

# HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND

## MINUTES OF MEETING 23 NOVEMBER 2007

### ATHOLL HOTEL, ABERDEEN

**Present:** Liz Burns (Chair)  
Mark Hopton  
Ian Johnson  
Colin McLean  
Eila Macqueen  
Colin Martin  
Ross Noble  
Richard Oram  
Evelyn Silber  
Andrew Wright  
Olwyn Owen (Secretary)  
Malcolm Bangor-Jones (Senior Administrator)

#### **Welcome and apologies**

1. There were apologies from Peter Burman and James Simpson.

#### **Minutes of the meeting of 26 September 2007**

2. The minutes of the meeting were approved.

#### **Matters arising**

##### Meetings with other agencies

3. Council agreed that meetings should be arranged with agencies in London (in March 2008) and Belfast thereafter as a matter of priority. Meetings with various Scottish-based organisations were also considered.

##### Rural issues

4. Council considered the progress being made with the implementation of the Scottish Rural Development Programme. It was noted that a number of issues remained to be resolved. Concern was expressed as to whether the package of built and cultural heritage priorities would be prioritised by the Regional Committees. It was decided to maintain a watching brief on developments.

##### Scotland's Historic Environment Audit

5. Council received an oral report from the Secretary on the recent meeting of the Historic Environment Audit Stakeholder Group (HEASAG) during which the

future priorities for historic environment headline indicators and research had been considered. Points made during Council's discussion of the matter included: the need for the audit to include undesignated as well as designated historic environment assets, particularly historic landscapes; the importance of robust and consistent measures of condition; and the need for the audit to continue to collect comparative data.

#### Annual Conference 2007 – letter to Minister

6. Council noted the letter from the Chair to the Minister about the need for a strategic approach to the dissemination of information and advice about the likely effects of climatic change, particularly for property owners.

#### Minister's responses to the four reports

7. Council noted the latest advice from Historic Scotland on the timetable for the Minister's responses to Council's four reports.

#### **Current work**

#### Report from Chairs' Group meeting of 22 November

8. The Chair reported on a special Chairs' Group meeting which had been convened the previous day comprising members of the Chair's Group, the Chairs of Working Groups, and the Secretariat. Council needed to make sure that it had the processes and procedures in place to enable its work programme to be properly planned and co-ordinated.

9. The Chairs' Group had considered a discussion paper prepared by the Secretary setting out a list of staff duties and a draft work plan for 2008 detailing the main tasks of the Secretariat. It had been agreed that, while the Senior Administrator would generally be the main contact with Working Groups, the Secretary would remain as the main contact for the Economic Significance Working Group. It had been agreed that the Secretary would not only be responsible for project managing all research contracts, but would be available to provide advice to all Working Groups. The Secretary would also minute meetings of the Chair's Group. The decision to develop a database of contacts was welcomed.

10. The Chairs' Group had discussed the drafting of reports to be submitted to Ministers. The importance of a corporate style had been noted. It had been agreed that reports should be drafted by the Secretariat, although it had been recognised that the Chairs of Working Groups might wish to contribute to the process. The usefulness of submitting scoping papers for discussion by Council had been noted.

11. The timetable for submitting the reports of the four topics currently under consideration had been discussed. It had been agreed that the provisional timetable for the submission of draft reports to Council should be as follows: the Infrastructure draft report by March 2008, the Economic Impact draft report by December 2008, the Young Adults draft report by March 2009, and the Ecclesiastical Heritage draft report by June 2009.

12. The Chairs' Group had noted that the draft work plan required to be firmed up. The importance of identifying blocks of work to be fitted into the work programme had been discussed. It had been agreed that Working Groups should consider the draft work plan and, if possible, should produce a schedule of dates for Working Group meetings in 2008, after which the Secretary would firm up a work plan for 2008 and into 2009.

13. The Chairs' Group had agreed that Working Group Chairs should ensure that the work was moved forward and should take shared responsibility with the Secretariat if the timetable slipped.

14. The process whereby the Minister requested HEACS to advise on a number of topics and its impact on the bunching of reports had been discussed. It had been considered that this should be examined when HEACS was reviewed. The possibility of Council undertaking one major topic each year had been raised.

15. Council noted that the Chairs' Group would reconvene on 5 February to consider the composition of the Chair's and Chairs' Groups and to firm up on the phasing of Council's work programme. It was agreed that Working Groups should be given the opportunity to confirm their proposed timetables before the meeting.

#### Economic Significance

16. Council noted the progress made by the Economic Significance Working Group. Council thanked the Secretary for taking forward the tendering process for letting the research contract.

#### Infrastructure

17. Council noted the progress made by the Infrastructure Working Group, particularly the recent seminar which had been attended by a number of public and voluntary organisations.

#### Ecclesiastical Heritage

18. Council noted the progress made by the Ecclesiastical Heritage Working Group. The Group would hold its first formal evidence gathering session on 10 December. The Group would also be issuing an invitation to submit written evidence to a wide range of organisations.

#### Young Adults

19. Council noted the progress made by the Young Adults Working Group. The Group would hold its first formal evidence gathering session on 6 December. The Group would also be issuing an invitation to submit written evidence to a wide range of organisations.

### Proposals for additional research

20. Council considered a number of proposals for possible research projects which had been submitted by Working Groups for commencement in the current financial year. It was agreed that Working Groups should provide more detail on their priority proposals as soon as possible so that work can be commissioned in this financial year. Proposals for research projects to be undertaken during the next financial year should be submitted for consideration at the March Council meeting.

### Properties in Care Analysis Report

21. Council noted an extract from the Historic Scotland analysis of responses to the draft SHEP on Properties in Care which set out the background to the SHEPs.

### **Consultation papers**

#### Schedule of forthcoming consultations

22. Council considered the schedule of forthcoming Scottish Government consultations and agreed to respond to several of the documents. Council discussed the arrangements for dealing with consultations and it was agreed that the Secretary should alert Council to relevant consultation documents and coordinate Council's responses as appropriate.

#### Public Petitions Committee: Petition PE1078, Save Gillies Hill

23. Council considered the request from the Public Petitions Committee for a written response to Petition PE1078 Save Gillies Hill. Council agreed that, while it did not deal with individual cases, it would be appropriate to draw the Committee's attention to its advice on battlefields contained in its report on the need for a review of the heritage protection legislation.

### **Chair's Group**

#### Meeting of 5 November

24. Council noted the record of the Chair's Group.

#### Communications Strategy

25. Council considered the recommendation by Chair's Group that Council should revisit the Communications Strategy. It was agreed that a Group comprising Mark Hopton (chair), Colin McLean and Evelyn Silber should meet to take this forward.

### **Annual Conference Ayr 2008**

26. Council discussed possible themes for the 2008 Annual Conference. It was agreed that the Conference should be on the theme of Championing the Historic Environment. Planning of the conference was remitted to the Chair's Group.

### **Study Tour of Caithness 2008**

27. Council discussed possible arrangements for the tour to Caithness. It was agreed that the tour would leave Inverness on the morning of 17 June, and finish on 20 June. The Council meeting would take place on 19 June.

### **Budget paper**

28. Council noted the budget paper.

### **A O B**

#### Dates of Working Group meetings 2008

29. Council noted that, as previously agreed, Working Groups should try to produce a schedule of dates for meetings in 2008.

#### Appointments to Council

30. Council discussed aspects of the appointments process, including the possibility of extending the term of a number of members by three months.

### **Date of next meeting**

31. The next Council meeting would take place at Duns Castle on 14 March 2008.

### **HEACS December 2007**