorities.

PHASE 3

July 2023 – November 2023

Develop resourced and costed work programmes.

Board approval in *principle.*

PHASE 4

December 2023 – February 2024

Build work programmes into PWI integrated budgets and physical plans.

Board endorsement of budgets and plans.

Development of the new strategy will run in four phases.

- Firstly, between now and late November the executive team will develop a set of questions and initial thoughts to stimulate strategic discussion on the future direction of the PWI: outcomes we might achieve - and how we might achieve them. We will also set out a programme of structured consultations, both face to face and online, providing forums for key stakeholder groups to discuss that material and bring their own perspectives and priorities to bear.

- Secondly, from December through to mid-2023 we will run those consultation events and invite individual written contributions. Using the output from this wide consultation and working closely with the Board, we will determine the outcomes the Institution should seek to achieve, identify the related areas for strategic development and change, and prioritise them for delivery.

- From mid-2023 to late Autumn we will turn those priorities into proposed resourced and costed work programmes, then put these to the Board for agreement in principle.

- Finally, from November 2023 to February 2024 we will refine those programmes, building them into the PWI's integrated budgets and physical plans. In February 2024 I will ask the Board to endorse those budgets and plans.

Getting consultation, the second stage of the process, right will be hugely important in ensuring we make the most of the collective experience and wisdom of our members and supporters. Understandably, we intend to make use of established forums (including Vice Presidents' meeting, Section Secretaries' meeting, Technical Board, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and Decarbonisation Committee).

We will include a review of feedback from previous discussions with members, including Membership Director Joan Heery's extensive work with corporate members.

Additionally, we intend to convene special face-to-face and online events to capture the ideas and views of the wider membership: particularly those, such as Section Committee members, who have hands-on experience of making the Institution flourish at local level; and our professionally registered engineers, who are integral to the Institution's place within the "club" of professional engineering institutions. Fellows' and senior members' input, representing the thinking of influential industry engineers and managers, will be enormously helpful as will input from our apprentices and students - the future of the PWI! Individual written submissions will, of course, be very welcome.

To summarise, the new strategic plan will be central to maintaining the Institution's "development momentum" and making member support and services even better. I look forward to your contribution.



Stephen Barber

CEO
stephen.barber@thepwi.org