Minutes of the Meeting of Royal Commissioners

Wednesday 19 February 2014
Conference Room, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth

Present
Commissioners: Dr Eurwyn Wiliam (Chairman), Henry Owen-John (Vice Chair), Anne Eastham, Dr Mark Redknap, Prof. Christopher Williams, Catherine Hardman, Jonathan Hudson, Thomas Lloyd
Staff: Hilary Malaws, Stephen Hughes, Louise Barker, Gareth Edwards, David Thomas, Toby Driver, Angharad Williams, Steve Bailey-John, Rachael Barnwell, Jo Pettitt, Sue Billingsley
Observer: Andrew George (Cadw)

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| 1. | **Apologies**  
None. The Chairman welcomed Andrew George, as Cadw’s observer, to the meeting. | | |
| 2. | **Declarations of interest**  
None. | | |
| 3. | **Minutes of the previous meeting**  
The minutes were **agreed** as an accurate record. | | |
| 4. | **Matters arising**  
None. | | |
| 5. | **Matters arising from Committee Meetings**  
Gareth Edwards will be attending a meeting of the Bedern Group in March. The Commission will be moving forward with archive accreditation following the success of a pilot project undertaken during 2013.  
The SWISH partnership continues to progress well, with the next meeting scheduled for June 2013.  
The Commission’s Thematic Research Framework is being progressed, with a revised draft currently in development. The Commission envisages the Framework as a document for the wider historic environment sector in Wales. The Commission also intends to offer support for the development of the Institute for Archaeologists’ Research Framework.  
The Britain from Above team will launch *Aerofilms: A History of Britain from Above* at Hendon on the 20th February 2014.  
A communications audit is to be carried out by an HR consultant to identify and help resolve any issues with internal communication at the Commission.  
Projects and programmes will be moved forward by the Executive Team with support from Commissioners, to aid in the delivery of the Operational Plan 2014/15. | | |
6. **Chairman’s business**  
   It was noted that the Chairman had taken part in merger discussions and had needed to devote considerable time to them.  
   It was noted that Anne Eastham’s term as a Commissioner is coming to an end after a decade of service. Commissioners and staff acknowledged her invaluable contribution to the work of the Commission in the last ten years, and thanked her for her support.  
   Commissioners noted the receipt of a revised draft of the Framework Document. The current draft highlights a need for a Corporate Governance Committee. It was agreed that the Effectiveness Committee already carried out many of the functions required by a Corporate Governance Committee. However, there is a need to review the Terms of Reference to ensure it meets all criteria, and to agree this with the Sponsoring Officer, Andrew George.  
   Commissioners noted that a draft Project Closure Report for the merger project had been circulated for review and comment.  
   It was noted that the Chairman wrote to the Minister in January requesting approval to appoint a new permanent, full-time Secretary and new Commissioners. It was agreed that new Commissioners are essential to securing and progressing the future of the organisation. No response has been received yet.  
   Commissioners noted the receipt of the final Remit Letter. A draft Operational Plan for 2014/15 will be drawn up, and an initial version passed to the Sponsoring Officer in late February/early March. A final draft, incorporating comments from colleagues at Cadw, will be prepared for the week commencing the 24th March 2014.  
   It was noted that Baroness Andrews’ report into how organisations in the historic environment sector can contribute to the Welsh Government’s tackling poverty agenda is expected to be launched on the 13th March 2014.

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| 7. | **Secretary’s report**  
   Commissioners noted the contents of the report.  
   Commissioners noted that the Falcon Hildred Access and Learning Project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has come to an end. It was agreed that a copy of the final report and evaluation would be circulated to Commissioners. |
|   | Evaluation to be circulated. |
|   | RLB |

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| 8. | **Finance**  
   Commissioners noted the contents of the report.  
   It was noted that income figures for the financial year 2013/14 have been revised down to c. £328k. This will be constantly reviewed in the run up to year end.  
   It was noted that all outstanding People’s Collection Wales |
payments have now been received. It was noted that the Metal Links claim for the period October 2013 – March 2014 is now being processed. However, it is not likely that the funds will be received by the end of the current financial year.

