

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FORUM HELD ON MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2013 IN LARGE DINING ROOM, JUDGES LODGINGS, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 3.45 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Members

Mr R Evans
Mr M Farley
Mr G Marshall
Mr W Chapple OBE
Mr W Whyte
Mr R Pushman

Organisation

Diocese of Oxford
Bucks Archaeological Society
National Trust
Buckinghamshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Bucks Heritage Champion

Officers

Mr M Andrew
Mr J Brushe
Ms J Wise
Ms K MacDonald
Ms E Alqassar
Mr N Crank
Ms S Farr
Ms S Keene
Ms E Hands
Mr S Peart

Organisation

Wycombe District Council
South Bucks District Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Milton Keynes Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Milton Keynes Council

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

As there were new members of the Forum and not all members in attendance it was agreed that the Election of Chairman be delayed until the next meeting.

Members agreed that Mike Farley be Chairman for the meeting.

Mike Farley in the Chair.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies of absence were received from Brett Thorn, Sue Polhill and Hugh McCarthy.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2012 were confirmed subject to the following:

Item 9, County Museum Report, Paragraph 6 should read:

“Mike Farley said that the bulk of the premises of the County Museum were actually the property of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society. The Trust would take over the running of the Museum and staff in Aylesbury, as well as the Halton site, once it was redeveloped. The Trust would not take ownership of the collections or the premises”.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Mr Roger Evans advised that he had resigned from the Diocese. He said that he had tried to contact Mr Julian Mumby regarding a replacement but had not as yet been able to speak to him. Roger said he felt it was useful for the Forum to know what the Diocese was doing. Roger informed the Forum that he would no longer be attending.

On behalf of the Forum the Chairman thanked Roger for all his support.

The Chairman agreed to write to Julian Mumby regarding a replacement member.
ACTION: Mike Farley

HS2 had been discussed at the last meeting and Gary Marshall commented that it had been very difficult to ascertain from HS2 what fieldwork had been done, which has been very frustrating.

Members were reminded that the formal consultation would be starting this year and that the first reading of the Hybrid Bill had been heard in Parliament.

6 ROLE AND PRIORITIES OF BHEF

Ms Shelia Keene introduced the item and asked members whether the Forum provided a valuable place to discuss issues regarding the Historic Environment or whether this was an opportunity to look for other possible options. Shelia also asked if members did feel the Forum was valuable whether there was a need to amend or review the constitution.

The Chairman advised that Mr Cory Cashman, who was unable to attend the meeting, had sent an email with suggested topics for consideration by the Forum. His suggestions were as follows:

1: Reviewing the constitution. It is around 10 years since the constitution was agreed and I do not think that it has been reviewed in that time – does it fully reflect and have the ability to respond to contemporary realities?

2: Composition of membership. Does the present membership always ensure fully informed responses to every matter discussed? Some of our group have been poor attenders at meetings, often for reasons outside their control. This can handicap the ability of the committee to respond knowledgeably on certain matters in the absence of

such members who might otherwise usefully inform these discussions.

3: Relationship with the 5 Buckinghamshire local authorities. How do we see this relationship and what would we say was its purpose? How well do we communicate to them what we do? Is this communication patchy both in terms of time and geography?

4: Frequency of meetings.

Cory had said that he felt consideration of the issues needed to be supported by appropriate additional information to help inform the discussions and suggested these and any other similar matters could be discussed at the Spring meeting in 2014.

Mr Richard Pushman referred to the Constitution for the Forum and said that he didn't think the objects had changed and was still worthwhile. He suggested that the objects could however be more rigorously and consistently followed. Richard suggested that the membership and representation could be reconsidered. He queried the reason for having voting and non-voting members and said he thought this needed to be reviewed. He also suggested that information sharing could be improved.

Ms Sarah-Jane Farr highlighted the importance of effective advocacy and said that members had various experience and skills which could be effectively used for the Historic Environment.

It was highlighted that meetings needed to be focused and outcome based as officers are increasingly challenged about their attendance at meetings. It was commented that if officers received a presentation or attended a site visit it may be easier to justify attendance at meetings with employers as there is added value and also useful for CPD. It was commented that the expertise of the different members was important as those members could inform discussions.

Shelia asked if there was any value in having more interactive meetings and asked if this should be explored further. Shelia said if the Forum was able to inject vigour and purpose it could provide a rationale for the Forum continuing. Mr Nick Crank said that Milton Keynes Council would be happy to host a future meeting and said that a walk and talk could be arranged.

The Chairman enquired if the District Councils had Heritage Champions. In response it was commented that South Bucks and Chiltern District Councils did not have Heritage Champions. The representative from Milton Keynes Council said that they had a Heritage Champion who they wanted to provide training for and said they could invite the Heritage Champion to the Forum if there was agreement.

The Chairman summarised what he saw as the key issues as follows:

1. Committee and general advocacy of heritage as a whole
2. Interactive sessions based on localities to be used as an educational session.

