

HISTORIC SCOTLAND BOARD

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND (HEACS)

Purpose

1. To provide the Historic Scotland Board (HSB) with an update on the expected delivery by the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland (HEACS) of its current work programme and the timetable for the Scottish Public Service Reform Bill.

Decisions/Actions required of Historic Scotland Board

2. The Board is invited to note the position and highlight any issues they foresee over the next few months, in relation both to the handling of the reports and the forthcoming legislation.

Key information the Board will need to support its decisions/action

HEACS' work programme

3. HEACS' current work programme was set by Ministers in the previous administration and consists of four separate pieces of work. The Council expects to complete these reports as set out below:

- **Infrastructure of the Historic Environment Sector**

Submit to Minister by end December 2008

- **Economic Impact of the Historic Environment**

Submit to Minister by January 2009

- **Involving Young Adults in the Historic Environment**

Submit to Minister by end February 2009

- **Conservation of the Ecclesiastical Heritage**

Submit to Minister by end March 2009

4. HEACS have also commissioned a report from Volunteer Development Scotland on, "An Audit and Review of Volunteering in the Historic Environment". This will be submitted formally at the same time as the Infrastructure report.

5. The Council then plans to hold a closing conference in May 2009, to which it will present a final annual report. The conference programme is being developed in partnership with other bodies, including ourselves

6. Senior staff recently met with HEACS as part of the regular series of high-level liaison meetings which take place between HS and the Council, at which the Council explained the range of research it had undertaken in support of this set of reports. In particular, substantial independent research has been produced to underpin the economic impact and infrastructure reports. We would be happy to provide some further detail on this during the meeting.

Scottish Public Service Reform Bill

7. The Scottish Public Service Reform Bill is the legislation which will be used to take forward the proposal to abolish HEACS, which was announced in January 2008 as part of Ministers' wider simplification agenda. We expect the Bill to be introduced during 2009 and to complete its parliamentary passage in 2010.

8. We agreed with OCPAS last year that in view of the proposal to abolish HEACS, it was acceptable not to undertake any new recruitment, but to extend appointments in order to keep sufficient numbers on the Council for it to be able to complete its work programme effectively. Most of the existing appointments are due to end in May 2009 and we are considering at the moment how we deal with the period after May 2009.

9. The current work programme was due to be completed during 2009. No new work programme has been set, given the abolition proposals.

Conclusions

10. The Board is invited to note the position and highlight any issues they foresee over the next few months, in relation both to the handling of the reports and the forthcoming legislation.

Policy Group
December 2008