

MINUTES OF MEETING

3rd February 2014

The Agenda for this meeting:

- 1 Architects Scores
- 2 SoN
- 3 Sub Teams
- 4 Leadership Meeting
- 5 AOB
- 6 Next Meetings

Present: Geof Care (Chair) – GC, Trevor Boyland – TB, Paul Chapman – PC, Bryan Dedman - BD, Riana Welman – RW (Minutes), and Caroline Darvell – CD

Apologies: None

1. Architects Scores

To recap: The 3 architects invited to interview were Allen Associates, John Finch Partnership and MEB Design. The architects were each interviewed on different days over 3 weeks and to help the team decide who to chose Geof drew up an 'Architect Interview Matrix' and another document called 'Redevelopment: Architects' Company Information'. Both documents are attached to these minutes.

While the matrix was valuable, we recognised that for each person certain criteria bore more importance than others and therefore the overall scores would not give a fair assessment. There was a lot of discussion around the competence, presentation, empathy and fees of the architects and whether a Christian architect was important. We weighed up information from all the building visits. Each team member had very different views about these factors.

Riana was not able to attend any of the interviews with the Architects due to work commitments and therefore felt that there were gaps in her knowledge. Riana discussed the company information document with the other team members. Riana was concerned that John Finch Partnership only has one architect and although John Finch Partnership have been in business since 1960 there is the risk of engaging this architect and that for unforeseen reasons he is not able to complete the project. Both Allen Associates and MEB come highly recommended. Both firms have been in business since the 1980's and both firms have more than one architect and have more ecclesiastic experience. Riana did have reservations about Allen Associates due to the fact that Ralph Allen is semi-retired and therefore there is a question over whether he will be able to complete the project should he be appointed. However, after a lengthy discussion with the team Riana voted for Allen Associates as first, MEB Design as second and John Finch Partnership as her third choice. Riana did not score the firms individually.

Initially Caroline felt that she couldn't decide and said that for her evidence of the architects' work was important, that witness was less important, but that the number of architects at the firm were important, and that the level of interaction with membership was high on her list. Caroline had reservations about John Finch Partnership and the fact that there is only the one architect. She felt that both Allen Associates and MEB Design were equally good and felt that both these firms would be able to complete the project. After discussing the aforementioned with the team, Caroline said that her vote was Allen Associates first, MEB Design second and John Finch Partnership third. Caroline did not score the firms individually.

Trevor did score each of the firms, but felt that his knowledge had gaps. Trevor scored Allen 64, John Finch 48 and MEB 60. Trevor felt that Allen Associates would be able to deliver on all expectations and had concerns about the fact that John Finch Partnership only had one architect. Trevor felt that Allen Associates' signature is glass panels in all the buildings they design as well as chunky wooden frames, which the team all agreed previously was what we would like to see in the new building.

Paul scored the firms as follows: Allen Associates 76, MEB Design 77 and Finch 60. Although Paul scored MEB Design 77, one point more than Allen Associates, the tipping balance for Paul in choosing an architect were the recommendations given to Allen Associates by clients of the churches we visited and the experience and dedication of the firm. In particular, Terry Pearce of Hythe URC had worked many times with Ralph Allen

during his period with the URC Synod Buildings Committee and had high praise for the firm. Paul felt that all the firms were capable of delivering on a project of this scale, but that because of the recommendations given to Allen Associates voted them first, then MEB as second and John Finch as third.

Bryan scored each of the firms and awarded MEB Design 70, John Finch Partnership 69 and Alan Associates 65. Bryan said that for him the process of choosing an architect was to use the matrix as a guide. He said that the team must choose an architect based on what they thought they were going to do with the building as both Allen Associates and MEB Design were not willing to provide initial drawings. Only John Finch Partnership is willing to submit initial drawings. Bryan feels that the designs would've been important. Bryan also felt that the larger firms (Allen Associates and MEB) might manipulate to our disadvantage if the project proved too small to command the attention of their top architects. Bryan has a concern about how the communication would work between us and them and them with the members. Deciding on which architect to use becomes a really difficult thing because we have to choose the architect based on what we think about them and how we thought they conducted themselves during the interview and looking at their previous work and recommendations received. Bryan was very concerned that John Finch Partnership was excluded fairly early on in discussions as he felt that John Finch Partnership had a lot to offer and was willing to provide initial drawings, which the other two firms were not prepared to do. Bryan felt that John Finch Partnership should not be excluded just because the firm has only one architect.

Geof scored each of the firms and awarded Allen Associates 86, MEB 78 and John Finch 66. Geof felt that there was good rapport with Allen Associates and that as a team we would not be intimidated by any of the architects and that we would get the building that the church needs, rather than being manipulated by the architect in giving us a building that looks nice, but doesn't necessarily fulfil the requirements. Geof felt that all 3 firms would be able to do the project, but had a real concern also about the fact that John Finch Partnership only has the one architect. While MEB has the most architects these are split between three sites. Of their work we've visited, the outstanding All Saints Woodford was designed by the London office. The other two – Leyton and Ilford – were designed by John Marsh of their Kent office and appeared rather nondescript (although the crowded neighborhoods limited the possibilities). We're dealing with the Kent branch and John Marsh, despite being a director, is not listed on one of the two national registers even as an architect at that location. This suggests he's about to retire, a view reinforced when he said 'a director' would oversee the work which would otherwise be done by Alex as project architect. Geof felt Alex's youth and inexperience was a risk too far. In contrast, Ralph Allen committed himself to design our building and Geof felt his practice posed least risk although much depends on his continued commitment. This, together with the ringing endorsements Allen received from clients, and the standard of the work we saw, made him our best choice.