He said that these issues fell within the remit of the Forum.

Mr Warren Whyte was interested in any impact that the New National Planning Framework (NNPF) had on heritage and how the Council members are dealing with applications.

All members felt that reports from members were important to enable effective information sharing. It was agreed papers should be circulated electronically in future.

Shelia suggested that the Spring meeting could be held outside County Hall at another location. Members discussed areas of the County that might be interesting to visit and it

was suggested that members could visit Stoke Mandeville old church to discuss the issues surrounding large linear development schemes. Members agreed (arrangements permitting) to visit Stoke Mandeville old church for the next meeting.

Richard updated members on Quarrendon Leas. He highlighted that he is Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust and said that the Trust is in the process of acquiring Quarrendon Leas. It is hoped that a transfer of ownership will be achieved by the end of the year. He said that once the land is acquired there will be a need for a work programme as the church ruin is deteriorating further. He highlighted that the Trust had lost a LEADER grant due to the delays in the transfer and said that help is needed to make the site suitable for public visitors.

It was suggested that future agenda items could include:

1. Re-laying stone sets and street de-cluttering in Aylesbury
2. Quarrendon Leas Management

Members were reminded that were any changes to the Terms of Reference proposed, 28 days' notice would need to be given to members and the proposed amendments would need to be circulated 21 clear days' in advance.

7 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE REPORTS

Sarah-Jane took members through her report and made the following comments:

- The County Council also recognises difficulties with HS2 sharing information about their fieldwork.
- The County Council has commented on the Draft Planning Memorandum and the Draft Heritage Memorandum.
- The Hybrid Bill allows HS2 to dis-apply statutory regulations.
- Members are invited to comment on Appendix C. Please let Sarah-Jane know by the end of November if you have any priorities on the appendix. The Council would like to submit the document to English Heritage for scheduling consideration.

The Chairman enquired about the future of the Archaeological Service in County. Shelia advised that a post had been added to the structure and work was being undertaken to fill the post.

Warren asked if Hillesden Church was on the radar in relation to HS2. He said it has stained glass dating to the 15th Century. It was also commented that it is a Grade I building. Ms Julia Wise advised that there was a lot of ambiguity in the draft Environmental Statement regarding what areas they are looking at. She said that the Environmental Statement focusses on properties within 750m of the line itself. She said Hillesden Church has not fallen off the radar but that it is outside the area that HS2 is looking at.

8 MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER'S REPORT

Members noted the Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer's report which was circulated to members at the meeting (copy attached to the minutes).

John Brushe asked for an update on Bradwell Abbey. In response it was highlighted that Bradwell Abbey is a Council owned asset and that the Council were in discussions with the tenants regarding a major project for repairs.

9 EMERGENCY RECORDING FUND

Members had received the Emergency Archaeological Recording Fund Report and were invited to note the current status of the fund.

Members discussed the fund and it was highlighted that the current balance of the fund was £6,267 and that all Districts Council could apply for funding from the fund. Members were informed that Shelia Keene was currently acting as the Treasurer.

Shelia requested clarification regarding whether all contributors had paid their subs. Contributors agreed to pay subs this year in accordance with the amounts listed in the report. A member asked that funds be requested before the end of the tax year.

10 COUNTY MUSEUM REPORT

Members were informed that the transfer of the County Museum to a Trust was progressing. It was highlighted that the care of the museum was being transferred but not the ownership.

11 NATIONAL TRUST REPORT

Members noted the National Trust Report (attached to the minutes)

12 CHURCH ARCHAEOLOGY

Nothing to report.

13 CONSERVATION OFFICERS' REPORTS

The Conservation Officers provided the following updates:

Aylesbury Vale

- A consultancy arm of the Design and Conservation team has been set up with a target of 2/3rds of the annual budget
- Quainton windmill has been upgraded to Grade II*
- There have been recent listings at Westcott
- Planning permission has been granted for the car park at Waddesdon
- English Heritage have funded a street clutter removal project in Aylesbury and more will be reported on this at a future meeting.

Milton Keynes

- There have been 473 development management consultations
- There is work being undertaken to get the Local Heritage List moving and there has been interest for designations for the New Town.
- The application at the Point Cinema was refused. There is now an application to demolish and replace with retail units.
- The Council refused the application to demolish Cofferridge Close, Stony Stratford and this is now going to a Public Inquiry.

South Bucks

- The Heatherden Wood Hall building, which is the centrepiece of Pinewood Studios has now been designated at Grade II

Wycombe

- Daws Hill nuclear bunker has been listed as II* and the generator building as Grade II
- The Council is about to commence a consultation on Local Listing
- The roof is on at Bledlow Homes
- Discussions are ongoing regarding High Wycombe Station and the possibility of a short term lease for restoration.

Chiltern

No update

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were asked to consider who would be a suitable Chairman of the Forum.

15 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that dates for March and September should be arranged.

CHAIRMAN