



HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT  
SCOTLAND

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EACHDRAIDHEIL  
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## **HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND**

**MINUTES OF HES BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2019**

**EDINBURGH PRINTMAKERS, DUNDEE STREET, EDINBURGH**

### **Present:**

Jane Ryder, Chair  
Janet Brennan  
Ian Brennan  
Trudi Craggs  
Andrew Holmes  
Coinneach Maclean  
Fiona McLean  
Paul Stollard  
Ken Thomson  
Ian Robertson

### **In attendance:**

Alex Paterson, Chief Executive  
Barbara Cummins, Director of Heritage  
Stephen Duncan, Director of Commercial and Tourism  
Gary Love, Director of Corporate Services  
David Mitchell, Director of Conservation  
Kirsteen Rowlands, Acting Director of Communications  
Donella Steel, Director of Finance  
Alison Turnbull, Director of Development and Partnerships  
Lorna Ewan, Head of Visitor Experience, Content and Learning (part)  
Martin Gray, Ranger and Visitor Services Manager (part)  
Jane Rahil, Project Portfolio Manager (part)  
Hazel Pearson, Michael Laird Architects (part)  
Suzanne Casey, Head of the Chief Executive's Office  
Jules Davidson-Welch, Board Secretariat

### **Introduction and Apologies**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Coinneach Maclean, Fiona McLean and Ken Thomson for jointly chairing the meeting of 25 April in her absence.

2. The Chair congratulated Ken Thomson on news that he is to receive an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

### **Minutes of the 25 April Board Meeting and Action Tracker**

3. The Board approved the minute of the April meeting subject to minor amendment. The table of actions was reviewed and progress discussed. Board members noted that the consultation on the Climate Change and Environmental Action Plan is currently live; information on the timescale for publication will be issued to the Board.

**ACTION:** Director of Conservation

4. The Chair noted that the Board had discussed and agreed their updated objectives during the closed session in April.

### **Chair's Update**

5. The Chair visited Lewis and Harris to attend the launch of the 'Seven Waves' exhibition at St Clement's Church, Rodell on 01 June. She commended the organisation of the launch as well as the successful use of the Property in Care.
6. The Chair attended the AGM of the Historic Houses Association Scotland on 04 June, noting interesting insights and key themes of visitor experience and sustainable tourism.

### **Chief Executive's Report**

7. The Chief Executive presented his update to the Board. A number of matters were discussed, including:
  - Work on the Orkney Gateway project is progressing well; a memorandum of understanding has been signed between HES, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Orkney Islands Council, and the Local Authority has succeeded in purchasing the car park area at Stones of Stenness;
  - The Chief Executive updated the Board on his meeting with the Cabinet Secretary on 15 May, including discussion of St Peter's
  - The Chief Executive met with the Scottish Government Protocol and Honours unit to discuss the Stone of Destiny but with no indicative outcome ;
  - The Chief Executive updated the Board on the current situation regarding the increased employers' contributions to the pension scheme. The latest information indicates that government will cover a significant percentage of the additional cost, but this is yet to be formally confirmed;
  - The Board noted positive partnership working with the Abbotsford Trust, and emphasised the importance of HES' involvement in longer-term strategic partnerships in the area; and

- The Board discussed the topic of heritage crime, noting that cases involving unauthorised works have been increasing. The Chief Executive explained that many of the reported cases had been resolved by a mixture of formal and informal correspondence, and that work is ongoing to raise awareness of this type of crime.
8. The Director of Finance summarised the year to date financial position to 30 April 2019, which shows a forecast outturn at year end, in line with the organisation's budget. The commercial income for the month was well ahead of target due to a 17% increase in visitor numbers year on year including an exceptional Easter. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the additional funding for the increase in pension contribution costs, allocation of an element of the operational expenditure budget has been held back to be reviewed once the position is clearer.
  9. The Board reviewed the planned actions arising from the John Sinclair House fire safety audit report, noting that the timescale for some of the actions appear to have slipped, but received assurances that many would be completed ahead of schedule. The Board emphasised that investment in bringing John Sinclair House to compliance must still be completed regardless of future plans for the building, and commended work to fully integrate fire safety considerations into the design work of the archives storage project.
  10. The Director of Finance briefed the Board on an application to the Historic Environment Repair Grant (HERG) funding from Renfrewshire Council with a grant request of £2m towards the proposed £42m repair and redevelopment of the complex of historic buildings which constitute Paisley Museum. The application is due to be considered at the HERG assessment panel on 02 July 2019, ahead of which the Board were invited to share their thoughts. While the level of grant is considered affordable within the current programme, the Board discussed the potential opportunity cost of committing a high level of funding to a single project. Approval of this project may also encourage similar high-value applications to come forward, for which funding may not be available. These and other matters will be considered as part of the formal assessment

**ACTION:** Director of Finance

## **Holyrood Park**

*Lorna Ewan and Martin Gray joined the meeting*

11. Lorna Ewan, Head of Visitor Experience, Content and Learning, and Martin Gray, Ranger and Visitor Services Manager, gave a presentation covering the complex and wide-ranging archaeological, cultural and scientific significance of the park, as well as the many challenges and opportunities faced by HES in managing the park.

