



REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE: 22 AUGUST 2013

JOINT CONSULTATION ON THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND AND THE MERGER OF HISTORIC SCOTLAND AND THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE ANCIENT AND HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF SCOTLAND

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:-

- 1.1 **Approve the attached response to the proposed Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland and the merger of Historic Scotland with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. (RCAHMS) (Appendix 1)**

2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 The above consultation comes in two parts: the first sets out a draft Strategy for Scotland's Historic Environment for the next 15 years. The second focuses on its delivery, with the establishment of a new lead, Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) for the historic environment, through the merger of Historic Scotland and RCAHMS.
- 2.2 Aberdeenshire Council adopted its own Historic Environment Strategy in June 2010; the publication now, for the first time, of a national Strategy is welcomed. It reflects the rising profile of care for our historic environment within Scottish Government, based on a recognition that our historic assets are not only valuable in their own right, but generate much wider social and economic benefits.
- 2.3 Within Aberdeenshire, the contribution of the historic environment to the tourist economy, in particular, is critical. The publication of the Scottish Strategy affords an opportunity to refocus on the significance of our own historic assets, and sets a wider context for any review of the Council's own Historic Environment Strategy and associated resources.
- 2.4 The new national Strategy is designed to take account both of present and future challenges, and has been based on opinions across the wide range of players involved in care of the historic environment. Strategic priorities identified to support its delivery, are based around the following:
 - The need to be *cross-cutting*, to ensure the historic environment lies at the heart of future agenda in achieving common outcomes to place-making, employment and climate change;
 - The need to *investigate and record* our historic environment;
 - The need for *care and protection* of assets for future generations;
 - The need to *value* the significance of our historic environment.

- 2.5 The new Non Departmental Public Body is intended to be more resilient, sustainable and effective in dealing with the challenges associated with the historic environment and pressures on funding. The organisation will have charitable status subject to application and approval by the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator.
- 2.6 It is not clear at this stage to what extent there may be any additional burden on local authorities as a result of the new arrangement. This will become clearer during ongoing discussion on the Joint Working Agreement, and emergence of the legislation establishing the new NDPB and setting out the functions the organisation is to carry out.
- 2.7 The new body will deliver on a core 'placemaking' agenda through the following headline outcomes:-
- A national cultural institution focused on the historic environment.
 - The celebration of Scotland's heritage;
 - A highly motivated and respected organisation, providing informed and enabling leadership;
 - Building knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment;
 - Organisational and financial resilience and sustainability of functions.
- 2.8 Full details of the consultation can be accessed at:
- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/05/1373>
- 2.9 An officer level response has been forwarded as per **Appendix 1** to meet the closing date of 31 July. However, should Members wish to make amendments or additions, the opportunity is afforded to forward these to the Scottish Government.
- 2.10 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and have no comment to make.

3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 3.1 An equalities assessment is not required because the recommended action will not have a detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics.
- 3.2 There will be no financial or staffing implications arising from the content of this report. However, further delegation of responsibilities may be passed down to local authorities as a result of the merger, and these will have to be examined in the Joint Working Agreement and with the emergence of new legislation.

Stephen Archer

Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Irina Birnie & Shaun Norman (Environment Planner)
8 July 2013



A Joint Consultation on the Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland and the Merger of Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS).

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Aberdeenshire Council

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Birnie

Forename

Irina

2. Postal Address

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual

/

Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

OR

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

OR

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

Group/Org Type (please tick one)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local Authority | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Body | <input type="checkbox"/> | Voluntary Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Contractor/Developer | <input type="checkbox"/> | Housing Provider / RSL | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Designer/Consultant | <input type="checkbox"/> | NDPB/Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Academic Body | <input type="checkbox"/> | Advisory | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Industry Association/Manufacturer | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Please Specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(d)

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes

No

4. I will be responding to:

Please tick as appropriate

Both parts of the consultation

Part 1 - Historic Environment Strategy

Part 2 – Business case for the Merger

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

To select an answer click one of the tick boxes. To change your answer click in the box again e.g. Yes No

To enter comments please use the blue comments boxes as below which will automatically expand as you type.

Comments

Part 1 Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland

Q1. Do you agree that the definition appropriately describes the 'historic environment'?

Yes what do you like about it?
No how do you think it could be improved?

It reflects the diverse nature of the historic environment and acknowledges the importance of intangible heritage. When the definition is read in conjunction with the explanation on pg 5-6 of the strategy document it is easy to understand. However without this explanation the part which states 'and includes the associations we can see, feel and understand' may not be clear to a lot of people.

Q2. Does the Vision take account of your aspirations for the historic environment?

Yes what do you like about it?
No what would you change?

It covers all elements that are important

Q3. Are the overarching principles the right principles to guide our activities over the next 10-15 years?

Yes what do you like about them?
No what would you change?

The recommended principles are appropriate.

In planning how to deliver the aims and vision of the strategy, staff worked in collaboration with stakeholders to produce a series of high level strategic priorities, these included cross cutting overarching priorities and a series of priority areas for the sector.

Q4. Cross-cutting

(i) Does the overarching aim reflect your ambition for the historic environment?

Yes what do you like about it?
No what would you change?

