

Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN SCOTLAND

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Online Via MS Teams

10.00 am on Thursday 14 May 2020

Present: Ann Allen (AA) Chair, Sue Evans (SE), Alistair Scott (AS), Angela Bonney (AB), Bruce Ross (BR), Caroline Parkinson (CP), Daisy Narayanan (DN), Graham Hill (GH), Kirsty Macari (KM) & Lynn Wilson (LW)

Staff: Jim MacDonald, (CEO), Heather Chapple (HC), Lynne Lineen (LL), Sue Reynolds (SR), Anja Ekelof (AE), Andrea Hepburn (AH - Minutes), Val Macbeath (Observing)

Guest: Ian Gilzean, PAD (IG)

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair welcomed everyone to the online Board Meeting. There were no apologies and no declarations of interest. It was agreed that the meeting would be recorded and the recording destroyed after the Minutes are prepared.

2 PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The previous Minutes were AGREED.

The following was reported in relation to outstanding actions:-

Feb 20 No 2 The Strategy Outcome links being included against projects in the Business Plan updates will be incorporated for the June meeting.

3 REVIEW OF 2019/20

The Review of 2019/20 was tabled. JMacD advised it was put together at short notice and is primarily for information as it sits alongside the Annual Report and Annual Review. The new format was well received and it was felt that the more outcome focused approach stands us in good stead for future reporting with the new strategy. It was noted that Number 7 says "Outstanding" and should read "Not Complete".

Action 1 : Update Item 7 in Review from Outstanding to Not Complete.

AA asked about the capacity to do everything on the plan. JMacD advised that Case Studies is not on the plan due to our capacity to deliver what we set out to do. Capacity to deliver will become a bigger issue when we move into the new strategy period as there will be questions asked about what we need to do to achieve our objectives. We need to look at how we structure our projects as we over-reached ourselves last year. We are looking at how to align projects to the strategy and when resources are reallocated everyone is clear on the implications. Management Team have a work planning exercise and are trying to tackle issues before they arise.

SE happy for forward plans to be developed but recognises decisions will need to be taken to alter the course.

It was requested that an additional field is inserted to advise on the time period of the project. SR advised that this Report was put together quickly and future Reports will contain more information for the Board. SE is happy to chat with JMacD re project evaluation support. SR advised that some Corporate Services resources have been reallocated to allow JMacD, SR and EB to dedicate more time to this.

Action 2 : Time periods of projects to be inserted into the reporting template.

Action 3 : SE and JMacD to chat re project evaluation support.

The report was NOTED.

4 IMPACT OF COVID-19

AA advised that Covid-19 has impacted on everyone and how we work and live. We should reflect on how it impacts on us and our work with communities and how we work more widely with communities and in more remote areas. How do we support our staff, create a presence nationally and how do we play a part in the strategic conversations.

GH updated that we have responded by thinking ahead and in particular A&DS have found new ways of working. There are opportunities arising from Covid-19 that are a positive but there will be negatives impacts. Three breakout groups are organised to discuss Placemaking Communicating and Strategy.

The groups broke out and reconvened to report back.

Placemaking – AA reported on a good conversation looking at short term and long opportunities. Short term opportunities and what A&DS role should be – Atkins are doing some work on safe standard guidance and IG's team are reviewing Place Standard and how that can be adapted. We can look at how things are being adapted elsewhere. Evaluating and changing things can take a long time. How can we be agile in what we do and where we focus. Is there a role for us around Policies as they are coming out and a review of Place Standards in commenting and advising. Can we take our existing tools and demonstrate how they can work in the world of physical distancing. If we do this can we be seen to be part of the Government initiative around restarting the economy? IG offered to have a conversation with JMacD on setting this out. We need to engage externally and be agile.

DN advised she is happy to strengthen the links with A&DS on the work Sustrans are doing just now.

Communicating – AE reported that the group discussed being agile and how we are experienced in delivering through digital means. Certain sectors we will need to work harder with as they are struggling with the technical aspect of some digital platforms. There are areas of digital poverty in disadvantaged communities and we don't want to leave them behind. We need simple clear messages that are not over-repeated. Positives are the remote accessibility to conferences both to participate and deliver. Some of the messaging may need tweaked but our work is already tackling some of the issues coming up and there is potential to reach current and new audiences.

Strategy – JMacD reported that the scenarios looked at are a mixture of dark and positive - dark are picking up the pieces of decision making that has been rushed! On positives there is more recognition of the benefits of joined up approaches and the importance of making more from less. There will be significant changes in the use of physical spaces and there will be

new ways of doing things. Life may be based around a community sharing model. How will we support and champion design? How will it impact on our strategy? There may be a loss of capacity and we may deliver our work differently, there will be an increased focus on care of the elderly and increased emphasis on storytelling.

It was noted that the Strategy is for 10 years – Covid will be behind us by then but climate change will be here for the long term. It was felt that a lot of the climate issues will benefit from Covid but a lot of issues will impact for several years.

GH thanked everyone for their participation but we should not lose sight of the long term aims. This is the start of the engagement and we will build in the chat and comments.

AA summed up a useful conversation and the challenge is where to focus but we don't want to spread ourselves too thin.

Action 4: JMacD and DN to discuss A&DS support of Sustrans work.

Action 5: JMacD to liaise with IG on how we can support government priorities.

GH will continue to support A&DS on this and JMacD and AA will think about the next steps and how this is fed into the strategy. AA thanked everyone for their input and SR for setting everything up.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Audit Committee Update

SE felt it would be beneficial for the Board to have an update on the Audit Planning for this year. LL updated that the recent Audit Planning Meeting took place online and all the audit work will also be done online. The timetable will require to be modified slightly but we are confident of achieving the deadlines and have the Annual Report and Accounts ready for signing on time.

SE advised that this is only possible due to the work done over the last 18 months or so by the Corporate Services Team on 365 and working remotely which has put us in a good position to meet the deadlines.

AA wished on behalf of the Board to thank all the staff for the way they responded in the first few days and how effectively they are now working.

Action 6: JMacD to pass thanks to staff from the Board on how they have responded to the new ways of working remotely.

Corporate Strategy

JMacD updated that we are in the middle of the group sessions which are working well. We hope to have the basis of a proposal at the June Meeting therefore the more that can get done now the more we can develop the framework. If the June meeting date is moved back a week it relieves some of the pressure to get a more developed proposal to the Board. The Board were in favour of moving the June date.

Action 7: Revised date for June Board meeting to be sought.

SURF Awards 2020

JMacD advised that we sponsor the "Most Improved Place" category at the SURF Awards and have been asked to participate in the judging. It is felt that it would be appropriate to offer the chance to a Board Member. Anyone interested please let JMacD know.

Action 8: Board Members interested in SURF Awards judging let JMacD know.

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in extraordinary circumstances.

The Meeting closed at 12.10 pm.

Signed: 
Ann Allen, Chair

Date 18 June 2020