

## **AESOP | Head of Schools Meeting - Breakout Outcomes**

Olivier Sykes (Moderator):

“Try and wrap up and then we need to get a bit of a break before we go to the pizza and bring your friends... So okay, this was the final session and essentially what we'd like to do is I... we've not really got much time... Sebastian, could you just quickly...”

Sebastian (Breakout 1 – on Dittimacy):

“We had a private-sector focus... The biggest challenges for the Dittimacy were: as council-based companies, the lack of training for our politicians making decisions... In the planning system, particular groups of planning staff face challenges in participatory processes—especially younger and female staff. We discussed how discrimination in neighbourhoods can make development difficult and lengthy. There was debate about moving beyond a simplistic quality view...and that the UK planning system gives binary yes/no outcomes with limited scope for more nuanced decisions.”

Olivier:

“Thanks Sebastian, that's very good and it was a very rich discussion...”

Tom (Session on Employability in Planning Education):

“I was a presenter... We focused on employability and how it's integrated into planning education... Myself and Dominique presented on raising awareness of diverse career routes for planning students at Liverpool. We discussed embedding employability in curricula—communication, preparation, conflict resolution, not just technical skills. The audience included colleagues from across Europe, sharing various embedding approaches. We talked about UK employability metrics like the Teaching Excellence Framework, and balancing skill-imperatives with preserving core planning values like social and environmental justice.”

Olivier:

“Social justice, very good question. Excellent... Next, Andrew—could you speak about your session on inclusivity?”

Andrew (Session on Inclusivity in the Profession):

“The Clford Trust (CPI?) shared updates on their diversity programme—undergraduate/postgraduate representation, and chartered planner characteristics. Data: 40 % female, 21 % black/minority ethnic, 60 % with disabilities. We debated how GDPR affects data collection across Europe, and how cultural norms (e.g. France banning racial questions on census) shape data availability. We discussed pay stagnation deterring disadvantaged applicants, widening access, social-class challenge in capturing students from working-class backgrounds. Finally, we covered perception of planning and the prevalence of intergenerational planners—sometimes a barrier, sometimes an opportunity.”

Olivier:

“Yeah fantastic, and finally the Place session...”

Sam/Dankaolo (Place Social Enterprise Workshop):

“We split into groups with profiles and briefs—mine prioritized profit and de-emphasized community consultation. The process involved receiving envelopes (with money) contingent on decisions affecting local residents, etc. Each group had different briefs and our work diverged accordingly... It highlighted the complexity of working with communities across varying expectations.”

Olivier (to others):

“I don’t know if others want to comment?”

Sam/Dankaolo continues:

“But basically the interesting part was that it was fun; we got to see models and pictures...”

Olivier:

“Thank you everyone... give yourselves a round of applause. I’d like to invite Dankaolo to say a few words.”

Dankaolo:

“Thank you Olivier. I think we are at the end of this very interesting event... I was like a fly on the wall, and I found it really interesting... people were excited and it seemed fun... across keynotes and breakout rooms, the issues discussed were many and I hope you share my opinion of the interest this event has raised... These events serve different purposes—head of school meeting and congress—and I will stop talking.”