

AGENDA ITEM 10

MODERNISING THE COUNTYWIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To: Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee

Date: 26th September 2001

Author: Senior Archaeological Officer

A PURPOSE

- 1 To report opinions expressed on the future remit of the CAAC and to propose a way forward.

B PROPOSED ACTION

2 The Committee is invited to:

- a) **NOTE that there is at present no consensus in favour of converting the Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee to an Historic Environment Forum or Joint Committee.**
- b) **SUPPORT the principle of an holistic approach to the historic environment and the desirability of CAAC encouraging and facilitating practical measures to achieve this.**
- c) **SUPPORT the principle of broadening the membership of CAAC and INSTRUCT the Secretary to write to the organisations listed in paragraph 7 to invite expressions of interest in joining the Committee.**

C RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3 No additional resources would be required to implement the proposed changes.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4 A proposal to reviewing the role, remit and membership of the CAAC with a view to creating a more broad based Historic Environment Forum for Bucks was discussed at the CAAC meeting held on the 21st March 2001. The item was deferred for further consideration of the Committee's focus, objectives and what

further organisations should be represented. Members were asked to feedback comments to the Secretary.

5 Comments have been received from Mr Michael Farley and from South Bucks District Council:

Mr Farley suggested that the Committee should be principally concerned with archaeology “outdoors” (i.e. not museum and archive issues) but including the historic natural environment, buildings and conservation areas. Mr Farley suggested that the Objects set out in the Constitution would have to be replaced and commented upon the suitability of various organisations for membership.

South Bucks District Council put the matter to their Planning & Transportation Committee which resolved that

- (1) The report presented by Mr Kidd, Senior Archaeological Officer, Buckinghamshire County Council be noted.
- (2) That the County Council be informed that South Bucks District Council would not support a change in the role/remit of the CAAC as it would be inappropriate to extend the remit of CAAC to cover listed building and conservation area issues; that there would be duplication and overlap between a CAAC (with a wider remit) and the BBOCOF¹ and BHB²; and this would be undesirable but also unnecessarily stretching limited resources.
- (3) South Bucks District Council considers it be (sic) appropriate for those parties who have a sincere interest in or whose work may affect archaeology should also sit on the CAAC and have voting rights.

The views expressed by South Bucks demonstrate that no consensus exists at present for the creation of a broad historic environment committee, although both respondents recognised that a case could be made for widening membership.

- 6 The co-ordination of archaeological activities throughout the County is already an object of the Committee specified in paragraph 2 (v) of the Constitution. If it is accepted that the Constitution will remain unchanged for the time-being then it is worthwhile asking in what areas of historic environment policy and practice greater co-ordination of services might benefit the county’s archaeological heritage. The *Power of Place* national policy review and the European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (the Valletta Convention – see agenda item 10) provide a national and international context for such an approach. More locally, *A future for our past* and the draft revised Chilterns AONB Management Plan are relevant. Key areas could be identified as (in no particular priority order):
- Policy towards the recording of historic buildings (both listed and unlisted) prior to demolition or conversion.

¹ Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire Conservation Officers Forum

² Buckinghamshire Historic Buildings Trust

- The relationship between Historic Environment Records proposed in *Power of Place* and the Sites and Monuments Record.
- The management of historic landscapes – both parks and gardens and the wider historic landscape.

- 7 As stated in the 21st March paper there are a number of organisations with considerable interest in and/or influence over the conservation of Buckinghamshire’s archaeological heritage which are not currently represented on CAAC. Foremost amongst these are the National Trust, the Department of the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs’ Rural Development Service (DEFRA-RDS) and the Chilterns AONB Office. It would be highly desirable to invite representatives of the National Trust and DEFRA-RDS on to the CAAC to better address the conservation of archaeological heritage and historic landscapes in the rural environment where many issues fall outside the remit of the organisations currently represented. The AONB Office should also be represented but this might be achieved through the Senior Archaeological Officer’s involvement in the Chilterns Historic Environment Group. Other organisations for which a case could be made for membership include the Bucks Historic Buildings Trust and the Bucks Gardens Trust. The desirability of having an academic representative has been expressed but in the absence of active participation by the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education it is difficult to identify a suitable candidate. It is perhaps worth observing that most academic research interests are subject based rather than focusing on specific administrative areas and that it may therefore be more fruitful to find other ways of engaging academic interest.
- 8 If the Committee’s membership is extended there is provision for voting rights be accorded to “authorities and bodies having archaeological interests or undertaking archaeological activities” as specified in paragraph 3 a) v). The Committee will need to consider whether it wishes to extend this right to any of the above organisations.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

A future for our past. The Buckinghamshire Archaeological Management Plan

European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised)

Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment

Modernising the Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee (CAAC Paper 21st March 2001)

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