



ENGLISH HERITAGE

Commission

Minutes of the 237th meeting held at 8.30am on 28 March 2007 at Nunsmere Hall Hotel, Tarporley Road, Northwich, Cheshire

Commissioners present: Sir Neil Cossons – Chairman
Mrs Joyce Bridges CBE
Mr Michael Cairns
Mr Manish Chande
Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe CBE
Mr Piers Gough CBE
Dr Jane Grenville
Mr Michael Jolly CBE
Ms Jane Kennedy
Mr Les Sparks OBE
Ms Elizabeth Williamson

Staff present for meeting: Dr Simon Thurley – Chief Executive
Mr Steve Bee – Director of Planning and Development
Mr Mike Harlow – Legal Director
Ms Anna Keay - Properties Presentation Director (part)
Mr Dave Kuenssberg – Finance Director (part)
Ms Deborah Lamb – Director of Policy and Communications
Mr Mark Pemberton – Director of Properties and Outreach
Ms Christine Wall – Director of Corporate Communications (part)
Mr David Burgh – Commission Secretariat Manager

Item 1 – Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Ms Maria Adebowale, Mr Bill Bryson, Professor David Cannadine, Lord Douro OBE, Mrs Gilly Drummond and Lord Leicester CBE. Apologies were also received from Dr Edward Impey.

Declarations of interest

- 1.2 A declaration of interest was received from Mr Les Sparks in relation to his role as Chairman of an advisory panel set up by Bath and NE Somerset (BANES) Council on the Western Riverside project.

Item 2 – Communications Strategy (Oral)

- 2.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 36.*
- 2.2 Commissioners considered a presentation by Christine Wall, Director of Corporate Communications on English Heritage's communications strategy over recent years and proposals for the future.

Item 3 – Commercial Development of English Heritage properties (CP 2007/25/E)

- 3.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*
- 3.2 Commission considered a report on the commercial development of English Heritage properties. Commission had considered a paper in May 2006 looking at options for development and prior to that had not discussed site presentation since June 2003. It was timely to have a debate on the wider issues.

Item 4 – Budget 2007/08 (CP 2007/26/E)

- 4.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*
- 4.2 Commission considered a report on the revenue budget for 2007/08. The report had been considered in detail by the Finance Committee the day before.

Item 5 – Financial Overview: February 2007 (CP 2007/39/E)

- 5.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*
- 5.2 Commissioners considered English Heritage's financial results for the eleven months up to February 2007.

Item 6 – Announcements

6.1 The Chairman;

- announced that Piers Gough was coming to the end of his second term as a Commissioner and that this would be his last meeting. He thanked him for his valued and lively contribution to Commission debate and his service on the Commission since May 2000 and his membership of LAC and the Urban Panel.
- also announced that Dave Kuenssberg, the Finance Director, was leaving English Heritage and that this would be his last meeting. He thanked him for his excellent service to the organisation and wished him well for the future.
- welcomed Mike Harlow, the new English Heritage Legal Director to his first meeting of the Commission.
- thanked Henry Owen-John and his staff for an excellent visit to Chester on the day before the meeting. The visit had been very informative and posed a number of questions for Commission, such as the best way for English Heritage to work with the local Council on presentation of the amphitheatre. A Commissioner remarked that the Chester amphitheatre was an example of a case where English Heritage involvement might be necessary to ensure that it was developed in an appropriate way.
- Referred to the unfortunate number of apologies for the meeting. He asked the Commission Secretary to write to all Commissioners with the minutes of the meeting and an indication of the major items for the next Commission agenda to encourage better attendance for the next and future meetings.

Action: David Burgh

Item 7 – Open Minutes of the 236th Meeting: 7 February 2007 (CP 2007/27)

- 7.1 The Commission agreed the open minutes of the 236th Commission meeting held on 7 February 2007, to be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Item 8 – Exempt Minutes of the 236th Meeting: 7 February 2007 (CP 2007/28/E)

- 8.1 The Commission agreed the exempt minutes of the 236th Commission meeting held on 7 February 2007, subject to some minor amendments, to be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Item 9 – Matters Arising

- 9.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 40: personal data.*

Item 10 – Committee Minutes

a) Stonehenge Committee – 10 January 2007 (CP 2007/29/E)

- 10.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 42: legal professional privilege.*

10.3 Commission noted and endorsed the minutes of the Stonehenge Committee meeting held on 10 January 2007.

b) Business Committee – 28 February 2007 (CP 2007/30/E)

10.4 Commission noted and endorsed the minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 28 February 2007.

c) Remuneration Committee (open) – 28 February 2007 (CP 2007/31)

- 10.5 Commission noted that a two year pay settlement for 2006/07 and 2007/08 had been agreed. This would enable the development of a reward, recognition and retention strategy within a stable framework.

