



**HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND**

**MINUTES OF HES BOARD MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**THE ENGINE SHED, STIRLING**

**Present:**

Jane Ryder, Chair  
Janet Brennan  
Andrew Davis  
Emma Herd  
Fiona McLean  
Paul Stollard  
Jane Williamson

**In attendance:**

Alex Paterson, Chief Executive  
Stephen Duncan, Director of Commercial and Tourism (via video link)  
Gary Love, Director of Corporate Services (via video link)  
Elly McCrone, Director of Heritage (via video link)  
David Mitchell, Director of Conservation  
Donella Steel, Director of Finance  
Alison Turnbull, Director of Development and Partnership  
Alasdair McKenzie, Deputy Head of Planning, Consents and Advice Service (Environmental Assessment) (part)  
Iona Murray, Deputy Head of Planning, Consents and Advice Service (Ancient Monuments) (part)  
Josie Ayers, Co-design Officer, YoungScot (part)  
Euan Platt Co-design Manager, YoungScot (part)  
Katelyn Grant Co-design Assistant, YoungScot (part)  
Alice Masson, #HistoricScot Forum Member (part)  
Charlotte Doig, #HistoricScot Forum Member (part)  
Cara Schroter, #HistoricScot Forum Member (part)  
Ewan Hyslop, Head of Technical Research and Science (part)  
David Harkin, Climate Change Scientist (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. Apologies were noted from Ian Brennan, Terry Levinthal, Ian Robertson and the Director of People.
2. Paul Stollard made a new declaration of interest; he has been appointed to the Board of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The Chair also declared that she has been

appointed as a trustee of the Sir William Syson Foundation. Both appointments have been added to the published register of interests.

### **Minute of the 19 August Board Meeting**

3. The Board approved the Minute of the August Board meeting.
4. Turning to the action log, the Chief Executive updated the Board on a number of items listed, including:
  - The Board noted that the development of the Holyrood Park strategic plan was being taken forward under business as usual planning. Members requested that this be within the next 12 months. The current consultation on road use within the Park will feed into the larger project.
  - Members agreed to indicate their approval of the revised PIC Annual Report by 20 September.
  - The Annual Operating Plan 2021/22, amended to reflect the recent prioritisation exercise, will be circulated to the Board with members asked to indicate their approval by 20 September.
  - The Board noted that the timescale for the preparation of the Orkney Gateway Outline Business Case has slipped and will not now come to the Board in October. HES is working with partners, Orkney Islands Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise on a revised timeframe following the public consultation.

### **Chair's Update**

5. The Chair advised the Board that the next meeting with the Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development had been arranged for 28 September. Given its significance as an investment priority, she had requested that Archives House be on the agenda.

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

6. The Chief Executive gave an update to the Board on a number of matters, including:
  - Scottish Government continue to consider the business case for the Archive House project; further information has been requested and provided.
  - The Board noted a brief update on the financial position.
  - Members received an update on work to implement the action plan associated with the Fundraising Strategy approved earlier in the year. An early action is to put in place capability and functionality to enable fundraising, and to provide a more visible means for donors to donate via the HES website. This will go live in early October. A Fundraising Manager is now in place.
  - The Chief Executive informed the Board about the newly opened Skills Centre in Stirling, which replaces the former facility housed in Forth Valley College. The Board noted that this provides increased space and the opportunity to deliver additional training courses. HES and Forth Valley College continue to work in partnership, with the College being the SQA Approved Centre for the HES delivery of the stonemasonry modern apprenticeship.

- The Board raised the recent incident at Holyrood Park which had resulted in a fatality, noting that given the circumstance surrounding the incident, Police Scotland had taken over at the site and that HES staff involvement had been minimal.
7. Turning to the update on Monument Investment Plans, the Board asked a number of questions. Members noted the transition from Monument Investment Plans to Sustainable Management Plans, the latter of which will be broader in scope. A governance and sign-off process for the plans was set out in the paper with financial commitments following the thresholds set out the Scheme of Internal Delegation.
  8. While generally supportive of the proposals in principle, members asked for consideration of the proposed governance including more detail on the accountability and reporting to the Board and a specific update of the status of the current MIPs.

**ACTION:** Chief Executive to October Board

*Alasdair McKenzie, Deputy Head of Planning, Consents and Advice Service (Environmental Assessment) and Iona Murray, Deputy Head of Planning, Consents and Advice Service (Ancient Monuments) joined the meeting*

### **Regulatory Framework**

9. The Board noted the draft Regulatory Framework, which had been developed following discussions involving the Chair and some Board members. The document set out the context in which HES undertakes its regulatory function, the scope and range of HES regulatory activities and how the regulatory role is undertaken.
10. The Board welcomed elements of the draft Framework, although observed this was not comprehensive. Reflecting on previous discussions, areas for clarity and enhancement were identified. Board members welcomed the Chief Executive's suggestion of a fuller discussion on the subject, and in light of this, agreed the scheduling of a further draft should be postponed pending that fuller discussion.

