Members of the British Insurance Brokers’ Association (BIBA) will be invited shortly to give their views on proposals to overhaul its governance structure and a new model for segmenting membership in order to provide you with a more tailored approach that better suits your representation needs.

The proposed moves are some of the first to emerge from a full-scale review of BIBA’s strategy and how it responds to its membership which, you will no doubt be aware was launched in 2012 at last year’s conference.

The aim of the strategic review was to build on BIBA’s already strong foundations to ensure that your trade association was strong and fit for purpose to meet the challenges facing your businesses in the 21st century. Consultants Deloitte were appointed to assist BIBA in that process.

BIBA has not been idle in the last year. Six workstreams, made up of BIBA’s Board and Executive, have taken Deloitte’s recommendations to the next level and have spent the last half year in detailed investigation of BIBA’s activities in the key areas of:

- Board Governance (in particular board size, composition, structure, the role of our regional committees);
- Executive team and resource;
- Segmentation of members (improving member engagement and focus, data collection, fee structure);
- ‘One voice’ (how BIBA communicates with its wide range of stakeholders and speaks in a unified voice for the broker);
- Commercial activities; and a
- Code of Conduct (the possible introduction of a code to allow BIBA members to differentiate themselves from other GI intermediaries in the market).

These investigations by the BIBA team have involved visits to all thirteen of our regions where invaluable and diverse feedback has been gained from our members about the review. Thanks to all of you who participated in this first round of consultation, we hope that you respond with as much enthusiasm when called upon again to give us your views. This feedback has allowed the workstreams to develop proposals, which we believe will ensure the right structure to best serve you in the future.

We are now moving to the next stage of the strategic review. Andy Homer, BIBA’s Chairman, who also headed up the steering group which has been guiding the strategic review, said: “The BIBA Board are now in position to discuss in detail how the proposed reforms to make our association more relevant to members are to be implemented. The next phase of consultation will help to validate our proposals, and then we need to move ahead with implementation. There is still much work to be done and I welcome engagement and feedback from all members.”

Steve White, BIBA’s Chief Executive, set out in his keynote speech at BIBA 2013 how we propose to take the review forward on your behalf, subject to consultation with you.

Steve White said: “Given the review’s complexity, we have chosen at conference to focus on the areas that are of such fundamental importance to BIBA that they will be our first priority.”

He identified the proposals from the Segmentation and Board Governance workstreams as being areas for BIBA to prioritise, in particular:

The Segmentation workstream has looked at how we identify major segments of our membership in order to provide our members with a better, more tailored proposition to suit your needs. This workstream has recommended a new model which separates members into five broad segments, namely: Small firms North with a turnover of less than £1m; Small firms South with a turnover of less than £1m; Larger firms with a turnover of greater than £1m; Networks, aggregators, MGAs and other distributors; and UK nationals, London market and international members. Each segment will have representation on the main Board.

The Governance workstream has recommended an overhaul of BIBA’s main Board structure, altering its size and constitution to better reflect how BIBA segments its membership. It proposes that the main Board should have 10 to 12 members in future comprising: A chairman; a deputy chairman; an independent non-executive director; the BIBA CEO plus two others from the Executive; and the balance of the Board made up of member representatives whose selection is based upon the proposed five
segments mentioned in the new model. It is also proposed that there are new Advisory Board structures made up of each segment plus a regional Advisory Board to support the revised Board.

BiBA will be holding a three month consultation with you about the governance and segmentation proposals later this year to ensure that your views are heard. A Dear CEO letter will be going out to the head of your firm in late June. This will contain a consultation paper setting out the proposals in more detail and asking you to submit your views on them to us. This will be followed by an Extraordinary General Meeting at which you will have the opportunity to vote on the proposals before you.

Please take the time to respond. Steve White said: “We want as many BiBA members as possible to participate in the forthcoming consultation. Conference provides an ideal opportunity for our members to come together to discuss the proposals and really thrash things out. This discussion is vital, it’s your trade organisation after all and it’s important that you approve of the proposals to shape BiBA’s future.

“The involvement of BiBA’s members will ensure that this review is a success and that together we achieve our aim of making BiBA one of the UK’s most admired trade associations with a bright future ahead of it.”

The activities of the other workstreams are important and ongoing and will increase in momentum once the outcomes of the governance and segmentation consultation become clearer.