12. The Director of Conservation gave an update on the rock safety situation in the park, noting the most recent report compiled by our geotech engineering consultants. In the longer term, complex and costly intervention will be required, but the process of preparing for this work will be lengthy. In the meantime, measures including access restrictions will remain in place.

13. The Board held a discussion of the themes raised, including:

- A number of strategic questions were posed by the Board, including the reason that the park is included within HES' portfolio, and whether HES is the organisation best-placed to lead on the park's road and infrastructure maintenance;
- A strategy may consider routes for recouping investment in the park, including a commercial strand;
- Discussion of the appropriate level of involvement for partners and stakeholders in developing a strategy for the site;
- While the relationship with Edinburgh City Council is very good on an operational level, there may be scope for further engagement at a strategic level on a number of issues; and
- Excellent work is undertaken in providing quality engagement with learning and wellbeing groups. There may be scope to support groups to lead their own learning experiences rather than delivering them directly.

14. The Board endorsed proposals for development of a strategic plan with attendant discussion with park stakeholders. In the meantime a park wide operational plan for HES with stakeholders will be important in shaping our continuing work.

**ACTION:** Director of Commercial  
and Tourism

*Lorna Ewan and Martin Gray left the meeting*

### **Our Place in Time (OPiT) Update**

15. The Chief Executive updated the Board on progress in delivering Our Place in Time during the period October 2018-March 2019 ahead of the meeting of the Strategic Historic Environment Forum (SHEF) on 17 June. HES is responsible for leading and enabling delivery of OPiT, with responsibilities including coordinating the production of 6 monthly and annual progress and performance reports, and chairing four of the five working groups.

16. The Chief Executive offered an update of the progress of each of the Working Groups, noting that each group has a different profile of outputs, some more tangible than others:

- The Climate Change Group has focused over the last six months on the production of an 'Impacts Guide' designed to meet the requirements of

interested members of the general public, professionals working in the sector and caretakers or owners of assets;

- The Heritage Tourism Group has identified sustainable tourism as a priority across the industry, particularly as it feeds in to the new National Tourism Strategy, which is due to be launched in 2020; agreeing this was a priority, the Board discussed briefly what would be the best forum for taking forward this priority and agreed this should be considered in light of SHEF discussions;
- The Skills and Expertise Group is acting as steering group for the development of the first historic environment sector Skills Investment Plan (SIP), a future skills strategy for the sector, launched at the Engine Shed on 25 March 2019; and
- The Volunteering Group have focused on launching and promoting the planned 2019-24 Volunteering Participation Campaign and developing a Framework for Action and the concept of a Leadership Pledge, whereby leaders from across the sector will be asked to pledge their support.

17. The Director of Conservation presented an update of the Built Heritage Investment Group, the purpose of which is to develop a Scotland-wide Built Heritage Investment Plan that will outline need, criteria for prioritising investment, and an action plan that sets out how various forms of intervention could achieve the goals. Four workstreams have been identified for project delivery, and the group has had successes to date, notably in combining datasets from various asset owners such as the NHS and Network Rail.

18. The Board discussed the Built Heritage Investment Group update, offering the following feedback:

- The Board emphasised the need for representation of the private sector in discussions;
- The Board noted the Directors view that, while recognising the valuable and extensive work to date, comprehensive data collection would take years. The Board identified the challenge of prioritisation based on indicators, including cultural significance or representative selection;
- It was not clear from work to date how a national prioritisation model with resource allocation was achievable. The Board felt a nuanced approach may be required, but meanwhile commended continued dialogue in the collection of data and identification of issues; and
- The purpose of prioritisation should be clearly defined, emphasising that climate change has precipitated or accelerated the need for prioritisation, rather than simply the lack of resources.

19. The update report considered by the Board and other points raised will inform discussion at the Strategic Historic Environment Forum (SHEF) meeting on 17 June.

## Health, Fire and Safety Annual Report

20. The Director of Corporate Services gave the Board an overview of the report, which provides a range of data and analysis on Health, Fire, Safety and Wellbeing across HES. He highlighted the following elements:
- The number of visitor accidents has increased, which is believed to be due to better reporting to a large extent. The Board noted the increased numbers, and asked for further reports if the expected 'plateauing' does not occur;
  - HES has been awarded the Healthily Working Lives Gold Award;
  - 37 defibrillators have now been installed across the estate, and the criteria for placement is under constant review; and
  - A number of historical personal injury claims dating from before the establishment of HES have been transferred to Scottish Government.
21. The Board thanked the Director of Corporate Services, commending the comprehensive report.

