

**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES
MEETING**

HELD ON 12 MAY 2020 VIA SKYPE

This document is available in Welsh

Present: Mr Ceri Stradling (Deputy Chair); Mr David Powell; Mrs Julie May; Mr Theodore Joloza.

LDBCW Officers attending: Mrs Shereen Williams (Chief Executive); Mr Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mr David Burley (Head of Business); Mr Tom Jenkins (Head of Policy and Programmes); Mrs Cher Cooke (Review Officer); Mr Josh Lovell (Review Officer); Mr Nathan Sweetman (Business Support Officer); Mrs Cath Thomas (Business Support Officer)

Time Started: 09:30

Time Finished: 13:45

1. Declarations of Interest

Mr Theo Joloza and Mrs Shereen Williams declared an interest in Newport as both of them reside in Newport. Mrs Julie May declared an interest in Neath Port Talbot, as a co-property owner.

2. Chair's Briefing

- 2.1. The CE provided an update from the meeting with Lisa James (Independent ARAC Member) and informed her that the Commission was intending to re-open all suspended reviews on 15 June 2020.
- 2.2. The CE also requested for LG orders to be made after the BCW review has commenced to ensure that there is a consistency in electoral ward boundaries across Wales for the parliamentary review.
- 2.3. The first draft of the Monmouthshire Order is still with the WG Local Government team for review.
- 2.4. Regulations are now in place for local authorities to meet and there was no plans at this point in time to delay Local Government elections in 2022.
- 2.5. It was noted that two Review Officers, from the Commission, have been seconded to Welsh Government to support the COVID-19 response.
- 2.6. Lisa James (Independent ARAC Member) was agreeable to the request for the Commission to draw down its funding on a quarterly basis. CE has asked for the section within the Framework document relating to the limits on the Commission's end of month bank balance to be amended.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 31 March 2020

- 3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting as a correct record of the matters considered subject to some minor amendments.

4. Issues Arising

Consideration was given to the report dated 05 May 2020 by the Chief Executive and progress was noted on the following:

- 4.1. (Issue 1) **Action** – CE to update the Change Programme with key actions agreed as part of the Commission’s response to the staff survey and set up the People Committee.
- 4.2. (Issue 2) **Action** – CE to task a BSO to assist with setting up Post-Review Questionnaires.
- 4.3. (Issue 3) **Action** – CE to contact the four councils (Caerphilly, Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan, Wrexham) on the 1st of June to inform them of the Commission resuming consultations periods. If required, consideration can be given to a reasonable delay on an individual council basis.
- 4.4. (Issue 5) An update on the progress of the Framework Agreement was provided. The Sponsor Division is waiting on the Public Bodies Unit for a draft template for the new Framework agreement.
- 4.5. (Issue 6) It was confirmed that extensions on audit recommendations are not required.
- 4.6. (Issue 7) It was noted that the Operational Plan was sent to Julie James (Deputy Director, Local Government Democracy Division, WG) she has provided comments. **Action** – CE to update the Operational Plan
- 4.7. Additional comments were received from the Commissioners in relation to the Operational Plan **Action** – CE to include preparatory work on the Policy and Practice for the next round of reviews in 20/21 as part of the Commission’s business effectiveness and efficiency.
- 4.8. It was identified that sections 1,2 and 3, within the Operational Plan need to be categorised. **Action** - Categorise sections 1, 2 and 3 as Corporate Objectives
- 4.9. (Issue 8) Confirmation was provided by the Chief Executive that any staff that are required to attend the office, to undertake essential work, are provided with a certificate of authorisation.

5. Neath Port Talbot – Final Options Report

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 04 May 2020 by the Review Officer.
- 5.2. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 1 of Cwmllynfell, Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Godre'r Graig, Lower Brynamman and Ystalyfera and **agreed option 1 the draft proposals**. This option comprises the three electoral wards of Cwmllynfell and Ystalyfera, Godre'r Graig, and Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen and Lower Brynamman.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides improvement to electoral parity.
- No increase, or decrease, from the draft proposals.

This option returns a total number of 5 members, as per the existing membership.

- 5.3. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Cwmllynfell and Ystalyfera	Cwmllynfell ac Ystalyfera
Godre'r Graig	Godre'r Graig
Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen and Lower Brynamman	Gwauncaegurwen a Brynaman Isaf

- 5.4. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 2 of Pontardwe and Trebanos and **agreed option 2**. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Pontardawe and Trebanos and transfers 282 electors from the Pontardawe ward to the Trebanos ward.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Creates no split communities.
- Provides an improvement to electoral parity.
- Retains the same number of members as the draft proposals.

This option returns a total number of 3 members, as per the existing membership.

5.5. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Pontardawe	Pontardawe
Trebanos	Trebannws

5.6. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 3 of Blaengwrach, Crynant, Glynneath, Onllwyn, Resolven, Seven Sisters and Tonna and **agreed option 2**. This option comprises the four electoral wards of Crynant, Onllwyn and Seven Sisters, Glynneath Central and East, Blaengwrach and Glynneath West, and Resolven and Tonna.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides improvement to electoral parity.
- Attempts to address the large volume of representations opposed to merging Blaengwrach and Glynneath.
- Retains the same number of members as the draft proposals

This option returns a total number of 6 members, a decrease of two, from the existing membership.