10.6 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 28 February 2007.

d) Remuneration Committee (exempt) – 28 February 2007 (CP 2007/32/E)

10.7 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 28 February 2007.

e) Heritage Protection Review Working Group – 1 March 2007 (CP 2007/33/E)

10.8 Commission noted and endorsed the minutes of the Heritage Protection Review Working Group meeting held on 1 March 2007.

f) LAC Minutes (open) – 2 March 2007 (CP 2007/34)

10.9 Commission noted and endorsed the open minutes of the LAC meeting held on 2 March 2007.

g) LAC Minutes (exempt) – 2 March 2007 (CP 2007/35/E)

- 10.10 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*

10.13 Commission noted and endorsed the exempt minutes of the LAC meeting held on 2 March 2007.

h) EHAC cancelled meetings

10.14 The Chairman of EHAC noted that the last two meetings of the Committee had been cancelled due to lack of business. The planning of workload would be reviewed and efforts made to prevent this from recurring. The Commission Secretary was asked to write to Committee members to assure them of their valuable contribution to English Heritage's work and outline the major issues which would be brought to them for consideration at future meetings.

Item 11 – Chairman's Report (Oral)

11.1 The Chairman reported on his appointments since the last Commission meeting. These had included the successful opening of the new visitor Centre at Battle Abbey and two meetings with David Lammy, Minister for Culture, relating to World Heritage Sites and his attendance at the Heritage Forum.

11.2 The Chairman invited Mrs Joyce Bridges to report on the Hatfield Conference on the Built Environment where she had represented English Heritage. This was one of a series of events on the arts convened by Lord Salisbury on a non partisan basis, with most of the organisations invited being from the heritage sector. The meeting had been on the basis of Chatham House rules. Joyce indicated that the views that had been expressed suggested that the proposed approach to communications strategy was a correct way forward.

11.3 In response to a question, the Chairman indicated that progress was being made with the appointment of his successor. Head hunters had been appointed and it was intended that a new Chairman would be in place before he stepped down from the role at the end of July. The public appointments process was underway to identify a suitable architect to replace Piers Gough and a business representative to fill the vacancy that would arise with the end of Michael Cairns second term in September.

11.4 Commission noted the Chairman's report.

Item 12 – Chief Executive's Report – open (CP 2007/36)

12.1 The Chief Executive reported on a number of meetings he had attended. These had included a very positive event, the DCMS annual Chief Executives' conference, at which the new Permanent Secretary Jonathan Stephens had set out proposals for more effective working relationships between DCMS and sponsored NDPBs.

12.2 Commission noted the Chief Executive's open report.

Item 13 – Chief Executive’s Report – exempt (CP 2007/37/E)

- 13.1 *This item is potentially exempt from public access under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 43: commercial interests.*
- 13.2 Commission considered an application for a lease at Down House.

Item 14 – Internal Audit review of corporate governance (CP 2007/38)

- 14.1 Commission considered a report on Internal Audit’s review of English Heritage’s governance arrangements.
- 14.2 Commission welcomed the opportunity to discuss the report which had already been considered by the Audit Committee. A Commissioner noted that the report indicated that English Heritage was a model organisation which DCMS could see as an exemplar.
- 14.3 Some Commissioners welcomed the suggestion in the report that vacancies for Committee and Panel membership might be advertised to ensure all good candidates had the opportunity to apply. However some of the skills sought were so specific that the field was very narrow. There were concerns that some good candidates might not apply if they were required to go through a full recruitment process, with the possibility that their failure to gain an appointment might become widely known. Commission agreed that it would be appropriate to consider how effective this process might be by, in the first instance, assessing forthcoming vacancies for the English Heritage Advisory Committee (EHAC).
- 14.4 Commission:**
- a) noted Internal Audit’s findings from their review of English Heritage’s governance arrangements;**
 - b) noted Internal Audit’s conclusion that “English Heritage’s governance arrangements were robust and compared well against current best practice recommended by HM Treasury, with the effect that strong reliance could be placed on these arrangements”; and**
 - c) agreed that the possible advertisement of vacancies on Committees and Panels needed careful consideration. As a first step the English Heritage Chairman and the Chairman of EHAC would consider whether this might be undertaken in relation to possible vacancies on that Committee.**

Item 15 – Any Other Business

15.1 Places of Worship expertise

Commission noted that there had been a change in English Heritage's internal arrangements to deal with Places of Worship grants.

15.2 The meeting closed at 12.45pm.

Next meeting

15.3 The next Commission meeting will be on 22 May in London, at a venue to be agreed.

David Burgh
Commission Secretariat Manager

March 2007