

UDL Board Meeting - 26 September 2006 (Board Paper & Minutes)

Board Paper – 26.09.06

Agenda:

1. Election of Chair for meeting
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting
4. Urban Design Training – Review of tenders and selection of suppliers
5. Any other business

Item 1: Urban Design Training

Background

At the end of August, UDL received proposals from a number of organisations in response to a request for quotes and tenders to meet each of the key elements of the proposed learning and development programme. The overall aim of the programme is to raise the quality of urban design in London by improving both the quality of decision-making and the work being done. We sent out tender invites for 4 training elements as follows:

1. E-Learning programme to introduce the concept, principles and practice of urban design relevant to London.
2. Seminars developing urban design understanding by dealing with issues such as interpreting plans and access proposals and housing design and streetscape issues. These to be part of the STAR program within TfL and provided through a suite of seminars delivered at a sub regional level for Boroughs.
3. Design Aid for Projects – Workshops and individual coaching based on support for live projects for built environment professionals, delivered in part by urban design professionals.
4. Masterclasses: Series of in-depth sessions on specific, specialised design issues.

A wide selection of organisations were invited to quote or tender and in the event, ten proposals were received from four separate organisations, 3 of which represented consortiums pulling together a number of key potential suppliers. The organisations are described below:

Tendering organisations

- Resource for Urban Design Information (RUDI) – This is a not-for-profit organisation that makes available materials relating to urban design in a number of ways. They recently re-designed the UDL web-site now managed and host it. They are primarily disseminators of information rather than creators, and so could be described as perhaps followers rather than leaders in the field of urban design. Their expertise is in general marketing and journalism rather than training or design work. However they are linked to Oxford Brookes University and their tender submission suggests that they would use staff at the Joint Centre there could provide urban design expertise.
- IHT Consortium – This is a consortium of potential suppliers led by the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) and comprising IHT, Urban Initiatives, Rob Cowan and Alex Ely (MAE Architects). IHT recently ran a very successful training session for UDL and the consortium consists of (or can enlist) people involved in current practice in London. It pulls together some of the best, and most in demand, urban design speakers and practitioners available at the moment. As such, there are concerns about their availability and flexibility, but they are very supporting of our programme and wish to commit to 5 sets of the 5 seminars, 21 DAP days and running the series of masterclasses. Although this consortium has great strengths in the subject area, none of

the individuals involved are trained as educators and this comes through in the tender submissions.

- R99 consortium– R99 proposal is presented in partnership with John Rowland Urban Design and RPS Design. R99 describe themselves as 'urban design training specialists and do work with a number of renowned practitioners, some of whom are included in other tenders. They have a reputation of being easy to work with and place great emphasis on gaining understanding of the needs of participants. They set store on good facilitation and encourage and support networking through their training. Their tender is thoughtful and well written and their key strength is in organisation and developing a cohort of trainees. R99 themselves do not have high levels of urban design skills or practice experience, and would have to pull in outside speakers to run an effective programme. RPS and John Rowlands Associates could fulfil some of this need, but they have not indicated who else they would use. Apart from John Rowlands himself none of those named as contributors are of particularly high standing in the design world.
- University Consortium – This consortium comprises the University of Westminster, the Urban Renaissance Institute at the University of Greenwich and Llewellyn Davies Yang. Westminster currently runs the CABE Summer School. Our reservations about this consortium largely centre on their lack of recent experience of practical urban design in London and in particular the grasp of public policy and political issues in the London setting. Llewellyn Davies Yang, a leading planning and architectural firm, should have this knowledge but it is not clear of the extent of their involvement, particularly for the seminar series.

Although initially disappointed at the small number of proposals received, it soon became clear that the consortiums who tendered represent most of the key potential suppliers available. In many ways the consortium approach has helped us greatly and it is good to see that many organisations have realised the capacity issues in the programme we are proposing and so joined forces to ensure good delivery. We have also been pleased with the creativity and overall quality of those we received.

The Proposals

- E-Learning (estimate £50,000) – Two organisations tendered for this: RUDI and the Urban Design Consortium. The consortium's proposal is robust and excellent in terms of its approaches to e-learning as a teaching method, but at £52,000 slightly exceeds our estimate. At £26,000, RUDI's proposal is half that amount but we have reservations about the quality of what could be offered at that price. In both cases, the proposals are unclear about the how the content would be derived. Neither organisation impressed with their grasp of the issues to be covered, either in their e-learning or seminar submissions. It is considered that neither tender could be awarded a contract as they stand, and they need more than a little negotiation to make them acceptable.

CABE/IdEA have been developing an e-learning resource and our tender brief asked suppliers to show how they could build upon this rather than starting from scratch. Neither submission did this, and it would seem advisable to evaluate the CABE/IdEA package before we take the project forward so not to repeat work already done.