## HQ Project

*Jane Rahil and Hazel Pearson joined the meeting*

22. Jane Rahil, Project Portfolio Manager, and Hazel Pearson of Michael Laird Architects gave a presentation to the Board, including an updated Business Case, which demonstrates that costs are forecasted in line with that submitted in 2018. They also summarised the key findings of the RIBA Stage 2 concept design, notably, that the required number of staff can be accommodated within Longmore House.
23. The report outlines five project priorities, based on an understanding of the overall vision, the building constraints and the impact on users of the building:
- **Provide a Welcoming Arrival for all:** Give the historic building an appropriate main entrance which enables everyone to come in through the front door;
  - **Create a meaningful Building Heart:** Bring people in to the heart of Longmore house, where 'what HES does' is showcased;
  - **Connect the people:** Break down the silos, open up the building and connect people both physically and visibly;
  - **Provide an Effective and Efficient Workplace:** A variety of work settings bespoke to HES' needs to be dispersed cross departments; and
  - **Encourage Healthy People and Environment:** The building to support physical, mental and intellectual health.

24. A space is also proposed for the ground floor that will house a selection of items from the archive. The Board discussed briefly and a more detailed discussion on this specific issue will take place at the next meeting of the Archives Steering Group to ensure alignment with proposals for archives development overall .
25. The next stage of the process is the detailed design phase, scheduled for autumn 2019 to align with the wider Programme for Success and to ensure that staff have adequate opportunity to engage in the process. The Board commended the work of the Change Champions and agreed the proposal to allow some more time for staff consultation, with an assurance this would not delay the project.
26. The Board endorsed the Stage 2 concept designs and updated Business Case, which will now be taken forward to the next stage.

**ACTION:** Director of  
Corporate Services

### **Programme for Success Update**

27. The Chief Executive updated the Board on the Programme for Success, including the priorities for the immediate future include defining the objectives at a Programme level, refinement of a Programme delivery plan and communication with staff regarding what to expect and when. The Board received a copy of the Programme Status Report which had been considered by the Corporate Programme Governance Board on 09 May. Members noted that 25 Change Champions are now taking part in the process.
28. The lease for Archive House is being negotiated, and the plan for moving from John Sinclair House is being developed. The Board confirmed that the aim of moving out of John Sinclair House by the break in the lease is the preferred option. The Board confirmed that there should be an early review of the Terms of Reference for the Archives Steering Group to take account of developments

### **HESe**

29. Coinneach Maclean, Chair of the Historic Environment Scotland Enterprises Board (HESe) gave the Board a verbal update of the 12 June meeting. Coinneach summarised the results of the HESe for 2018/19, noting a contribution of £3.1m.
30. The HESe Board had approved the HESe Business Plan for 19/20, which sets out year one of the overall three-year HESe Business Plan. This outlines a

target for growth in the amount of contribution produced by HESe, with NCAP activity as a key route for increased income generation.

31. Over the shorter term, the relocation of NCAP to new premises continues to progress, with ongoing negotiations with the new owner of the building previously identified as the preferred location.
32. Issues of governance and staffing complement should be considered between Board members and the CEO asap after this Board meeting, with a view to action necessary recruitment

**Action:** Chair

## **ARAC**

33. Ian Brennan, Chair of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC), gave the Board an update of the 15 May meeting.
34. The Committee had completed their annual self-assessment, in which Members considered opportunities to build on the Committee's effectiveness and assessed their skill-level against a list of skills areas.
35. A deep-dive assessment had been undertaken on Scheme of Delegation compliance relating to Properties in Care, and a number of actions are now being implemented.
36. ARAC considered the Internal Audit opinion for the financial year and noted the Head of Internal Audit and Business Improvement's finding of satisfactory assurance.

## **Board Access to Information**

37. The Director of Finance updated the Board on work to provide a platform for communicating and sharing information with the Board, as HES moves more generally to adopt standardised approaches to managing and sharing data.
38. Potential suppliers are due to provide demonstrations in the coming weeks; a group of colleagues will assess each platform's functionality with regard to ease of obtaining and commenting on information, and of increasing collaboration.
39. The Board emphasised the importance not only of access, but of appropriate architecture of content, and the need to access documents off-line. While some members would appreciate a stand-alone device for HES documents, others would prefer to use their existing devices.

**ACTION:** Director of Finance

40. The Board also emphasised the need for regular and timely communication of general and HES specific intelligence between Board meetings. This should be reinstated, having fallen behind in recent weeks

**Action:** Chief Executive

**There followed a closed session of the Board and Chief Executive.**