*The Deputy Head of Planning, Consents and Advice Service (Environmental Assessment) and Deputy Head of Planning, Consents and Advice Service (Ancient Monuments) left the meeting*

*Members of the #HistoricScot youth forum and supporting staff from YoungScot joined the meeting*

### **#HistoricScot External Youth Forum**

11. The Chair welcomed members of the #HistoricScot youth forum and supporting staff from YoungScot to the meeting. The Director of Development and Partnership introduced the project, which is a three-year partnership project between HES and Young Scot. The Forum is a group of 35 young people aged between 12–26 years old from across Scotland. Their report contains the group's recommendations, based on their own reflections and research from online surveys and polls involving young people. The varied recommendations span all HES business areas and focus on the themes of Community and Schools; Volunteering and Work; HES Sites; and Website.
12. The forum members gave a presentation on highlights from their report, including recommendations on accessibility, diversity, gamification and the HES website, followed by a question and answer session with Board members.

The Board commended the group and their excellent report, agreeing that recommendations should be prioritised within a Youth Plan. Members also welcomed the breadth of the recommendations, observing that many of the recommendations have wider relevance in the context of developing Equalities and diversity; Board members would warmly support mainstreaming these not restricted to a Youth Plan. Staff will work with the Forum to develop action plans including mainstreaming.

*Members of the #HistoricScot youth forum and supporting staff from YoungScot left the meeting*

*Ewan Hyslop, Head of Technical Research and Science, and David Harkin, Climate Change Scientist joined the meeting*

## **Climate Change**

13. Introducing the first of two papers, the Director of Development and Partnership briefed the Board on HES' draft programme for the forthcoming COP 26 summit.

14. In discussion, the Board offered the following comments:

- The Board welcomed the Programme of activity, noting the partnership work across the culture sector in preparation for COP 26. Members noted that the uncertain nature of some of the arrangements has necessitated a flexible approach, and that HES' content has been designed to accommodate a pivot to a hybrid or online-only format.
- Members discussed the intended audiences for the events, noting that the wide scope of the offer is intended to reach the broadest possible range and provide the most impactful legacy. International connections were also noted and welcomed, particularly through HES role in the Climate Heritage Network.
- The Board identified the importance of the theme of sustainable tourism, with the need to clearly define our position.

15. The Board approved the programme, also noting the annex to the paper covering the business continuity measures in place for the summit.

16. Turning to 'Climate Ready HES', a climate change adaptation plan, the Chief Executive briefed the Board on the background and context to the document. The document puts forward a plan for how HES will adapt to the elements of climate change which are now inevitable, or already occurring, and is a key deliverable of HES' Climate Action Plan.

17. The Board offered feedback on the plan, including:

- While the purpose of the plan is to provide a baseline in a relatively new field, Board members felt the narrative may not sufficiently reflect the urgency involved.
- The title 'Towards a Climate-Ready HES' may be more appropriate, highlighting the action we need to take rather than suggest we had already achieved "Climate Ready".
- It will be important to set the Adaptation Plan in the context of our overarching Climate Action Plan. The document would benefit from clarity on the primary and secondary adaptation responses.
- The document should be condensed for an external audience, ensuring that the key messages are prominent. The Communications around the Plan will require careful consideration.

A revised version of the Plan will be circulated to the Board for approval.

**ACTION:** Director of Conservation

*Ewan Hyslop, Head of Technical Research and Science, and David Harkin, Climate Change Scientist left the meeting*

### **Paisley Museum Grant Application**

18. The Director of Finance presented a grant application from Renfrewshire Council for Board endorsement. Since the Board received an initial briefing on the application in June 2019, the final sum applied for has been revised down from £2m to £1.49m. While this is below the financial threshold necessitating Board approval, given previous Board awareness, the Board was asked to endorse staff's recommendation to approve the application.
19. The Board noted the details of the project, which aims to repair and revitalise the historic museum complex in Paisley, delivering strong social and economic outcomes, and will play a key heritage-led role in the regeneration of Paisley. Members considered and endorsed the recommendation given by the Director of Finance. Feedback will be sought from Renfrewshire Council to capture comments and lessons on the process.

**ACTION:** Director of Finance

### **High Level Inspections Update**

20. The Director of Conservation provided an update on the High-Level Inspection Programme. The programme of inspections is progressing in line with the plan, and the peer review process has concluded. A lessons-learned review has been undertaken, and a programme of staff engagement and training continues to take place.
21. Paul Stollard, a member of the Board sub-group on High Level Inspections gave a summary of positive comments from the Peer Review Panel members. The excellent feedback demonstrates the structure and methodology adopted is robust and fit for purpose, and the Board welcomed this assurance. The Board agreed that the Chair should write to thank the panel members.

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