

Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN SCOTLAND

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING (93)

Online Via MS Teams

10:00 on Thursday 14 March 2024

Present: Ann Allen (AA) Chair, Alistair Scott (AS), Angela Bonney (AB), Bruce Ross (BR), Caroline Parkinson (CP), Georgiana Varna (GV), Kirsty Macari (KM) & Lynn Wilson (part)

Staff: Lynne Lineen (LL), Sue Reynolds (SRe), Anja Ekelof (AE), Emelie Borg (EB), Laura Hailey (LH) (Item 6) & Andrea Hepburn (AH – Minutes)

Guest: Sandy Robinson (SRo) & Graeme Walker (GW) PARD

Observer: Eilidh Henderson (EH) & Lizzie Smith (LS)

Apologies: Jim MacDonald (JMacD), Daisy Narayanan (DN) & Sam McCabe (SM)

1. APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Jim MacDonald, Daisy Narayanan & Sam McCabe.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes from the meeting on 8 February 2024 were approved.

All matters arising are up to date.

3. 2024/25 BUSINESS PLAN

LL presented the Business Plan for 2024/25. The Business Plan outlines our plan of work to deliver Corporate Plan 2 which was agreed at the February Board Meeting. It builds on our work to date using learning to demonstrate how design can drive innovation in public service delivery. There will be a continuity of current work as new work comes in. Alongside this we will continue to support capital investment in the health, learning and regeneration sectors.

The emphasis in 2024/25 will be on capital investment planning and local development planning, working with partners to test more strategic/place-scale working in line with the Place Principle, capturing and using the lessons from our work and build awareness of the Place Principle.

Discussion took place and questions were centred primarily around the reduction in demand in the healthcare sector which is due to the pause in capital investment. Likewise the education sector is the same but we have the opportunity to focus on outdoor learning which helps to address climate change. We can draw on the outdoor learning work we have done to date at QMU which is making an impact and influence already.

SRo advised that PARD are working closely with Heather to map out and pick-up workstreams.

The Board felt the plan was clear and made sense and that Audit Committee can see clear reporting and measures on a regular basis.

The Business Plan for 2024/25 was AGREED.

4. STAFF STRUCTURE

LL advised Board that along with developing Corporate Plan 2 and the Business Plan for 2024/25 Leadership Team looked at the current structure and recognised the need to increase flexibility to deliver our work in the most effective and impactful way. The new structure has an activity lead for each workstream to deliver the work and people leads to manage the B1s and B2s – the Directors will continue to manage the B3s. There will also be acting activity and people leads who will cover the main leads in periods of absence. The new structure will allow staff to be involved in more than one workstream and outreach colleagues will be involved in projects from the initial planning stage. This was presented to staff last week and FAQs are being added to regularly.

The Board continues to be very appreciative of the work that everyone in A&DS does. The Board discussed the leadership team's revised staffing structure. The Board noted that this was about ways of working and not about changes in roles or job numbers.

GW advised that A&DS have been keeping PARD up to date and changing ways of working is not in isolation as it is in line with public service reform and is occurring across public sector. PARD are currently having to manage the closure of the Digital Planning programme and staff are being re-deployed elsewhere and posts consolidated.

Both AA and GW offered advice and assistance to the Leadership Team to work through these issues should it be required.

5. STAKEHOLDER PLAN UPDATE

SRe updated that we are looking at the Microsoft platform to streamline the stakeholder work and a paper on this will go the Leadership Team in a few weeks. Key stakeholders will be the responsibility of Leadership Team with Corporate Infrastructure Team gathering the intel. We will also be engaging Board Members in a forward programme and will get events into diaries.

We are developing our USP and AE advised that there is a lot in the Ministerial version of the Corporate Plan 2 around our key USPs and to make these more shareable. Outreach are looking at our campaigning and focus on themes – the language of which will be shared with staff.

KM suggested we looked forward around engagements with RTPi, etc and arrange regular catch-up meetings.

KM mentioned key learnings around digital tools/data analysis. With the change around SG's digital programme there will be further work with the institutions which she is happy to discuss further.

ACTION 1: Pick up discussion with KM on further work with institutions around Digital Strategy.

6. CAT PROJECT UPDATE

LH joined the meeting and presented the Climate Action Towns final report.

The Report was well received and the Board thanked the team for the huge amount of work undertaken during the lifespan of the project. It was also noted that the report and links to resources will be available on the website after the CAT Gathering on 28 March 2024. The tools will be mapped and updated in due course.

AE reminded everyone that the CAT Gathering event in Stirling on 28 March will also be available online.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Architecture Policy Delivery Review

SRe advised there was no further update from the last Board Meeting.

SRo advised there has been a delay in taking this forward but the first phase is complete and they are at the stakeholder engagement part now. The RFA should be completed by the end of March 2024 and this is likely to set out recommendations for change. PARD are working closely with Jim and the team. This has been a positive process and has formed part of the pilot phase for Public Service Reform.

Corporate Plan 2

JMacD sent a note round a few days ago. EB advised that we are awaiting on final feedback to incorporate this into the final document.

Accommodation

SRe advised there is no update on this. Our proposal has gone to the Minister and we are still waiting to hear back. SRo advised there has been a hold up but hopes to have a decision soon.

Deputy Chair Proposals for Main Board and Audit Committee

SRe advised that it has been agreed that KM has been appointed Deputy Chair of Board and AB has been appointed Deputy Chair of Audit Committee.

It was noted last week's Audit Committee meeting was not quorate. KM advised that there had been agenda items that could not be agreed due to not being quorate which ultimately impacts on staff and work. Audit was shaped so the Board could be more strategic as Audit were designated the decision processes.

Revised Terms of Reference for Audit Committee will be brought to next month's Board.

AA encouraged all Board Members to attend Audit meetings meantime.

Any thoughts anyone has with regards to Audit Committee to send a note to AA/KM.

ACTION 2 Board Members to send any thoughts around Audit Committee to AA/KM.

Surf Awards

LL updated that we have co-sponsored the SURF Award "Improving Scotland's Places" for several years but we are unable to financially contribute to this going forward therefore STP will be the sole sponsor of the award in 2024. We have been in contact with STP and SURF to update them and to express how keen we are to continue to collaborate and support them in other ways.

Euan Leitch from SURF has responded positively welcoming future collaboration, and in particular thanked Gill for the presentation on A&DS work in Stewarton at a recent SURF event.

Expenses

LL reminded Board Members to get any travel expenses in ASAP due to the end of the financial year. Any pre-booked travel for the CAT event in Stirling or the Falkirk Town Centre Roadshow can be submitted in advance.

Date of next meeting – 10.00 am on Thursday 18 April 2024.

The meeting closed at 11.45 am.



Signed:
Ann Allen, Chair

Date: 18 April 2024