

AGENDA ITEM 12

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT POLICY STATEMENT AND PLANNING GREEN PAPER - UPDATE

To: Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee

Date: 16th October 2002

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A PURPOSE

- 1 To update members on the Government's progress on implementing its policy statement on the historic environment and those aspects of the Planning Green Paper affecting historic environment.

B PROPOSED ACTION

- 2 **The Committee is invited to:**

AUTHORISE the Secretary and Chairman to co-ordinate and issue a response on behalf of the Committee to the expected national consultations on the joint reviews of PPGs 15 and 16 and on historic environment records.

C RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3 No immediate costs but there may be some arising from new arrangements or initiatives.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4 The Planning Green Paper was published by DTLR on Wednesday 12 December and followed the next day by a policy statement from the DCMS entitled "*The historic environment: a force for our future.*" The latter document is the product of a consultative process initiated by the Government in February 2000 and co-ordinated by English Heritage. The two documents are explicitly inter-linked and were reported jointly to the March 2002 meeting. Three consultations are now emerging from DCMS and the ODPM.

Making the most of our Civic Heritage

- 5 The first consultation arising from "*The Historic Environment: A Force for our Future*" was published by English Heritage consultation paper "*Making the most of our Civic Heritage*" in July 2002. It is the first step towards issuing advice to

local authorities on the care of historic assets in their ownership and will therefore be of relevance to all local authorities.

6. In responding to the Planning Green Paper and Historic Environment Policy Statement at the March 2002 meeting the Committee is agreed to:
 - a) Welcome the Government historic environment policy statement but continue to impress upon Ministers the need to provide adequate resources and a statutory basis for local government historic environment services and to improve protection of sites vulnerable to ploughing or demolition without the need for prior consent. Highlight the risks of detaching county-based archaeological services from planning departments
 - b) Promote an holistic view of the historic environment and a programme of initiatives to improve co-ordination across the sector.
 - c) Participate in the reviews of PPGs 15 and 16.
 - d) Participate in the review of SMRs and work to develop a viable model for an Historic Environment Record (HER) for Buckinghamshire
 - e) Consider initiating and co-ordinating training for elected members with responsibilities impinging on the historic environment – e.g. an annual historic environment training event hosted by this committee to which all elected members would receive personal invitations.
 - f) Consider creating an inventory of the councils' historic environment assets. Implement the Action Plan set out in the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Management Plan giving top priority to the Historic Landscape Characterisation and Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past Projects.

Review of PPG s 15 and 16

7. The Planning Green Paper stated that the national planning guidelines covering the historic environment and archaeology (PPGs 15 and 16) were to be reviewed as a matter of priority but the fundamental principles enshrined in them will continue. It is understood that the two PPGs have been combined into a single document which is to be issued for consultation in October for a three month period. If the consultation is available by the time of the meeting a verbal report will be made and the nature of the forum's response agreed. If the consultation is not available by the meeting then it is proposed to delegate this role to the Secretary and Chairman acting in consultation with the membership.

Historic Environment Records

8. *"The Historic Environment: A Force for our Future"* expressed strong support for local Sites and Monuments Records, both as a planning tool and education resource, for their accessibility by electronic means and for their enhancement into comprehensive Historic Environment Records covering historic buildings and landscapes as well as archaeological sites. A consultation paper on options for

creating Historic Environment Records is expected in October 2002. It is thought that the consultation will be based upon a draft joint English Heritage/Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers report: "*Historic Environment Records : Benchmarks for Good Practice*". A critical decision to be taken locally will be whether there should be a single database for New Buckinghamshire, presumably based on the existing SMR and how such a record should be managed and resourced. It is suggested that the Committee might in future wish to make a "formal report" to its constituent bodies (as allowed under rule 2iv of the Constitution) proposing a framework for a Buckinghamshire HER.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Planning Green Paper. Planning: Delivering a Fundamental Change

"The Historic Environment Policy Statement And Planning Green Paper" Report to Countywide Archaeological Advisory Committee, 20th March 2002.

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