

# Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

## **ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN SCOTLAND**

### **BOARD MEETING (102)**

#### **Online Via MS Teams**

**10.30 am on Wednesday 9 April 2025**

**Present:** Ann Allen (AA) Chair, Alistair Scott (AS), Angela Bonney (AB), Bruce Ross (BR), Caroline Parkinson (CP), Georgiana Varga (GV), Kirsty Macari (KM), Lynn Wilson (LW) & Sam McCabe (SM)

**Staff:** Jim MacDonald, (CEO), Lynne Lineen (LL), Sue Reynolds (SRe), Heather Claridge (HC), Kate Hendry (KH) (Item 5), Soirse Docherty (SD) (Item 5) & Andrea Hepburn (AH - Minutes)

**Guests:** Sandy Robinson (SRo) Planning, Architecture & Regeneration Directorate, Scottish Government

#### **1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **2. APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were received from Daisy Narayanan.

#### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING**

The previous Minutes were AGREED.

##### Matters Arising

Jan 25 No 4 - SRe advised that the Board Skills Matrixes have now been completed.

Jan 25 No 5 - JMacD updated that he has met with the board shadows. Formal feedback has been sought, and a report will be provided to the Board to inform future shadowing arrangements.

The Board felt the shadow contributions were valuable and once we are through the months ahead we can explore this again. The Chair wished the benefits of this to be recorded and thanks will be passed to them in June. SRo will also feedback the success of this to SG, noting that A&DS has set a good example for other public bodies.

#### **4. CEO MONTHLY UPDATE**

Members asked for an update on the business planning process. JMacD advised that we are on track to present the detailed plan to the May meeting.

KM updated on the meeting herself and JMacD had with Mr McKee, Minister for Public Finance, last week. This was our first formal meeting with Mr McKee which was positive and the Minister was engaged in what we had to say. There were good outcomes and suggestions on how we could speak to other groups and the role we can play in public sector reform. JMacD spoke about the value of our work, particularly in health and the value of skill sharing. Mr McKee is keen to undertake a site visit and we are liaising with his office to line up a site visit.

Members were pleased to hear about the connections to other parts of Scottish Government and the Chair encouraged people with contacts in SG to share these with JMacD.

LW asked if there would be value in her asking if any of her service design colleagues could give a presentation on how they can influence the SG estate? SRO advised that Cat McCauley at SG can also assist with this and is happy to put her in touch.

**Action 1:** JMacD, SRO and LW to liaise on the potential for discussions with service designers.

JMacD was asked how the actions from the staff survey are progressing. He confirmed that an all-staff workshop will take place tomorrow and that we will work through the outcomes of this and update at the May meeting.

JMacD updated on the Gateway Review - the initial meeting took place earlier this week and there will be follow up meetings next week prior to the report being sent to us. This is the first piece of external scrutiny on the review and has been commissioned to provide a sense of how well fitted we are for this. The headlines from this will be shared once we have the report and an update will be provided to the May Board.

The report was NOTED.

## **5. 20TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING**

KH and SD joined the meeting and SD updated on our 20th anniversary (1 April). We are embarking on an awareness raising campaign and the plan is for 20 weeks to celebrate past achievements, reflecting on a different campaign each week. This is a work in progress and we're identifying projects to feature, grow social media and engage with stakeholders. We will not be tackling the review over the 20 weeks but this fits in with the review work and will promote our impact so far and will be developed as we go. It will be online only with an event later in the year. There will be a page developed for this on the website identifying the projects we are highlighting.

The Board felt it was a good plan to keep the story going and share the change in the landscape but we're not specifically talking about the future and should we start building this in? It was felt possibly 20 activities over 20 weeks was maybe a bit much and maybe it should be spaced out more along with what happens in the last six months of the year. JMacD confirmed we are relaxed about looking at the timeline and it gives us time to strengthen a good proposal.

The Chair summed up that it is a lot to take away with the key being stakeholder engagement and debate. There is an opportunity to be broader on what we want to get out of this.

The report was NOTED.

## **6. BOARD SKILLS AUDIT**

SRe thanked members for completing the skills matrix audit. The areas we fall short on are IT and Legal – we don't feel these are a great risk as we have a contract with an IT company and we can look at SG systems or call on Anderson Strathearn where required for legal advice. Everything else had at least one Board member with an excellent understanding of the topic.

Going forward do we feel we have the skills to support Leadership Team with the review work? Could Board members run coaching sessions with staff, eg AB could run a session on comms.

It was felt that IT and legal are quite broad and we may need to think wider than SG's resources. It was noted that IT and digital should be treated separately and where does AI sit in this? Would there be merit in having an Advisory Steering Group to enable us to bring in expertise when required? Is anything missing on either the skills we have or on the skills matrix form? We can also look at if we're growing in the right direction during the Board appraisal process.

JMacD & SRe can take the discussions away and can capture if there is a need for more along with considering if skills are required in staffing or Board advisory areas then this can be brought back to the May meeting.

The report was NOTED.

## **7 & 8. FRAUD & ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY & WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

SRe updated on the Fraud and Anti-Bribery and Whistleblowing policies that regularly come to Board for noting. These have recently undergone minor updates and, along with various other HR policies, have been uploaded on Sage HR for staff to read and sign once they have seen them. They are also updated on the staff hub. As a follow up we will be carrying out bite sized training sessions on our policies at Thursday assemblies.

In addition to this we will be utilising the civil service learning platform where staff will need to sign up to six or eight training themes. This will provide a completed list of training which will link into appraisal forms so we can see what everyone has done over the year.

The question was asked on how Board would deal with concerns that were notified to them or if Board are notified of concerns that Leadership Team are dealing with? The skills matrix can be utilised and training can be provided on policies for Board. Any concerns raised to Leadership are highlighted in the CEO Governance Report to Audit which also covers fraud and whistleblowing.

The Chair advised that Board need to be aware of the policies but these relate to staff and Leadership Team manage these in the correct way. JMacD and the directors also have a monthly meeting with sponsors and JMacD has regular meetings with SRO who can also be made aware of any issues as and when they occur.

SRO also noted that SG have recently launched information on Copilot and how SG should be using it to streamline work – going forward we will also be looking into this.

The policies were NOTED.

## 9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### Publishing of Review Outcomes

SRO updated that we hope to publish the review work outcomes in the next 4 to 5 weeks. This will be shared with JMacD first.

**Action 2:** JMacD to let Board members know when this is done.

Date of next meeting – 10.30 am on Wednesday 14 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm.



Signed:  
**Kirsty Macari, Deputy Chair**

Date: 14 May 2025