

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2011 IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.30 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members

Mr C Cashman
Mr M Farley
Mr H McCarthy
Mr R Pushman (Chairman)

Organisation

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

Officers

Mr J Brushe
Mr S Kidd
Mr B Thorn
Ms J Wise
Ms K MacDonald
Ms E Alqassar

Organisation

South Bucks District Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Bucks County Museum
Buckinghamshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies of absence were received from Nick Crank, Gary Marshall, Sue Polhill, Roger Evans, Brenda Jennings, Ann Davies, Martin Andrew and Sarah Gray.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2011 were confirmed

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Mr Kidd advised that the National Planning Policy Framework consultation was undertaken over the Summer and that he had responded to the consultation on behalf of



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



the Forum as discussed at the previous meeting. He advised that the issue would be discussed later on the agenda.

5 LOCALISM BILL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: ISSUES FOR THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Mr Kidd reported that:

The Localism Bill contains proposals which aim to make the planning system clearer, and more effective. The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) works with the Localism Bill to put into practice the Duty to Cooperate, Neighbourhood Planning and other changes.

The Localism Bill will abolish regional strategies which will see the abolition of the South East England Plan and lose a tier of development plans. Instead Councils are required to develop local plans which set out where different kinds of development should be located. They can also contain policies on the natural and historic environment.

The Localism Bill will also introduce Neighbourhood Planning and the draft PPF supports neighbourhood planning. A neighbourhood plan enables communities to have a genuine opportunity to influence the future of the places where they live and they will have the right to draw up a neighbourhood plan. Mr Kidd said that a bid for funding had been submitted so that Community Impact Bucks (CIB) could support this planning process and that the bid had been successful. He advised that there was a potential implication to the historic environment as he was not sure about undesignated development which would potentially be harmful.

A Member advised that Bristol City Council have developed a website called 'Know Your Place' which allows users to explore the neighbourhood through historic maps, images and linked information. Users can also upload information. The information on the website has helped the Council defend proposed planning developments and it was suggested that perhaps Buckinghamshire could introduce something similar to help provide evidence in any potential planning appeals. Another Member commented that local knowledge is important and said how with the passing of generations valuable information is often lost but with a system like this information could be preserved. Mr Kidd said he would look into the system used by Bristol City Council.

Mr Kidd then discussed the NPPF and said that a lot of detail has been lost. He advised that there is a strong emphasis on the need for supportive guidance to say what was intended and how to interpret the document. He said that the consultation has now ended and that the results are awaited.

He said that one of the concerns is that if the regional strategies are abolished, the Policy Planning Statements documents will be lost at national level. Local plans are not advanced and there is an assumption that Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5 is in place. Mr Kidd said he is not sure where it leaves us and that the Council could potentially find itself in an awkward situation as local plans rely on documents which no longer exist.

A Member commented that Local Authorities (LA) who do not have plans in place may be vulnerable to development being pushed through. A Member from AVDC commented that their plan would not be in place until 2013. Mr Kidd encouraged all District Councils to look at their plans to ensure historic environment was included.

6 HERITAGE AT RISK

Members considered the report and noted the conclusions of the survey. Mr Kidd invited the Forum to consider that should HS2 be given the go-ahead English Heritage be asked to add threatened designated heritage assets along the route through Buckinghamshire to the at risk register in 2012.

A Member enquired what the criteria was for selection and it was commented that English Heritage have the criteria but that in most cases it was ploughing and identifying sites for environmental stewardess.

A Member said that Mentmore towers was a building of concern. He said it was a Building at Risk but that it was getting worse not better and that it had tarpaulin on the roof for protection. It was commented that the Local Authority would probably be reluctant to issue a repairs notice as it could lead to acquisition and said that the building needing monitoring. It was suggested that tarpaulin did not seem adequate enough to be keeping up with maintenance and the solution might be to request an urgent works notice.

Members agreed to monitor the situation and reconsider if necessary.

7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

Members had received the report.

Members reviewed the implications with respect to historic environment services in Buckinghamshire and it was commented that Local Authorities (LAs) are losing expertise which can not be got back.

A Member said that if the County Council was supplying a service to the District Council whether there was any merit in closer working with District Council's making a fairer contribution. In response it was highlighted that the responsibility lies with the Local Authority dealing with the planning application and that there would need to be political will to further any discussions.

8 MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER'S REPORT

Members noted the report.

9 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST'S REPORT

Members noted the report.

10 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD REPORT

Members were informed that the HER search room had changed and that this was now in New County Offices. The Officer said that there is a data inputting backlog and that this was going up with the office move as a number of reports have been founds which

also need to be inputted.

11 COUNTY MUSEUM REPORT

Members noted the report.

Members were informed that Halton is an old school building and is not ideal for environmental storage. The Officer advised that they are looking to put in a stage 1 bid to the lottery to rebuild stores. A meeting has taken place with consultants and the Forum will be kept informed.

12 NATIONAL TRUST REPORT

Members noted the report.

13 CHURCH ARCHAEOLOGY

The Diocesan Archaeological Adviser was unable to attend.

14 CONSERVATION OFFICERS' REPORTS

(i) AYLESBURY VALE

The Aylesbury Vale Officer was unable to attend and the Chairman read an update provided:

1. The public consultation process on the draft Wendover conservation area document has now been completed and a report is now being written up
2. The draft Padbury conservation area document will be going out to public consultation before Christmas.
3. Conservation area documents for Bishopstone, Hartwell and Sedrup are in preparation at the moment.

(ii) CHILTERN

Nothing to report.

(iii) MILTON KEYNES

Nothing to report.

(iv) SOUTH BUCKS

It was reported that:

Conservation Areas

Two new conservation areas have been adopted as of July 2011 - Stoke Poges West End Conservation Area and a Framewood Road Conservation Area taking the number of Conservation areas in South Bucks to 21. The Officer said that the Conservation Area Review came to a halt with the departure of Marian Miller.

Dropmore

Dropmore went into receivership 2 years ago and has now been brought by Richard Livingstone who wants to carry forward repairs as a single, private residential dwelling.

Cliveden

A new bronze cast has been made and is due to be put onto the clock tower within the next month.

(v) WYCOMBE

It was reported that:

The Conservation Area studies have been delayed due to the departure of a member of a staff.

A national developer has brought Dawes Hill Military of Defence site for intensive development and there is to be a pre-consultation consultation. Mr Kidd said that BCC would like to be involved.

15 EMERGENCY RECORDING FUND

The Forum considered whether to request contributions for 2012/13 and it was agreed that no request for contributions would be made.

16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to be held on 14 March 2012, 2.30pm, Mezz 2, County Hall, Aylesbury.

CHAIRMAN