



# Buckinghamshire County Council

## Minutes

## *COUNTYWIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE*

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### AGENDA ITEM: 5

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNTYWIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2001 IN MEZZANINE ROOM 3, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 2.35 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 4.30 PM.**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

#### **Members**

Mrs C M Aston  
Mr C Cashman  
Ms B Hurman  
Mr C B Oliver  
Ms J M Woolveridge

#### **Organisation**

Buckinghamshire County Council  
Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Bucks Archaeological Society  
Wycombe District Council  
South Bucks District Council

#### **Officers**

Mr M Andrew	Wycombe District Council
Ms S Gray	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr B Giggins	Milton Keynes Council
Mr O Green	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr J Inglis	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr S Kidd	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr D Pickard	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr S Went	South Bucks District Council
Ms J Wise	Buckinghamshire County Council

#### **Co-opted Member**

Mr M Farley

### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING**

### **RESOLVED**

That Mrs C M Aston be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

## **DR A H J BAINES**

The Committee stood for silence in remembrance of Dr A H J Baines who had been a member of the Committee.

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G Friell, Ms L Stone and Mr M White.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr M Farley declared a general interest in the areas covered by the reports on the Agenda.

### **1 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee held on 13 September 2000, were confirmed.

### **2 MATTERS ARISING**

#### **Buckinghamshire Archaeological Management Plan**

A member requested information on progress made to date with the post of Portable Antiquity Officer.

In response it was noted that the bid had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund, however it had subsequently been returned to the Consortium for more detail and evaluation to be included. The bid had not yet been re-submitted and would therefore set the timetable back by approximately one year.

The Committee expressed their concern and agreed that a letter should be written outlining their concerns.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE IN MILTON KEYNES**

The Committee received and noted the report from the Archaeological Officer, Design and Conservation for Milton Keynes which informed members of the current archaeological matters in Milton Keynes.

In introducing the report, Mr Giggins stated that due to an increase in planning applications not enough time and attention had been given to the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). It was noted that a significant Bronze Age find had been made on the east side of Milton Keynes on a building site, 2 gold neck rings and 3 gold bracelets. The British Museum had declared them treasure. Mr Giggins circulated pictures of the gold ornaments.

It was confirmed that the final tranche of material relating to Milton Keynes had been received from the Bucks County Council Sites and Monuments Record and incorporated into the system at Milton Keynes.

Members raised concerns at the on-going difficulties experienced with English Partnerships. A letter was circulated to the Committee from Jane Hamilton, Director of Planning and Technical Services which outlined the way in which English Partnerships covers archaeology issues in Milton Keynes. Although members felt this was a step in the right direction further work was required. Mr Giggins reported that a positive meeting had been held with EP and he was confident the situation would improve. It was agreed that the Committee would continue to monitor the situation.

#### **4 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Committee received and noted a report from the Senior Archaeological Officer which advised members of significant events since the last meeting.

Members were advised that unfortunately the collation of planning statistics had been affected by the delays in installing the new SMR system and were therefore not available. Also that the Archaeological Management Plan had been approved and subsequently published.

An update on recent fieldwork was provided, officers confirmed that trial trenching, in advance of mineral extraction, at the Lea in Denham had failed to find any evidence of Early Mesolithic (hunter, gatherer) occupation. However ditches, pits and potholes of later prehistoric and/or Roman date and one cremation pyre was found.

Members discussed several specific locations including Langley Park and the restoration of the parkland, including visitor facilities. Concerns were raised in relation to the conservation of the walls at the Roman Villa at Rye, High Wycombe. Officers assured members that these would be preserved. Members also voiced concerns that damage had been caused at the Dinton Hall site due to unauthorised building works prior to planning consent being given. It was confirmed that the District Council were considering remedial action to address this issue.

#### **5 COUNTY MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGICAL PUBLICATION BACKLOG**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Museum Services and the Senior Archaeological Officer proposing a strategy for resolving the County Museum's archaeological publication backlog.

It was reported that in order to progress the matter as quickly as possible a review was being implemented to identify "packages" of important projects with common themes which potentially may attract funding from external sources and to pinpoint less significant work where further publication is not essential.

Two potential project packages had been identified, "Unlocking Aylesbury's Past" and "Mesolithic Hunter-Gatherers of the Colne Valley".

