

Second Meeting of the Cross Government, Cross Sector Heritage Council

Wednesday 14th November, 9:00am -10:30am

MINUTES

OFFICIAL

Summary of actions

1	A summary of the meeting minutes will be published on gov.uk after prior circulation to members.	DCMS
2.1	HE will provide feedback on the Planning Practice Guidance revisions on behalf of the heritage sector to DCMS and MHCLG.	HE
2.2	Heritage sector to respond to MHCLG's consultation on 'building up' by January.	HS
2.3	Provide feedback to MHCLG on how the revised NPPF is operating in reality.	HS
3.1	Defra to increase engagement with the heritage sector on Environmental Land Management Systems, development of indicators for the 25 Year Plan, and preparation for the Environment Bill, and to provide an update on this at the next Heritage Council meeting.	Defra
4.1	AHF, HLF and HE to facilitate communication with recipients of ERDF and other EU social funding, and to encourage them to respond to the UKSPF consultation.	AHF, HLF, HE
4.2	Cities and Local Growth Unit to continue to engage with the heritage sector once the UKSPF consultation is launched.	HS/CLOG
5.1	Heritage sector to collate evidence to support exemptions from a salary threshold for highly skilled heritage professionals and the possible inclusion of professionals with heritage skills in the shortage occupation list for visas, potentially linked to the Cooperative Accord sectors.	HS
5.2	DCMS to facilitate and engage HO to arrange a roundtable between the heritage sector to ensure bespoke engagement with the sector on the Immigration White Paper.	DCMS
7	DCMS officials will circulate a date and invitation for the next Heritage Council meeting, to be held in the spring.	DCMS

*HS= Heritage Sector members

Attendees

Chair - Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis MP

Cities and Local Growth Unit (*joint unit between Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government*)

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Department for International Development (DFID)

Department for Transport (DFT)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

HM Treasury (HMT)

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF)

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

Historic England (HE)

Historic Houses (HH)

National Trust (NT)

Natural England (NE)

The Heritage Alliance (THA)

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. The Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and reminded colleagues that the forum's key aim is to enable dialogue and collaboration between Government and the heritage sector, and to drive progress on key policy areas for heritage.

Item 2: Minutes and Actions

2. After introductions, the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis MP, confirmed that DCMS' actions from the last Heritage Council (1, 2, 3.1 and 3.2) have been completed, and advised that actions 4.1 and 4.3 would be covered under other agenda items.
3. Simon Gallagher, Director of Planning at MHCLG, updated that actions 5.1 and 5.2 are complete. He thanked heritage sector colleagues for their input into the NPPF revision process, and advised that HE colleagues are working with MHCLG and DCMS to provide feedback on revisions to the Planning Practice Guidance on behalf of the heritage sector. Sector attendees emphasised that it was important that this included consultation wider heritage sector as well, and THA offered to facilitate another red line exercise. MHCLG invited feedback from the sector in due course as to how the revised NPPF and PPG are working in practice.

4. Action 5.3 is in progress. MHCLG's consultation on Planning Reform, including 'building up', closes in January, and they would be happy to discuss this with sector individuals or as a group. HE and the Minister both emphasised the need for clarity in guidance on this issue. MHCLG encouraged the heritage sector to respond to this consultation, and offered to discuss the issue with sector representatives if helpful.

Item 3: Environmental Land Management

5. Gavin Ross, Head of Environmental Land Management at Defra, gave a presentation and update on Environmental Land Management Systems.
6. National Trust thanked Gavin for the presentation and raised three concerns, around the 1) speed of progress, 2) the need to involve a wider cross-section of the heritage community, and 3) where heritage might be placed amongst wider financial considerations and what the mechanisms will be for assessing the value of environmental benefits.
7. Defra acknowledged that there is a need to increase the pace of discussions and that funding for heritage will depend on the overall funding envelope. There is a separate workstream within Defra for the transition phase. Sector representatives reiterated the need to have an emerging degree of certainty around the scheme and its timescales, and that match-funding alignment needs to be considered from the outset.
8. Defra acknowledged the importance of having heritage expertise on the testing and trialling elements of the scheme, and committed to increased engagement with the sector. HH noted that it will also be important to involve owners of private houses within wider estates.
9. It was agreed that Defra would provide an update at the next Heritage Council meeting in the spring on ELMs and on engagement with the sector on issues raised in the meeting, in particular on the development of indicators for the 25 Year Plan and preparation for the Environment Bill.

Item 4: UKSPF and investment in place

10. The Minister highlighted the recent £55 million allocated in the Budget for heritage high streets, and the importance of heritage for creating successful places.
11. Ben Pledger, Deputy Director for Cities and Local Growth, talked through a paper on the UKSPF. The UKSPF will be an opportunity to focus more on outcomes, and to

streamline processes. Consultation is due to launch before the end of 2018, and the heritage sector were strongly encouraged to engage with this.

12. The AHF emphasised that it will be important for the UKSPF to support the development of softer skills in enhancing productivity, be accessible for smaller charities and social enterprises, and have suitably long investment time frames. HE reported that work is ongoing to develop mechanisms to comprehensively measure the value of heritage.
13. CLOG is keen to use the heritage sector, and the Heritage Council, to ensure the consultation reaches individuals and groups who would otherwise not be reached, e.g. grant recipients, previous beneficiaries of EU funds. AHF, HLF and HE offered to facilitate communication with recipients of funding, and to encourage them to respond to the UKSPF consultation.
14. CLOG will continue to engage the heritage sector once the UKSPF consultation is launched.

Item 5: Immigration

15. The Home Office were unable to send a representative to this meeting, but fed back that they would be undertaking an extensive programme of engagement and evidence-gathering from a wide range of interested parties, including the heritage sector.
16. THA advised that the heritage sector has a particular issue with high skill / low pay jobs, and consultation with their members has suggested that around 50% of staff in responding organisations would fall below the £30k minimum salary threshold for visas. THA asked whether there could be an exemption made for specialist heritage skills if the £30k threshold went ahead, and whether this could be included in the Culture and Education or Science and Innovation Cooperative Accord.
17. The Minister emphasised the need for the sector to be ready to respond as soon as the Home Office publishes its White Paper and asks for engagement. Good evidence will be important in making the case for exemptions. The MAC is currently exploring options for expanding the shortage occupation list, and the sector should seek to engage with them on this.
18. It was suggested that a roundtable between the heritage sector and the new immigration Minister would be helpful in making the case and ensuring bespoke engagement. DCMS will liaise with HO on engagement with the sector as part of the consultation process, as offered by HO by email correspondence prior to the council.

19. FCO gave an update on cross-government soft power work. The International Soft Power Strategy is due to be drafted by the end of 2018, and FCO SoS has sent a letter to Heads of Mission to instruct them to ensure that soft power is mainstreamed in their in-country activities. The importance of being able to evaluate soft power and demonstrate value for money was noted (for example, the strong ROI of the GREAT campaign), and HE asked for more guidance on ways to enhance soft power. FCO advised that the Soft Power Strategy will not have a single list of geographical priorities for all Departments, but rather hopes to highlight where there are confluences of interests across Departments.

Item 6: Future agenda items

20. The Minister thanked all departments who had fed into the exercise and explained that the department would be considering how best to take this exercise forward proportionately in future. It provides a useful snapshot and DCMS will engage with sector members to prioritise and identify future agenda items for the spring meeting.

Item 7: Actions and close

21. DCMS officials will circulate a date and invitation for the next Heritage Council meeting, to be held in the spring.