



REPORT TO CILT BOARD FROM MRG

March 2025

Introduction

1 The MRG last met on 5 February 2025 online.

MRG members

- 2 As previously indicated, six new members will be required to be selected for the MRG by July 2025. The Nominations Committee is therefore requested to begin the process.
- 3 At the July meeting of the MRG, it is expected that the process for electing a Chair and Vice Chair will be initiated. The current Vice Chair and I will remain available to hand over, but the new MRG Chair will be expected to attend the Board from September 2025 onwards.

Board Report

- 4 The MRG reviews the information provided at immediately previous Board meetings. The following feedback to the Board was agreed:
 - The change to using Eventbrite for booking events was considered to be very positive
 - The proposal to hold the Annual Conference and Awards at Silverstone was criticised because of its inaccessibility by public transport. MRG noted that this would be addressed by arranging transport from stations.
 - The future of the Knowledge Centre was also discussed, with the dilemma similar to that being faced by many educational institutions. However, there are significant opportunities for the Institute to use its expertise to undertake research, for which there is a significant demand. The Knowledge Centre should be used to facilitate and disseminate this.
 - We noted that some Forums had decided not to continue as CILT groups, but the MRG accepted this and suggested that it may provide opportunities for new groups within CILT.
- 5 The Board's attitude to the MRG was discussed, with the observation that MRG reports were noted but rarely discussed. The MRG is rarely asked for its view by the Board and the Board seems to pay lip service to the MRG's priorities. This has fed into the Governance Review as noted below.

Governance Review

- 6 The Governance Review Group, which includes the MRG Vice Chair and me, has been considering the Charity Guidance template. This has seven principles and it has become clear that changes are needed to meet the recommended practices in one of these seven sections relating to Openness and Accountability, in particular those concerning:
 - stakeholders' opportunities to hold the Board to account
 - looking for, valuing and taking into account members' views
 - the need for clarity about an appropriate level of participation in governance for members.



- 7 There are options for changes to the MRG to better enable the Institute to address the above. These include changing the way the MRG members are identified, and/or changing the way in which it operates.
 - Members could be wholly or partially elected or appointed instead of being selected as we have done to date. Elections have a cost, and whilst it adds a democratic veneer, there is no guarantee of electing members representing the range of membership. Appointing members does allow the diversity of the MRG to be managed but still is no guarantee of achieving representation and runs the risk of duplication of responsibilities.
 - Having two (rather than one) MRG members as ex-officio Board members. Alternatively, a second Board member could be nominated to support the MRG.
 - One of the key challenges of the four years of the MRG's existence has been to enable good two-way interaction between the Board and the membership. A further option is therefore to require the MRG to be more pro-active in communications and better engaged by the Executive, for example using the staff communications resources to enable the MRG be directly involved with membership surveys, events, FOCUS, and other channels for receiving views from members, as well as a clear programme of communications to members.
- 8 The Board is invited to give its view on these options and, if any are agreed, to agree to any required changes to the MRG's Terms of Reference.

Key Projects/Initiatives/MRG Task Teams

Communities' Chairs Liaison

- 9 The MRG Task Team attended the Communities Chairs' meeting on 23 January 2025. We were told that feedback relating to the Volunteers' Handbook and questions about ciltuk.org.uk email addresses and address lists were being considered, but it is not known if they have been actioned.
- 10 The meeting between some Communities Chairs and two Board members took place on 26 February and I expect Jonathan Chadburn will report on it.

Awards

- 11 We noted the date and venue as referred to above.

Education and Professional Development

- 12 The MRG Task Team has continued to liaise with Shaun Fardy about the Brightspace LMS, providing input on the need for member briefings as part of the introduction process.



Market Research

13 The MRG Task Team had not been able to establish contact with the Director of Sales & Marketing. The Task Team and the MRG has knowledge and experience which should be of value.

Communications

14 The Task Team met with the new Head of Communications on 25 February, and it is understood that an audit of social media is being done and an overall communications strategy is to be developed. As Board Sponsor on Membership Communications relating to Governance, I also attended the meeting along with the Director of Policy & Communications.

Grading

15 No report. The lack of any attention to this matter remains a source of frustration to MRG, particularly as the existing grading structure and criteria is seen as a barrier to attracting new members and member progression.

Future Priorities

16 The new MRG members have been asked to indicate their priorities. Sustaining, nurturing and growing the membership of CILT UK, and enablers for this, have to be the principle priorities. Communications is also likely to remain a high priority and we accept that the MRG has found this challenging. The understanding of the grading structure and requirements by members still needs to be improved. Interaction with university students should also be a priority so that ways can be found of retaining them as members. The new Chair and Vice Chair will no doubt indicate the MRG's priorities is due course.

Next Meeting

17 MRG meetings for 2025 have been set for 16 May, 28 July and 29 October.

Paul Le Blond
MRG Chair
10 March 2025