It was noted that an outstanding Atlanterra claim for €80k/£64k has been located and the funds transferred to the Commission’s account. This claim does not wipe out the outstanding debt carried forward from 2012/13. However, it is expected that upcoming claims will cover the remaining amount.

It was noted that budget lines are being simplified for the upcoming financial year, so that there will be one current budget, rather than separate current and programme current budget.

It was noted that Teresa Platt, Cadw’s Finance Officer, is leaving for another post in Welsh Government. Cadw are in the process of recruiting a replacement. A representative from the Sustainable Futures Directorate will be covering Teresa’s work in the interim.

It was noted that the Trusted Digital Repository (TDR) payment for this year needs to be finalised. Gareth Edwards and Dave Thomas will co-ordinate this with Sue Billingsley, and an invoice will be requested.

Commissioners thanked Sue Billingsley for her invaluable work in the newly constituted Strategy & Resources Team.

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<td>9.</td>
<td><strong>Heritage Bill Progress</strong>&lt;br&gt;Commissioners noted the contents of the report.&lt;br&gt;It was agreed that Hilary Malaws will arrange appropriate representation at Heritage Bill Working Group meetings.</td>
<td><strong>TDR payment to be finalised</strong>&lt;br&gt;SJB</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td><strong>Prioritising Actions and Long Term Vision</strong>&lt;br&gt;Commissioners noted the contents of the report.&lt;br&gt;It was agreed that there was a need to define and articulate a vision for the future of the organisation. Work on this will take place in upcoming weeks. However, it was agreed to discuss this in working groups in time scheduled for the afternoon session of the meeting. &lt;br&gt;It was agreed that key priorities are: income generation, charitable status and accommodation. Decisions/information on these three points will be required in order to deliver on several of the priorities identified in the Remit Letter.</td>
<td><strong>Arrange representation at Heritage Bill meetings.</strong>&lt;br&gt;HAM</td>
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## 11. Future Management of the Commission

It was agreed that a full-time, permanent Secretary should be appointed now that the Minister has made the decision to continue the Commission as a Welsh Government Sponsored Body. It was also agreed that new Commissioners should now be appointed, though action to progress this is dependent on the Minister’s response to the Chairman’s letter requesting approval to proceed with recruitment.

## 12. Future Accommodation

Commissioners noted the contents of the report.

It was noted that the Commission has had contact with Richard Baker, of Welsh Government Estates, who has requested revised figures for the Plas Crug overspend. However, there has been no other communication with him on this matter.

It was noted that Hilary Malaws is seeking a meeting with the National Librarian at the National Library of Wales, to discuss options for co-location. Hilary will report back on progress to Commissioners at the next meeting.

It was agreed that any discussions of future accommodation arrangements should take place within a tripartite structure (Royal Commission, National Library, and Welsh Government comprising both Cadw and CyMAL) in order to be effective, and should be conducted with transparency.

## 13. Corporate Risk review

It was noted that all risks had been reviewed at the Executive Team Meeting on the 11th February 2014.

It was noted that a new corporate risk relating to copyright of the National Monuments Record has been identified, and will be added to the risk register.

It was agreed to draft a corporate risk regarding future accommodation arrangements for the Commission.

It was agreed that corporate risk was managed satisfactorily.

## 14. Welsh Language Scheme

It was noted that a report on the Welsh Language Scheme at the Commission must be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner in summer 2014.

It was noted that the Commission will be part of a national standards investigation for Welsh language in September 2014. Training will be provided for this in advance.

It was noted that Welsh Language Monitoring Group meetings are to be reinstated.
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<tr>
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<td>Summer 2014: 7 – 9 July, Aberystwyth</td>
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<td>Autumn 2014: 16 – 17 October, Aberystwyth</td>
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<td>Spring 2015: 17 – 18 February, Aberystwyth</td>
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<td>The Chairman expressed thanks to Rachael Barnwell and Stephen Bailey-John for organising the Commissioners’ meetings programme.</td>
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