5.7. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Crynant, Onllwyn and Seven Sisters	Creunant, Onllwyn a Blaendulais
Glynneath Central and East	Canol a Ddwyrain Glyn-nedd
Blaengwrach and Glynneath West	Blaengwrach a Gorllewin Glyn-nedd
Resolven and Tonna	Resolfen a Thonnau

5.8. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 4 of Cymmer, Glyncorrwg and Gwynfi and **agreed option 1 the draft proposals**. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Cymmer and Glyncorrwg, and Gwynfi with Croeserw.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Creates no split communities.
- Provides improvement to electoral parity.

This option returns a total number of 2 members, a decrease of one, from the existing membership.

5.9. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Cymmer and Glyncorrwg	Cymer a Glyncorrwg
Gwynfi with Croeserw	Gwynfi a Chroeserw

5.10. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 5 of Bryn and Cwmavon, Cimla and Pelenna and **agreed option 2**. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Bryn and Cwmavon, and Cimla and Pelenna.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides improvement to electoral parity.
- No increase, or decrease, from the draft proposals.
- Attempts to respond to the majority of representations received.

This option returns a total number of 5 members, a decrease of one, from the existing membership.

5.11. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Bryn and Cwmavon	Bryn a Chwmafan

Cimla and Pelenna	Cimla a Phelenna
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5.12. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 6 of Aberavon, Margam, Port Talbot and Tai-bach and **agreed option 1 the draft proposals**. This option comprises the three electoral wards of Aberavon, Margam and Tai-Bach and Port Talbot.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Creates no split communities.
- Provides improvement to electoral parity.
- Retains the same number of members as the draft proposals.

This option returns a total number of 7 members, a decrease of two, from the existing membership.

5.13. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Aberavon	Aberafan
Margam and Tai-bach	Margam a Thai-bach
Port Talbot	Port Talbot

5.14. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 7 of Coedffranc Central and Coedffranc West and **agreed option 1 the draft proposal**. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Coedffranc Central and Coeffranc West.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Creates no split communities.
- Provides improvements to electoral parity.

This option returns a total number of 4 members, an increase from one, from the existing membership.

5.15. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Coedffranc Central	Canol Coed-ffranc
Coedffranc West	Gorllewin Coed-ffranc

5.16. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 8 of Bryn-Coch North, Bryn-Coch South, Cadoxton, Coedffranc North and Dyffryn and **agreed option 2**. This option comprises the five electoral wards of Bryn-Coch North, Bryn-Coch South, Cadoxton, Coedffranc North and Dyffryn.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Creates no split communities.
- Provides substantial improvement to electoral parity.
- Responds to the concerns expressed in a number of representations.
- No increase, or decrease, from the draft proposals.

This option returns a total number of 7 members, an increase of one, from the existing membership.

5.17. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Bryn-côch North	Gogledd Bryn-côch
Bryn-côch South	De Bryn-côch
Cadoxton	Llangarwg
Coedffranc North	Gogledd Coed-ffranc
Dyffryn	Dyffryn

6. Newport – Final Options Report

6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 24 April 2020 by the Review Officer.

6.2. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 1 of Beechwood, Bettws and Victoria and **agreed option 2**. This option comprises the three electoral wards of Beechwood, Bettws and Victoria.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Retains the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- Is an increase of two members from the draft proposals.

This option returns a total number of 8 members, as per the existing membership.

6.3. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Beechwood	Beechwood
Bettws	Betws
Victoria	Victoria

6.4. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 2 of Graig and Rogerstone and **agreed option 1 the draft proposals**. This option comprises the four electoral wards of Graig, Rogerstone East, Rogerstone North and Rogerstone West.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides significant improvement to electoral parity.
- Creates no split communities.

This option returns a total number of 6 members, an increase of one, from the existing membership.

6.5. The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Graig	Y Graig
Rogerstone East	Dwyrain Tŷ-du
Rogerstone North	Gogledd Tŷ-du
Rogerstone West	Gorllewin Tŷ-du

6.6. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 3 of Marshfield and Tredegar Park and **agreed option 2**. This option comprises the electoral ward of Marshfield and Tredegar Park.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides improvement to electoral parity.
- Creates no split communities.
- Retains the same number of members as the draft proposals.

This option returns a total number of 3 members, as per the existing membership.

6.7. The Commission recommends adopting the names as proposed below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Marshfield and Tredegar Park	Maerun a Parc Tredegar

6.8. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 4 of Pillgwenlly and Stowhill and **agreed option 1 the draft proposals**. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Pillgwenlly and Stowhill.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides significant improvement to electoral parity.
- Creates no split communities.

This option returns a total number of 4 members, as per the existing membership.