As such it is proposed to not accept either of the current tenders at the present time. Instead, we should look at how we could make the material and content generated through the other elements of the programme more widely available through the UDL web-site, in e-learning format where appropriate. It is proposed that we work with RUDI and the seminar providers to achieve this. We should be able to make better decisions on the scope for interactive forms of delivery once more is known about the success of the CABE/IdEA project.

- Seminars (estimate £32,000) – We received four tenders to offer this programme at prices ranging from £31,995 to nearly £51,000. RUDI's proposal centred on running an existing Oxford Brookes programme for us, which does not meet our brief and as such should be rejected.

The brief gave 8 issues to be covered in 5 seminars and left it to bidders to work out a coherent programme which would take participants from an introduction to key design principles and how to use them, through explanation of useful tools and who is responsible for what to more specific design issues like climate change and inclusive design.

The Urban Design Consortium's (universities) proposal does not set out a particularly coherent programme and they do not seem to grasp some of the core issues we asked to be covered. Their submission also does not convince that they will bring in appropriate people to supplement their own expertise, so it is not clear that the programme would be based on a sufficient understanding of current good working practices.

The proposals of the IHT consortium and R99 both have merit but for different reasons. The IHT consortium offers a good, well thought out programme and they have a wide range of appropriate presenters to draw upon. R99's proposal is strong on the approach to learning, particularly on using the experience of participants.

The IHT consortium provide costs for the seminars and additional costs for a professionally design "workbook" to accompany them. Their cost to develop the seminars and deliver them once, with basic handouts, would be £18,225 with additional sets of 5 seminars costing £8,100. Their 'workbook' would cost £11,812 to prepare and £700 to print for 1 set of seminars.

R99 quote £28,340 to develop the seminars and deliver them once and £18,820 for each additional set of 5.

As such the IHT consortium is much cheaper, especially without the "workbook". However they may not provide the project management and support for attendees R99 offer. We have asked IHT to confirm their management resources and will report back to the Board verbally on any additional information we receive.

Ideally, IHTs design expertise and field of speakers, combined with R99s project management and teaching expertise and approach to learning would provide the best possible programme. As such it is suggested that we investigate whether R99 would be interested in taking on a project management role for this and other elements of the programme. UDL's programme manger post is still vacant, and as such this may be a suitable way of pulling in R99s experience.

However, irrespective of any possibility of R99 managing the programme, both their and IHTs proposals meet our brief and we can be confident that both would deliver a successful programme. But as IHT are cheaper, they offer better value for money, and so should be our first choice.

- Masterclasses (estimate £15,000) – Proposals were received from the IHT Consortium and the Urban Design Consortium (universities). Both are over the estimate with IHT at £21,400 and the universities at £19,963. IHT propose a classroom approach with a focus on hands on learning and discussion. They have not indicated who they would field for the classes, and we have asked them to provide this information.

The universities have focused on short lectures by experts followed by facilitated discussions. They set out a good programme of events including 2 speakers and a facilitator for each session. Some of the speakers they propose are excellent, at the forefront of the subjects, and would make the masterclasses special. But they do not propose 'hands on' exercises, and there would be less opportunity for participants to learn from each other.

Both proposals have much to commend them and it is suggested that, if budgets allow, we look to run both sets, possibly running the universities proposal as a series for Champions with

networking time after each session. Alternatively we could run one programme this financial year and one next.

- Design Aid for projects (estimate £25,000) – Proposals were again received from the IHT consortium (at £1,750 per DAP day) and the universities (at £1,100 per DAP day). On balance it is considered that the universities proposal better reflects the brief. DAP is essentially about coaching participants to solve their own design problems. IHT have taken more of the Design Review approach, where they would lead a review of schemes to ‘help’ those working on them. This could be useful for participants, but does not base itself on their learning needs as much as the universities proposal.

DAP should build upon the learning people have received in seminars and to a lesser extent in masterclasses. As such having the same supplier for DAP and other elements of the programme would have benefits. But the different approaches of the 2 main consortiums lend themselves to one being better set to deliver seminars and one to deliver DAP. As such it is suggested that we commission the universities to DAP, but require them to take into account seminar content and timings as provided by IHT.

Budget

The budget allows for £130,250 to spend on training this financial year. In addition we have £17,800 set aside separately for masterclasses and an extra £12,000 subscriptions received and £24,000 promised above our projected budget. As such, if we were to spend all our existing budget this financial year on providing ‘free’ training to participants we have a maximum of £184,050 to spend.

UDL has put a bid into DCLG for funds to run training sessions in the London Thames gateway area. No response has been received at the time of writing. We have also put a bid into to CABE and English heritage to part fund masterclasses for Champions. We could investigate other potential sources of income now we have a costed programme to propose. But there is no guarantee that we would be successful.

