

Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN SCOTLAND

BOARD MEETING (105)

In Person at Edinburgh Futures Institute (Room 3.05)

10.15 am Wednesday 11 June 2025

Present: Kirsty Macari (KM)(Chair), Angela Bonney (AB), Bruce Ross (BR), Caroline Parkinson (CP), Daisy Narayanan (DN) & Lynn Wilson (LW)

Staff: Jim MacDonald, (CEO), Sue Reynolds (SRe), Lynne Lineen (LL) & Andrea Hepburn (AH - Minutes)

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

Apologies: Ann Allen, Alistair Scott & Sam McCabe

Absent: Georgiana Varna

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Ann Allen, Alistair Scott & Sam McCabe.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

The previous Minutes were AGREED.

Matters Arising

Jan 25 No 4: SRe confirmed two scheduled trainings related to the Board Skills Matrix.

Apr 25 No 1: The meeting with Sandy Robinson regarding service designers is now confirmed for 16 June.

Apr 25 No 2: The Review will be published on 17 June and briefings will be circulated to Board Members ahead of this.

May 25 No 1: Draft minutes are now being issued to all members post meeting.

May 25 No 2: Eilidh Henderson (Board shadow) will join the meeting at lunch today we will look at a plan to continue the shadow programme.

May 25 No 3: We will be looking to put outreach into the projects post July when our work is clearer after the Discovery Units work.

4. CEO MONTHLY UPDATE

The report was tabled to highlight events since the previous meeting. The main point to note is a change in Director of Design - Steve Malone has been appointed to 31 March 2026 and we are working with Heather Claridge's new employers to put out a coordinated communications message on this.

Questions were asked around the UK spending review and opportunities around digital work – there are a lot of engagement possibilities around this and it was agreed that it is good to see the direction of travel. Time will tell if we're finding balance now the Discovery Units have a sense of purpose - we need to implement the work in the Review alongside other stuff but this is manageable.

Questions were asked around staff retention under the recruitment freeze and how much we can use AI? SRe updated that a policy is being issued around a low level AI introduction but the next steps are expensive and we need to consider if this is beneficial. SRO advised that SG are piloting Copilot as it is fundamental to equip staff to deal with different ways of doing things - if we have any issues we should speak to sponsors if resources are required.

It was noted that secondments are expensive as they incur VAT - strategic partnerships provide more flexibility and parts of SG explore areas to assign people to for informal arrangements.

The CEO Monthly Update Report was NOTED.

5. 2025 STAFF SURVEY

LL reported on the latest actions following this year's staff survey. Following the recent 1-1 interviews and all-staff workshop facilitated by external consultants we have identified a series of actions to address the principal issues as follows.

- Thursday assembly and how better to use it;
- Review existing channels of communication;
- Future structure of the organisation;
- Revisit our values and put together a working together charter.

LL acknowledged that there are still some concerns and that further work may required once the consultants have provided their final report. The next staff survey will be conducted in December/January which will provide a useful gauge of our progress in addressing the issues.

As regards support mechanisms for Leadership Team, it was confirmed that the consultants have been retained for this purpose and Board Members can offer mentoring support as required.

The Board welcomed the amount of work going into this.

The Staff Survey Report was NOTED.

6. OUTCOMES REPORT 2024/25

JMacD presented an evaluation of our work in 2024/25. Owing to the impact of the Review, resources were redeployed from front-line work which had an impact on our delivery of this. As a consequence, we will refresh the evaluation framework for this year. The Board noted the positives from this and how we have benefited from recent work promoting relationships with others at events etc.

Members asked about the reputational risk of some work ceasing. JMacD confirmed that in these instances, efforts are being made to engage those affected and to manage the withdrawal process sensitively. To date no major issues have been reported.

Members also questioned why Outcome 2 remains given the reduced emphasis on place issues flowing from the review.

Action 1: JMacD to arrange for clarification on Outcome 2 and its continued relevance.

The Board passed on thanks to team for this work.

The Outcomes Report was NOTED.

7. REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

The Review Implementation Update was NOTED.

8. RISK APPETITE

SRe advised that work on our risk appetite is ongoing in light of the Scottish Government's Risk Management Schedule published in April. We have not refreshed our Risk Appetite Statement since 2019 and there are new headings and fourteen different risk definitions to assess whereas there were four before.

Seven of the headings were taken as read and will be kept the same, Property and Security don't relate directly to us and the others were discussed briefly. It was decided to leave these until after the afternoon workshop and come back to them later. It was also discussed whether Projects should come under the same heading as Operational. Once this is finalised we will come back to review it regularly.

The Refresh of Risk Appetite was discussed and it was AGREED that this would be revisited after this afternoon's discussions.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr McKee

JMacD confirmed that Mr McKee will visit the Parkhead Healthcare hub on 20 June and that Steve Malone will represent us. LL offered to share information on this project with the Board.

Action 2: LL to share info on the Parkhead Hub project with the Board.

The Board also asked if there was anything climate change related with the healthcare projects and LL agreed to check this.

Action 3: LL to check if there is anything climate related with the healthcare projects.

2026 Holyrood Elections

Board Members asked what we should be doing ahead of these, and if we can proactively go cross party to raise our profile. SRO advised that there will be guidance around this in due course.

Audit Committee Update

AB updated on this morning's Audit Meeting which covered the press release for the Review publication; short term sickness was down last year although long term was up; staff numbers are reducing; we spent out last year– the VSS shortfall costs were met by sponsors; health and schools work will continue the rest of the work will cease and internal audit provided reasonable assurances.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 10 September 2025.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm.



Kirsty Macari, Chair

Date: 17 September 2025