6.9. The Commission recommends adopting the names as proposed below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Pillgwenlly	Pilgwenlli
Stow Hill	Stow Hill

6.10. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 5 of Langstone, Llanwern, Liswerry and Ringland and **agreed option 1 the draft proposals**. This option comprises the four electoral wards of Bishton and Langstone, Llanwern, Lliswerry and Ringland.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Provides significant improvement to electoral parity.
- Creates no split communities.

This option returns a total number of 10 members, as per the existing membership.

6.11. The Commission recommends adopting the names as proposed below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Bishton and Langstone	Trefesgob a Langstone
Llanwern	Llan-wern
Lliswerry	Lliswerry
Ringland	Ringland

7. Reviews Progress Report

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 4 May 2020 by the Head of Policy and Programmes (HPP) and its contents **noted**.
- 7.2. It was reported that the Neath Port Talbot and Newport Final Reports will be put before the next Commission Meeting in June. It was **agreed** that there would be an additional meeting in mid-June to agree the reports.

- 7.3. The Flintshire Final Report is at the printers and a publication date of 16 June was **agreed**. A briefing for the CEO of Flintshire County Council will be arranged prior to publication.
- 7.4. The Wrexham, Caerphilly, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Electoral Reviews are still paused until 15 June. It was **agreed** that the CE would contact the Councils concerned to inform them of the restart on 15 June. The HPP will email staff and Commissioners with the new consultation end dates for these reviews.
- 7.5. The Anglesey Draft Report is ready to be printed and a publication date of 16 June was **agreed** with the consultation starting the following week. The HPP will email the consultation dates to Commissioners and staff. A virtual Leaders Meeting will be arranged and the HPP will brief Huw Blacker regarding this.
- 7.6. The Monmouthshire pre-consultation will start in June. It was **agreed** that the Review Officer should contact the Town and Community Councils to obtain updated addresses to send out maps in advance of the pre-consultation and the CE will prepare a letter to circulate. The Community Order remains outstanding.

8. Welsh Language Annual Report

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 5 May 2020 by the CE.
- 8.2. It was **agreed** to approve the report subject to the following amendments.
- 8.3. **Section 2. Overview of 2019/20** should include a reference to the Welsh Language Impact Assessment Forms. Paragraph 2 should include details about our Welsh learners. Paragraph 3 should mention that the phone issue was a result of our responding to a mystery shopper. Paragraph 4 should include positive detail about the laying of accounts.
- 8.4. **Page 5 Record Keeping Standards** should cross-reference the complaint to Section 2 paragraph 4.
- 8.5. Regarding **Operational Standards**, it was **agreed** that the CE will check that all main office signs are displayed in Welsh and, if not, rectify this.

9. Risk Management – Risk Register

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 1 May 2020 by the Finance Manager and its contents **noted**.
- 9.2. It was **noted** that all changes agreed at the previous meeting had been implemented.
- 9.3. It was **agreed** that the residual risk likelihood of risk CR4 could be reduced from a rating of 5 to 4.

10. Budget Report

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 12 May 2020 by the Finance Manager and the current budget position was noted and **agreed**.
- 10.2. It was **noted** that the Commission's expenditure for 2019-20 was within budget in respect of both cash and resources with only a modest underspend of Grant-in-Aid of £14,000 (the additional £2,000 requested from Welsh Government had not been received but subsequently had not been needed). The Commission agreed the outturn for 2019-20.
- 10.3. It was **noted** that the outstanding payment for the maintenance agreement for the new plotter had been included in the carry-over for the year.
- 10.4. It was **noted** that there should be fewer concerns about funding during 2020-21 due to the receipt of BCW funding and the lack of capital expenditure required for this year. Following discussions the Commission approved the budget for 2020-21.
- 10.5. It was **noted** that new auditors were appointed following a tender exercise and a five-year contract will begin on 1 April 2020

11. Annual Accounts – Accounting Standards Not Yet Effective

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the report by the Finance Manager dated 15 April and its contents were **noted**.
- 11.2. It was reported that the implementation of IFRS 16 had been deferred for a further year due to the coronavirus lockdown and would now come into effect for the 2021-22 annual accounts,
- 11.3. The Commission **agreed** the suggested paragraph regarding accounting standard not yet effective for inclusion in the 2019-20 annual accounts.

- 11.4. Regarding IFRS 11, it was **agreed** that the Finance Manager should look at whether the relationship of the LDBCW and Qualifications Wales is a 'joint arrangement'.
- 11.5. It was reported that our accountants are content with the deadline of mid-June but the Finance Manager is waiting to hear from the Wales Audit Office.

12. Current Business Continuity Arrangements

- 12.1. The CE gave a brief verbal update on the current arrangements.
- 12.2. It was **noted** that staff continued to work from home with visits to the office being kept to a minimum. A Notice had been put on the LDBCW website stating that the office is closed and any postal representations will be processed according to the postmark date.

13. Calendar of Events

- 13.1. The contents of the Calendar were **noted**. The HPP reported that the new review consultation dates had been added.

14. Any Other Relevant Business

There were no additional items to discuss.

15. Date of Next Meeting: 09 June 2020