

AGENDA ITEM 5

MODERNISING THE COUNTYWIDE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To: Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee

Date: 20th March 2002

Author: Senior Archaeological Officer

A PURPOSE

- 1 To report responses to the invitations to new members and the recommendations of a working party set up to examine the committee constitution following on from the previous meeting.

B PROPOSED ACTION

- 2 **The Committee is invited to:**
 - a) **WELCOME** the nomination of new (non-voting) members by the National Trust, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Diocese of Oxford.
 - b) **AGREE** the request for voting membership received from the Shadow Conservation Board for the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - c) **APPROVE** a change of the Committee's name to the "Buckinghamshire Countywide Historic Environment Committee" and to its constitution as specified in appendix A. **INSTRUCT** the Secretary to inform each member organisation of the changes.
 - d) **AGREE** the list of topics outlined in paragraph 7 as priorities for practical measures designed to facilitate a more holistic approach to the historic environment.

C RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3 No additional resources would be required to implement the proposed changes of name and constitution. Service improvements would be the subject of separate funding bids.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4 Proposals to review the role, remit and membership of the CAAC with a view to having a more broad based “historic environment” remit have been discussed at several previous meetings. A variety of opinions have been expressed but at the September 2002 meeting it was agreed that membership should be widened and a working party be set up to consider constitutional issues.
- 5 Following a resolution of the committee, invitations to join (in a non-voting capacity) were extended to the National Trust, Shadow Conservation Board for the Chilterns AONB, DEFRA, the Diocese of Oxford and English Partnerships. The National Trust, DEFRA and the Diocese of Oxford have accepted and nominated representatives. The Shadow Conservation Board has replied that it would be willing nominate one of its members to voting membership only. As the Board is willing to nominate a member rather than an officer and is to become a statutory body with a statutory Management Plan including major commitments to the historic environment there is a strong case for extending voting membership in this instance. No reply has been received from English Partnerships.
- 6 The constitution working party met on the 29th November 2001 with representatives of Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, South Bucks Council and Wycombe District Council in attendance. In response to the holistic view of the historic environment emphasised by the government’s recent national policy review, the working party agreed to recommend amending the amendment of the committee’s title and constitution to replace the word “archaeology” with “historic environment”. The opportunity would also be taken to “tidy up” the constitution to reflect recent changes in local government etc. Proposed amendments are shown in appendix A – deletions are scored through whilst additions are underlined.
- 7 The practical effect of the proposed changes needs to be considered. For the time-being this is likely to focus on improving the co-ordination of historic environment activities throughout the County. It is proposed that the priority topics be identified as (in no particular order):
 - Policy towards the recording of historic buildings (both listed and unlisted) prior to demolition or conversion.
 - The implications of enhancing the Sites and Monuments Record to become an Historic Environment Record as proposed in the Government’s policy statement “*The historic environment: a force for our future*”. A national consultation paper will be issued in summer of 2002.
 - The management of historic landscapes – both parks and gardens and the wider historic landscape. In particular, the possibility of a local list of important designed landscapes and the implications of the County’s proposed Historic Landscape Characterisation Project.
- 8 Finally, the committee might like to consider whether it wishes to continue to receive detailed listings of archaeological projects and how it would consider built heritage conservation issues.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

A future for our past. The Buckinghamshire Archaeological Management Plan

The historic environment : a force for our future. Government Policy Statement.

Modernising the Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee (CAAC Papers 21st March and 26th September 2001)

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