

NORTHERN LIGHTHOUSE BOARD

Heritage & Estate Committee

MINUTES – 11 January 2010

PRESENT: Robert Quayle Chairman
Bruce Kerr Commissioner
John Ross Commissioner
Roger Lockwood Chief Executive
Douglas Gorman Director of Finance & Administration
Moray Waddell Director of Engineering
Jill Bennett Secretary to the Board

In Attendance James Taylor (items 1-2 only) Chairman, Museum of Scottish Lighthouses

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Brian Lockhart.

The Chairman welcomed James Taylor as Chairman of the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses to the meeting and noted that the Director of the Museum had submitted apologies due to the inclement weather conditions.

3. SCOTTISH MUSEUM OF LIGHTHOUSES

The Chairman of the Scottish Museum of Lighthouses gave an update on museum initiatives and also updated the Committee on the funding situation in the current economic climate. The Committee agreed that the links between the newly established Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust and the Museum should be developed.

Action: Chairman

The Committee noted that Museum was assisting with an exhibition to be held at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich in early May, details of which will be available in due course at www.nmm.ac.uk.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Heritage & Estate Committee meeting held on 11 May 2009 were agreed as a correct record. It was agreed that they could now be published on the website.

Action: Secretary to the Board

4. MATTERS ARISING

Historic Scotland

It was noted that the Chief Inspector was to meet with the Trustees of the Heritage Trust now that it was established in order to develop possible future collaborations between the Trust and HS.

Bell Rock Bi-Centenary

It was noted that the draft programme of events in the first week of February 2011 was still being finalised and would be circulated to the Board of Commissioners once it had been received.

84 George Street

The Committee noted that the Board of Commissioners at the September 2009 meeting had approved the way forward in the short term to undertake the minimum of maintenance and necessary refurbishment work at No 84 George Street.

Enforcement of Burdens

The Director of Finance updated the Committee on the four sites with maintenance burdens requiring enforcement of those burdens. The Committee noted that engagement/contact with the owners was vital and that the executive was addressing the issue in all cases.

5. HERITAGE TRUST AND TRADING COMPANY

Heritage Trust

The Committee noted that the Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust had been incorporated and charitable status achieved.

Trading Company

It was noted that the DfT was still working on potential State Aid issues arising from the Trading Company proposition.

Landmark Trust

The Committee noted the dialogue with the Landmark Trust remained open for any upcoming NLB surplus residential properties.

6. PROPERTY ISSUES

Calf of Man

The Committee noted that legal advice on the status of the lease and the land had been sought and that NLB was required to give 12 months' notice of termination of the lease and that the lease contained no obligation to re-instate the site. It was agreed that the Chairman would raise the issue of termination of the lease at the meeting of the Managing Board to be held on 26 January 2010 and that the Committee supported termination. The Chairman asked that a copy of the lease be forwarded to him. He would be meeting the newly appointed Director of Manx National Heritage, the site owner, to explore possibilities on an informal basis.

Action: Chairman/Director of Finance

Isle of May

The Committee noted that following the report conducted by consultants appointed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) that identified the Isle of May as a favourable prospect for a tourist attraction, SNH was still to identify funding.

Buchan Ness

It was noted that there was a new owner of the adjacent property and discussions were ongoing.

Cromarty Lighthouse

The Committee noted that the sale had been completed.

Tod Head

The Committee noted that removal of the lens was under discussion with Aberdeenshire Council and the National Museum of Scotland. The sale would be progressed following the removal of the lens.

Kyleakin

The Chief Executive reported that the Eilean Ban Trust Trustees were awaiting the Scottish Government response to their application to extend the lease of the island (currently 2015). It was noted that the lighthouse was leased from NLB to the Eilean Ban Trust - also until 2015 - and the Committee agreed that NLB should progress with a sale to the Trust if the opportunity arises, or to extend the lease.

Cape Wrath

The Committee noted that legal advice had been received on the correct process to proceed under the community right to buy legislation.

Start Point

The Committee noted that the legal situation in relation to a reversion clause was being clarified, following which the property would be offered for sale on the open market and that the sale contract should include maintenance burdens.

Rinns of Islay

The Committee noted that investigations were being undertaken into a potential interested purchaser, and that if these should prove unsuccessful, the property would be offered for sale on the open market.

Pentland Skerries. 2nd Tower

The Committee noted that agreement had been reached for a deed of excambion to transfer the 2nd tower in exchange for land required.

Bothies

It was noted that the sale of three of the surplus bothies was progressing and were being dealt with on a case-by case basis.

Turnberry

It was noted that the sale of the bothy and store building had stalled due to changes in ownership.

Barra Head

The Committee noted that a response to the National Trust for Scotland on the 'transfer of ownership' was awaited.

Butt of Lewis Holiday Homes

The Committee asked the executive to seek further advice on the way forward and either return to the Committee with a unanimous view or submit a paper clarifying the differing viewpoints.

Review of Sale of Holiday Homes to fund Conversion Works

The Committee asked for the tri-GLA property policy to be submitted to the next meeting.

Action: Director of Finance

7. LIBRARY AND OTHER ARTEFACTS OF VALUE

The Committee noted a sale of the non-lighthouse heritage books was to take place on 13 January 2010 with the proceeds directed to the Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust.

Action: Director of Finance

It was noted that the books retained by Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust were now held in one bookcase within the Board Room and that the insurance policy had been amended.

8. RECORDS ARCHIVE

Custody of Records

The Committee agreed that the three-way Memorandum of Understanding being developed by the National Archives (NAS) with themselves, NLB and the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses should be expanded to include the Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust.

Action: Director of Finance

9. ANNUAL STRATEGIC REVIEW

The Committee discussed the Committee Frequency and Structure proposal raised by the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners at the December 2009 Board meeting affecting the Heritage and Estate Committee. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Heritage and Estate Committee had no objection to the proposal to delegate the work of the Committee upwards to the Managing Board as a standing agenda item with the proviso that, should the extra work load prove to be burdensome to the Managing Board, then consideration should be given to re-establishing the Committee.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other relevant business.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that, dependent on the decision of the future of the Committee to be taken by the February meeting of the Board of Commissioners, the next meeting was provisionally timetabled for Tuesday 16 March 2010 at 1000 hours.