Members discussed the importance of the publication of the material and the possible solutions, it was suggested that perhaps Local Archaeological

Societies may be able to help, particularly for smaller projects where funding is not available.

## **RESOLVED**

**To APPROVE the strategy set out in the paper, especially the prioritisation of the “Unlocking Aylesbury’s Past” and “Mesolithic Hunter-Gatherers of the Colne Valley” packages.**

## **5 EMERGENCY ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING FUND**

The Committee received a report from the Senior Archaeological Officer and Treasurer to review the operation of the emergency recording fund.

It was noted that contributions for the financial year 2000/01 had been received with the exception of two. The year end balance of the fund was £804, with £600 still to be collected. Officers confirmed that there was a need to publish the Wendover cremation burial, which would cost £1,563.

In discussion members queried whether it was appropriate for the Emergency Recording Fund to be used to publish reports, Members were reminded that the principle had been discussed and agreed at a previous meeting.

## **RESOLVED**

- a) **to CHANGE the basis for apportioning contributions to the fund to a proportional system as set out in the paper from financial year 2002/03 onwards**
- b) **to APPROVE the expenditure of £1563 to publish the Wendover cremation burial.**

## **6 GOVERNMENT’S REVIEW OF POLICIES RELATING TO THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

The Committee received and noted a report from the Senior Archaeological Officer advising of the progress of the Government’s comprehensive review of policies relating to the historic environment and the potential implications for Buckinghamshire and the County Archaeological Service in particular.

Officers reported that the public consultation was now completed and that a report entitled “Power of Place” had been published and submitted to Government. The report contained 18 headline recommendations aimed at various combinations of central Government, local government, heritage organisations, owners and developers. The key issues covered included legislation, taxation, and planning systems; agricultural grants; education and training and many other areas. Within the headlines there were action points specifically aimed at local authorities e.g. Recommendation One - “to take full account of the historic environment in preparing community strategies required by the Local Government Act 2000”.

Members discussed the national thinking of a more “holistic” approach and the difficulties that this may cause for the Committee. Also the difficulties in terms of publishing site information and the system for licensing metal detectors. This linked back to the earlier issue of the Antiquity Officer and availability when a “find” is made.

## **7 THE “UNLOCKING BUCKINGHAMSHIRE’S PAST PROJECT” AND THE FUTURE OF THE SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD**

The Committee received a report from the Senior Archaeological Officer advising of potential new legislation giving SMR’s a statutory status, report the conclusions of a data audit of the Bucks SMR and to seek approval for a strategy for its future development.

Members noted that the Data Audit had identified improvements in five key areas for which an action plan was being produced, these were to :

- improve the use of IT for service delivery through Electronic Records
- implement a data inputting programme to clear the backlog and undertake essential editing of existing records by the end of the financial year 2005/06.
- produce a SMR manual based where possible on national documentation but adding local modules as specified.
- undertake the “Unlocking Buckinghamshire’s Past” project
- seek English Heritage support for the data inputting programme and Heritage Lottery Funding grant for “Unlocking Buckinghamshire’s Past”.

A Steering Committee needed to be established to oversee this work, Mr C B Oliver, Mr Cashman and Ms S Gray volunteered to be representatives.

### **RESOLVED**

- a) **to NOTE the contents of the briefing note**
- b) **to SUPPORT proposals for a new post to address the deficiencies identified**
- c) **To ENDORSE the proposal to submit a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the “Unlocking Buckinghamshire’s Past” SMR outreach project**
- d) **To APPROVE the setting up of a Project Steering Group as a Sub-Committee of the CAAC.**

## **8 MODERNISING THE COUNTYWIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a report from the Senior Archaeological Officer to review the implications of current national policy changes for the operation of the County Archaeological Advisory Committee and to propose that the

Committee seek to adopt a new wider role, remit and membership covering policies relating to the historic environment.

In discussions Members welcomed the paper and agreed that before moving this forward the Committee needed to think about what it wants to achieve and have a clear focus. It was therefore agreed that new terms of reference should be drafted for discussion at the next meeting, this could then be moved forward by addressing the issue of membership and whether academic input is required and representation from other appropriate bodies.

The Senior Archaeological Officer requested that Members of the Committee feedback their comments as soon as possible in order for the draft terms of reference and supporting paper be produced.

This item was therefore deferred to the next meeting.

**9 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 26 September 2001 at County Hall, Aylesbury

**CHAIRMAN**