If we follow the actions set out below the cost of the programme would be:

E-learning	10,000 max to turn workbook into e-content
Seminar workbook	12,000 (estimate)
Seminars	26,325 (for 5 sets of 5)
Masterclasses	41,363 (for 2 sets of 6)
DAP	23,100 (for 21 days)
Project Management	<u>20,000</u> (for 6 months)
Total	132,788
Max budget available	184,050

This is a very significant spend on the first stage of the programme, and would use up over two thirds of UDLs reserves. But as the programme is a key objective for UDL, and we have quality tenders before us, the spend seems appropriate. This level of provision should make a significant mark on the London built environment community and help us bid for funds for further training next year.

Our last newsletter asked Boroughs to indicate how much training they feel they may want. If demand far outstrips the level of supply indicated above we can negotiate with suppliers to either provide events for individual authorities or consider charging participants to cover the full costs of the training.

It is suggested that we offer “free” places first to subscription payers. To be fair to those Boroughs who have paid, we could charge a nominal fee to participants from other Boroughs and reduce our own outlay. Any feedback from Boroughs will be reported verbally to the meeting.

Action

It is suggested, subject to Board approval, that we:

- Negotiate with IHT and RUDI to develop e-learning.
- Seek to work with R99 as project managers of the programme;
- Engage IHT to run the seminar programme, and negotiate their workbook to become e-learning content;
- Engage both IHT and the universities to run their masterclass programmes, the universities specifically targeted at Champions –
- Engage the universities to run the DAP programme;
- Use our current website contract with RUDI to make content from the programme available through the UDL website.

UDL Board Meeting Minutes- 26.09.06

Jubilee Room, 55 Broadway, London SW1H 0BD

The ninth meeting of the UDL Board was held to address the following:

1. Election of Chair for meeting
 - The meeting was chaired by Daniel Moylan
2. Apologies
 - Caroline Fraser was unable to attend and was represented by Rachel Pittam
3. Introductions
 - Cllr Daniel Moylan (Deputy Leader, The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea) – UDL Co Chairman
 - Keith Mattacks – Training programme consultant
 - Esther Kurland (UDL Director)
 - Cllr Martin Elengorn (London Borough of Richmond) - UDL Co Chairman
 - David Ubaka (Head of Urban Environment, TfL)
 - David Stacey (Business Controller for Public Corporation, TfL)
 - Mike McCrory (Director Road Network Development, TfL)
 - Olubusola Daodu (PA to Director of UDL) - Observer/Minutes
 - Rachel Pittam (representing Caroline Fraser, Acting Director Learning & Development, CABE)
 - Peter Brown (Chief Operating Officer, Streets, TfL) – UDL Board Member
4. Minutes of last meeting

- Minutes of the July Board meeting were agreed
- Clarification regarding overpayment to Ludo Campbell-Reid: DS explained that the actual amount overpaid was £1,600 and not £5,000 as previously thought. TfL's Accounts Receivable unit is currently working on recovering this amount.
- IHT Training day: Leigh Barman (TfL Human Resource Manager) yet to agree budget on this; PB's help required to secure Leigh's agreement.
- IHT Training day: Board suggested that this be made to link up with the TfL Streetscape Manual.
- Board also suggested that EK liaise with Edmund Bird, TfL Heritage Adviser.
- Champions event on 9 October on line, DM to chair.

5. Urban Design Training – Review of tenders and selection of suppliers

- E-Learning: Board agreed not to accept either of the current tenders for E-learning at the present time. EK will negotiate with IHT and RUDI to ensure seminar material is available in electronic format on UDI and other relevant websites. KM to contact Alison Clark (TfL) about this as well.
- Seminars: Board agreed that UDL engage IHT to run the seminar programme and negotiate to develop their workbook as e-learning material. In addition, the Board suggested that EK negotiate to have the cost of delivering the seminars capped over the next 3 years.
- Masterclasses: The Board asked that the masterclasses be run by the Universities consortium.
- Design Aid for Projects (DAP): The Board agreed that the Universities be engaged to run the DAP programme.
- Board agreed to use our current website contract with RUDI to make the content of the skills programme available through the UDL website
- R99 as project managers of the programme: Board suggested that EK /KM write up a job description for the Project manager post which could potentially then be single sourced and filled by David Tittle of R99.
- EK to give PB a half year report on UDL's activities and keep Nigel Lloyd (TfL STAR programme) updated on the training programme.
- Board requested that EK make it clear that subscribing boroughs will get free places/priority on the training programme. This will serve as an incentive to subscribe to UDL.

6. Any other business

- PB and DM to meet with EK to discuss her employment contract with UDL.

Next board meeting date:

30 January 2007