

# Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

## **ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN SCOTLAND**

### **BOARD MEETING (104)**

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

**10.00 am on Wednesday 14 May 2025**

**Present:** Kirsty Macari, Deputy Chair (KM), Alistair Scott (AS), Bruce Ross (BR), Caroline Parkinson (CP), Daisy Narayanan (DN), Sam McCabe (SM) & Georgiana Varna (GV) (from Item 7)

**Staff:** Jim MacDonald, (CEO), Sue Reynolds (SRe), Heather Claridge (HC), Lesley Riddell-Robertson (LRR) (Item 6), Laura Hainey (LH) (Item 6), Gillian Black (GB) (Item 7) & Andrea Hepburn (AH - Minutes)

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

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

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Board members were updated that the Deputy Chair of the Main Board, Kirsty Macari, will temporarily become Chair of the Main Board and will step down as Chair of Audit Committee (as per the terms of reference). The Deputy Chair of Audit Committee, Angela Bonney, will become temporary Chair of Audit Committee. These appointments are initially to cover a period of three months' absence by Ann Allen, the permanent Chair of the Main Board. The Board members were in full support of the plan and noted their willingness to support KM and AB in their temporary roles.

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

Apologies were received from Ann Allen, Angela Bonney & Lynn Wilson.

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

The previous Minutes were AGREED.

AS reminded JMacD of the commitment to circulate draft minutes more promptly after meetings and asked when this would be implemented. JMacD confirmed that this would be implemented immediately.

**Action 1:** Draft minutes to be circulated within one week of the relevant meeting.

## Matters Arising

Jan 25 No 4 - SRe advised that the Board Skills Matrix results have been digested and we're building this into future agendas.

Jan 25 No 5 - JMacD confirmed that the meeting with the board shadows has taken place, and they will be invited to attend the June meeting, being their last formal involvement.

**Action 2:** Board shadows to be invited to June meeting.

Apr 25 No 2 – Sro updated that the provisional date for publication of the review is 17 June, subject to ministerial approval.

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

The report was NOTED.

### **5. 2025/26 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE**

JMacD presented the paper which builds on a previous paper (April 2025) to provide a more detailed description of the work planned in 2025/26.

Board members noted that 40% of resources are allocated to review work and asked if this will decline over time. JMacD confirmed that this is expected in the medium-long term, but harder to gauge for 2025/26.

The Board noted that the visual representation is useful and that it is helpful to see how outreach is broken down. Following discussion, it was agreed that each project should have outreach linked into it.

**Action 3:** Look at tying outreach into projects within the Business Plan.

JMacD was asked how staff are currently feeling. He advised that with a more detailed forward programme and the review work now forming part of everyone's day-to-day work, his sense is that people are clearer about what is required of them. However, he also noted that in the context of the review, staffing changes, and wider public service reform, it remains a challenging environment within which to work.

It was noted that the implementation of Project for the Web is now giving staff a lot of value as they see the work stages. The current discovery work has started with people working well together.

Board asked about resources being tight (both people and financial) and are we comfortable with this? JMacD acknowledged that this is a significant issue, not least as the plan was prepared prior to HC's now confirmed departure in July. SRO advised that the change review adds to disruption and a reduction in staff increases the risks. PARD are looking at resources in SG to help us mitigate aspects of this.

The Board AGREED the draft Business Plan for 2025/26.

### **6. LEARNING LOCALLY – CO-DESIGNING SUSTAINABLE LEARNING SETTINGS**

LRR and LH joined the meeting and made a presentation on Learning Locally – Co-Designing Sustainable Learning Settings. The presentation was well received by the Board. The full report on this will be published within the next few weeks and will be shared with Board.

The Board noted this emphasises the importance of co-design and inspires designers of the future. The Board asked if there was a sense of some of the schools continuing with this work - some are continuing the discussions and are keen to continue. It was noted that the legacy of this is important and Board asked what happens with learning and resources on the website post review? This will stay on the website and lots of the learning we can use going forward. It was noted that this shows our strengths as we can build on something and pivot it to something else keeping design throughout

The Chair thanked LRR and LH for an interesting presentation and the work carried out on this project.

The report was NOTED.

## **7. KEY AGENCIES UPDATE**

GB joined the meeting to present an overview of the Key Agencies Group (KAG) work. Due to the review we will be stepping back from this but are bringing out the lessons learned from the key piece of work. The project started in 2023 when 22 local authorities were asked to support this and six were identified to work with a five step process. We've provided leadership with KAG and built on trust and respect and the key outputs have been important.

The Board felt this was comprehensive and the impacts would have been good to do with all the local authorities but hopefully those that were selected will share the learning with the others. The legacy of a great piece of work was noted and this will translate to lessons learned as it will transition through to other things. It was also noted that Scottish Government colleagues are now engaged more directly with local authorities and we expect to have a strong role on the advocacy side of this.

The Board thanked GB for this and the amount of work the small team put into it and hope that local authorities reflect on what has been gained from this work and we see threads of it going forward.

The report was NOTED.

## **8. REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT UPDATE**

Responding to the need for additional project management support, Board emphasised that importance of the brief for this resource setting out measures for success and the need for us as clients to be in control of it.

JMacD noted the Board's comments and confirmed that this would be factored into any appointment.

## **9. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

The draft MoU was tabled for approval. JMacD advised that tentative plans are in place for the Cabinet Secretary to announce this partnership shortly after the next Board meeting hence the decision to present the MoU before all the issues within it are resolved. JMacD confirmed that should these issues not be resolved, or if further issues emerge, the MoU will be re-presented to Board.

SRO added that the partnership is principally about enhancing existing collaboration and is not intended to introduce additional accountability and/or reporting lines.

The Board welcomed that partnership and its adoption of a softer, more informal approach.

The Board APPROVED the MoU subject to the caveats and additional points discussed.

## **10. REVISED A&DS RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

JMacD presented a revised version for approval, noting that there are no significant issues to highlight. Members were grateful for sight of the revised version and asked that consistent use of words be used in relation to “environmental, economic, and social” throughout the paper.

**Action 4:** Revise the response to ensure the words “environmental, economic, and social” are used consistently throughout the paper.

The Report was APPROVED and the Board appreciated the value of the response.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### Board Registers of Interests

The Chair reminded everyone to update these and send them back.

### Board Annual Appraisals

The Chair advised she will be picking this up with JMacD and will be in contact shortly thereafter.

The Chair thanked everyone for their help and support recently and in the months going forward as we move through the Review.

Director of Design

HC advised Board that she leaves mid-July to take up a position with Glasgow City Region. On behalf of the Board, KM offered her congratulations on this and thanked HC for her contribution to A&DS.

Date of next meeting – all day in person in Edinburgh Futures Institute on Wednesday 11 June 2025.

The meeting closed at 12.00 noon.

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'K Macari', is positioned above the printed name.

Signed:

**Kirsty Macari, Chair**

Date: 11 June 2025