

Architecture & Design Scotland

Ailtearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

BOARD STRATEGY DISCUSSION

9 Bakehouse Close, 146 Canongate, Edinburgh

1.00 pm on Monday 18th April 2016

Present: Karen Anderson (KA), Sandy Beattie (SB), Martin Crookston (MC), David Chisholm (DC), Sue Evans (SE), Graham Hill (GH), Graham Ross (GR), Alan Sim (AS)

In attendance: Jim MacDonald (JMacD) and for Item 3 : Heather Chapple (HC) ; Diarmaid Lawlor (DL) ; Lynne Lineen (LL)

Apologies

Apologies were noted from Andrew Burrell.

Board Development and Succession

KA outlined the purpose of the discussion and directed members' attention toward the questions outlined in the related paper.

The discussion established broad agreement that the balance of skills on the Board should continue to ensure adequate sectoral knowledge/expertise is represented. It was also suggested that the Board could benefit from strengthening its skills around finance/audit, PR/Marketing and community development. In addition there was some interest in exploring the potential value that someone from an entirely different field might add.

There was separately agreement that the process of appointment should be much less arduous for potential members and a desire on the Board's part to have greater influence on the outcome, e.g. through setting the selection criteria.

In discussion, the issue of paid appointments was discussed. This highlighted a range of views with some suggesting they are unnecessary in contrast to others who felt they should be retained.

MC requested guidance from the CEO on handling his intended departure.

Action1: JMcD to discuss the issues raised with sponsor team and seek clarification on the handling of member resignations at or before their term of office.

Corporate Strategy: Review and Refresh

JMcD outlined how the review/refresh of our corporate strategy would take place. Broadly this happens in two parts: a review of the current plan involving reporting on how we met or not our objectives and the related preparation of a new strategy for the period 2017/20. It was stressed within this that it will be important to ensure that the former supports and informs the latter.

Board endorsed the approach and looked forward to seeing formal proposals at the May Board meeting.

Action 2: JMcD to present formal proposals for the review of the corporate strategy at the May Board

Strategic Priorities for 2017/18

HC, LL and DL joined the meeting and KA introduced the discussion by outlining the basis for the supporting paper and how this work might inform the new strategy.

The meeting then broke into 3 discussion groups to examine each of the topics (housing, roads/streets and stewardship) in more detail.

The discussion groups were asked to consider the following issues:

- Things we have done/are doing to address the topic
- Things we are not doing that might help
- The things that we want to do
- The next steps we need to take

Each group then fed-back their ideas which are summarised below.

Housing

There is a general recognition that in Scotland, housing is not right, ie not working: not enough supply, not enough quality, not enough wider benefit. The problem is big. The key question for A&DS is: what is our ability to influence?

Approach:

- *Mapping need:*

Central to any A&DS response is a better understanding of our target audience. This includes strategic parties who can make a difference at policy and investment levels, key individuals and influencers within organisations, and organisations themselves. We need a better map of need. This should include an understanding of the issues, aims and needs of key individuals, who we need to identify and build relations with. It should include an understanding of how these individuals respond to challenges around speed, efficiency and volume. Within this map, the central debate for A&DS is around enabling quality.

- *Shaping 'helpful' support:*

There are two scales of support. *The first targets the strategic scale decisionmakers*, who include Government, investors and market disruptors like new pension funds. These participants are interested in outcomes, deals, funds, bundles of land, and quality as a vehicle to achieve their objectives [the A&DS role], often with a focus on consumer need and drives. This work is about networking at a bigger level than A&DS and needs partnership working with organisations like SCDI. This is a package approach to support *The second target are officers in local authorities who are at the decisionmaking coalface*. Time pressured, in a landscape of reducing resources, outsourcing, competing priorities and shifting skills, these officers have a lot of responsibility, often a lot of interest but little time. And, much time is taken up in repeating issues or coming up with policy that mirrors policy already done elsewhere in the country. They have a need for quick, pragmatic and accessible information which is easily useable; this may include standard clauses, foundational policy text, templates or swot support teams on specialist issues. It may also include building fantastic events, great experiences to network and boost morale, with

access to skills and knowledge beyond the day to day. This is a mix of product and package approach to support.

- *Communicating:*

Building better awareness of the quality agenda on the one hand, and the specific A&DS support available to the different audiences on the other is critical. This requires a communications strategy of at least three parts. The first is about pointing specific resources to specific audiences, building support by being pointedly helpful; and inviting those who have received support to promote the value of what we do. The second is creating the right setting at the right time with the right people to do the influencing work. This may be about dinners, breakfast meetings etc which require investment. The third is about a broadcast/campaign approach around the quality agenda, founded on the work and support to the key audiences. The communication work is a programme of activity at Corporate A&DS level.

