

AGENDA ITEM 7

CREATION OF A BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM

To: Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee

Date: 16th October 2002

Author: Senior Archaeological Officer

A PURPOSE

- 1 To propose amendments to the committee constitution following on from the previous meeting.

B PROPOSED ACTION

2 The Committee is invited to:

- a) **APPROVE** a change of the Committee's name to the "Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum" and to its constitution as agreed in principle at the March 2002 meeting and specified in appendix A.
- c) **CONSIDER** the addition of an Object 2 (v) - "To comment on existing and proposed regional and national policies affecting the historic environment seeking improvements where appropriate"
- b) **CONSIDER** amending the quorum required under rule 7 iv) from four to three voting members.
- c) **CONSIDER** amending the number of assenting votes required to amend the constitution under rule 9 i) from five to three.
- d) **INSTRUCT** the Secretary to inform each member organisation of the changes.

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. The working party reported to the March 2002 meeting recommending changes to the constitution so that the committee could become an “Historic Environment Forum” thus better reflecting current thinking on the integration of historic environment policy and its role as an inter-agency non-executive body. Unfortunately, the March 2002 meeting did not have sufficient voting members present to amend the constitution. Proposed amendments agreed in principle at the previous meeting are shown in appendix A – deletions are scored through whilst additions are underlined.
- 5 It is proposed that an additional “Object” be identified to reflect the Committee’s role in responding to national, regional and other consultations and in lobbying for improved historic environment provision at a regional and national level.
- 6 The Committee has on occasion struggled to obtain a quorum and this position may become worse now that South Buckinghamshire District Council has withdrawn its Member representative. At present the Constitution requires an unusually high proportion of the voting membership (currently nine) to be present for a meeting to be quorate. It is suggested that this threshold be reduced to three to bring the new forum in line with the County Council Constitution which states: “The quorum for a Committee is one fifth of the whole number of the Committee but shall not be less than three voting members.” These changes would facilitate active members to continue the forum’s business.
- 7 The practical effect of the proposed changes was outlined at the March 2002 meeting at which it was agreed 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, with a particular emphasis on wartime and industrial buildings.
 - 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 is expected imminently.
 - 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 how it would be best able 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 2001, 26th September 2001 and 20th March 2002)

CONTACT OFFICER: ALEXANDER (SANDY) KIDD (01296) 382927