After a very long discussion, the overriding firm is Allen Associates. The tipping balance really came down to the recommendations received by clients of the churches we visited as well as the firm's commitment, experience and dedication to their projects.

ACTION:

- Bryan will draft the document recommending Allen Associates to the leadership. Bryan will also deliver the document to the members.
- All the architects will send brochures for members and leadership to view.
- The team will pray about which architect to choose and if any team member has a different conviction to say so to the other team members.

2. SoN (Statement of Needs)

Geof will draft the SoN considering Nick Tavener's comments. Geof urges the team to review the draft and consider Nick and Ron's comments. The team also discussed the pre-school, which discussion was prompted by Paul's concerns to protect their interests but we agreed that in doing so we should equally protect those of any other group involving children. We perceived there was a parallel need to enable anyone else present at the same time as a children's group to enjoy unhindered access to the rest of the building. We agreed the SoN should make both points clear.

3. Sub-Teams

No further information has been received by Chris Birchley. The information received regarding funding will be revisited at a later time. The team does not feel that any sub-teams are required at this time.

4. Leadership Meeting

The team is meeting with the church leadership on Monday, 24 February 2014 at BBC. The proposed agenda for this meeting is the following:

- 4.1 The choice of architect
- 4.2 Budget to pay for the feasibility study
- 4.3 Updated SoN
- 4.4 Would the leadership like the team to review and/or consider anything specific relating to redevelopment?

5. AOB

Something worth mentioning is that the church is currently looking at changing the software that is used for worship. Eric Baldwin has been appointed by the leadership to look into this and although AV is not part of redevelopment, it would be useful to know what the outcome of this is as it could have an influence on the layout of the new building. Paul will ensure that Eric liaises with Trevor as IT leader.

6. Next meetings

- 24th Feb – Joint Leadership/redevelopment meeting - (BBC)
- 3rd March 2014 – Redevelopment regular meeting – (BBC)

RW closed in prayer.

ARCHITECT INTERVIEW MATRIX

Scoring: Award integer points on a sliding scale 0 - 5 (0 = poor, 5 = excellent).
(In appropriate cases put 0 for 'no', 5 for 'yes'.)

CATEGORY	ISSUE	POINTS AWARDED		
		Allen Associates	Finch Partnership	MEB Design
Competence	1 Registered with ARB & RIBA			
	2 Ecclesiastic experience			
	3 Resources available for our project			
	4 Quality of the work we've seen at first-hand			
	5 Reputation as expressed by clients			
	6 Technical & environmental awareness			
	7 Capability of the architect assigned to our project			
Presentation	8 First impressions			
	9 Evidence of creativity, problem solving (brochure, website)			
	10 Timely mention of in-house skills			
	11 Logical, thoughtful & credible questions & explanations			
Empathy	12 Extent of Christian witness			
	13 Level of interest/enthusiasm			
	14 Grasp of our situation & expectations			
	15 Quality of the chemistry between us			
	16 Helpfulness, e.g. evening meetings			
	17 Communication aptitude: good listeners, responsive			
Fees	18 Value for money			
TOTALS				

Interviewer: _____

REDEVELOPMENT: ARCHITECTS' COMPANY INFORMATION

	ALLEN ASSOCIATES	JOHN FINCH PARTNERSHIP	MEB DESIGN
Established ¹	1988	1960	1985
Chartered architects ¹	3	1	11 ⁶
interior design capability ²	Y	N	Y
Christian character ²	Y	N	Y
Office Locations ²	Sunningdale, SL5 9RQ	Chelmsford, CM1 1SS	West Malling, ME19 4YU London, EC1R 0EB Oxford, OX2 7JT
Registered ¹ with RIBA?	Y	Y	Y
with ARB?	Y	Y	Y
Ecclesiastic experience ²	high	low	high
Fees ³ - feasibility study	£3,500 + VAT	£3,000 + VAT + QS ⁵	£3,000 + VAT + QS ⁵
¹ - overall: £200k bldg cost	10%		10%
¹ - overall: £500k bldg cost	7½ - 8½%	£500-600/day, fixed price	7½ - 8½%
¹ - overall: £1m bldg cost	?		6½%
website	<i>in revision</i>	www.johnfinchpartnership.co.uk	www.mebdesign.co.uk
telephone	01344-873784	01245-354319	01732-897642 (W. Malling)
company number ⁴	04988227	08024742	06644190

NOTES:1 From Architects' Regulatory Board (ARB) and Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

2 Brochure information.

3 Personal enquiry. (Feasibility study fees are deducted from the overall fee, which assumes turn-key management of the project.)

4 From Companies House website.

5 QS = Quantity surveyor's fees (typically £500-£750, plus VAT).

6 Located as follows: 4 at West Malling, 4 in London and 3 at Oxford.