Transport

Some cultures of working with infrastructure can limit the benefits of this investment by focusing on specific operational and technical targets and metrics. This has resulted in fragmented adoption of Designing Streets. In road design though, there are some initiatives like Scenic Routes and the A9 which are trying to shape places. The challenge is mainstreaming and rewarding these cultures by being clear on the investment benefits of these approaches, and on the service support A&DS can offer.

Approach:

Two approaches were discussed:

- *Campaign*

Beginning with an understanding of the current level of adoption of Designing Streets across the transport, planning and decision making system [which we estimate is currently low, say about 20%], we establish a target and a timescale. For example, this might be to increase adoption to 75% of local authorities by 2018.

Next, the structure of the campaign would be based on facts and examples, targeting peer to peer influence ie getting local authorities to adopt and influence other authorities and colleagues within their authorities. This is about supporting the constituency who want to adopt Designing Streets, and supporting them to negotiate with a constituency who hold on to older ideas like the Strathclyde guidelines.

A key element of the campaign would focus on benefits, clearly articulated in terms of say green infrastructure and sustainability, infrastructure, quality of life.

Building the audience would be about leveraging existing allies and building new partners, say campaigning organisations like the RISPB.

The overall campaign design then needs research, alliances, models and metrics. A focus might be to inform a future review of 'Designing Streets'.

- *Tests of change:*

The focus of the road design discussion was about promoting the whole experience of the landscapes connected by the infrastructure, not just the efficiency of the road. This might be achieved by building positive messages to re-inforce the approach and behaviours of projects like the A9. It might also be based on building on existing relationships with key people in Transport Scotland like Mike Baxter and Roy Brannan, who are aware of A&DS and the design agenda. What they need is a clear articulation of the 'how' of a design approach; how it relates to the Team Scotland thinking, how it relates to addressing the perceived threat of a suburbanised countryside, maximising public benefit and making things better. A clear pitch to these key decisionmakers is needed, with a 'tests of change'

approach, which links to change strategies already in place within Scottish Government and its agency around major policy areas and outcomes.

Stewardship

The management of building and places to sustain communities and enhance value [in different ways] is seen as a key issue, re-inforced by the experience of recent visits to Laurieston in Glasgow. However, the narrative of stewardship and the work of A&DS in this area is fragmented. The challenge is to shape a coherent narrative, anchored in specific policy areas targeting specific groups, particularly in the light of public sector cuts, shifting responsibilities and models of management.

Approach:

- *Easy wins:*

A 'hearts and minds' messaging campaign to support the idea and principles of place stewardship

- *Collect evidence:*

The pattern of stewardship is spatially differentiated. This is sometimes due to the participation and investment by different organisations. In some cases, it is due to the spatial distribution of poverty and deprivation[evidenced by JRF research in Scotland]. The issue then is about institutional priority setting. The challenge is about building evidence to change behaviour to maximise benefits. The challenge is also about understanding emerging models of management and maintenance, particularly in a climate where public authorities seek to offload services to third party providers and communities.

- *Find examples:*

A suggestion was made to find examples of good and bad stewardship in each of the cities in Scotland/bigger urban areas, looking at long term costs and benefits. This would enable understanding of different categories of solution in different settings, evaluated against a hypothesis of placemaking.

- *Place Goal:*

Establishing 'place goals' building on examples like Countesswells to drive clear, cross departmental agreement on the kind of place we want and the outcomes we want to achieve after 10 years should drive capital investment, and the necessary stewardship to achieve these goals. This device of setting goals to bind collaboration and investment across time has a lot of potential. It needs though targeting at long term institutional players, organisations who will stay with an issue/place over the long term. This sits firmly in the realm of informing the client requirement stage of project development; the strategic brief.

- *Whole life costing:*

SfT are looking at whole life costs for buildings and the business case stage of public investment. ICE and the municipal engineering associations have looked at public realm maintenance costs, and HCA/English Partnerships/Transport for London have financial models around this issue. However, there is no model which calculates the cost of poorly stewarded places on community or policy outcomes, nor are there funds like housing investment who pick up on this issue as part of the investment case. More research is needed.

The consensus was that the groups had established the basis for potential areas of work and that management team should now look at these and identify how best to take these forward as part of establishing the new strategy.

AOB

- i) Influencing Research: MC confirmed that the work with BEFS was now at an end and that there were no plans for further work in this area. KA asked that members consider whether/how A&DS might exert influence in some way and feed this in to the corporate strategy process.