

**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING
HELD ON 22 AUGUST 2017 AT HASTINGS HOUSE**

Present: Mr Owen Watkin (Chair); Mr Ceri Stradling; Mr David Powell; Mrs Julie May; Mr Theodore Joloza and Mrs Julie James (Independent Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Member).

LDBCW Officers attending: Mr Steve Halsall (Chief Executive); Mr Matt Redmond (Deputy Chief Executive); Mr Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mr Ross Evans (Review Officer); Mrs Cher Cooke (Review Officer); Mr Daniel Mosley (Review Officer); Mr Farhan Khan (Review Officer) and Mrs Caroline Redmond (Office Assistant)

Time Started: 09:30

Time Finished: 16:45

Apologies: Mrs Rachel Williams (Business Support Manager) and Miss Deb Jones (Business Support Officer).

Welcome: The Chair welcomed Mrs Julie James, the Independent Member of the Audit and Risk Committee, to the meeting, as an observer of the review process.

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1. The Chair declared an interest relating to Agenda Item 11, section 5 of “Ceredigion Draft Proposal”, in view of his residency in the Town of Aberystwyth.

1.2. Mr David Powell expressed an interest, being a member of the Birchgrove and Whitchurch Allotments Association, Cardiff, in relation to future reviews relating to the City and County of Cardiff.

1.3. The Commission **Noted** the Declarations.

2. Chair’s Briefing

2.1. The Chair stated that there were no matters to report.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 25 July 2017

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2017 as a correct record of the matters considered.

4. Issues Arising

- 4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 09 August 2017 by the Chief Executive on Issues Arising.
- 4.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report as a whole noting the issue for later discussion in the meeting, and updated progress was also noted on the following issues:
- **(Issue 2) Staffing:** The Review Officer secondment post has been re-advertised with a closing date of 13 September 2017.
 - **(Issue 4) Welsh Language Standards:** The Commission have published its Welsh Language Standards Action Plan and all of the actions required to ensure compliance with the Standards are now in place. The Standards are to be distributed to the Commissioners and staff within the Secretariat.
 - **(Issue 6) IT Strategy:** The Commission await a response from Welsh Government regarding the Business Case for IT provision. The Commission has received assurance from Welsh Government that, as an exception, the Commission may retain the use of its H:/drive facility until other arrangements can be put in place.
 - **(Issue 7) Inter-Commission Meeting 2017:** The Chief Executive announced that Professor Richard Wyn Jones of Cardiff University has agreed to give a presentation to the meeting.
 - **(Issue 8) Accommodation:** The transfer of the lease was ongoing, with the Commission appointing solicitors along with Welsh Government to resolve. It was **Agreed** that the Chief Executive makes inquiries into the progress.
 - **(Issue 10) Public Appointments:** The Public Appointments Unit was notified of the Commission's agreement to take part in the board shadowing scheme on 3 August 2017.
 - **(New Issue) Welsh Language Bill White Paper:** The Commission **Noted** the white paper issued by Welsh Government on the 9 August 2017. A paper considering the Commission's response is to be brought to the September Commission meeting.

5. Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated July 2017 by the Chief Executive.
- 5.2. The Commission **Agreed** the issues to be included within the Commissions consultation response which is to be drafted by the Chief Executive for consideration at the September meeting.

6. Report of ARAC Meeting held 26 July 2017

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 10 August 2017 by the Finance Manager which outlined the issues dealt with by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at their July meeting and the Minutes of the meeting.
- 6.2. The Commission **Noted** the report. The Commission **Noted** that the Auditor General for Wales had issued an unqualified audit report on the Commission's annual accounts which were signed at the ARAC meeting.

7. Board Effectiveness Evaluation

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 10 August 2017 by the Finance Manager.
- 7.2. The Commission **Noted** the report. The Commission **Agreed** to implement an annual board evaluation exercise as suggested in the recent audit. Several amendments were agreed to the board evaluation questionnaire. The Commission **Agreed** to complete the exercise in November, which would allow for the results to be considered at the December Commission meeting.

8. Risk Management – Risk Register

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 09 August 2017 by the Finance Manager.
- 8.2. The Commission **Noted** and **Agreed** the report subject to the following amendments –
 - CR2 (Staff for Review Work) – will be re-evaluated at the September Commission meeting.
 - CR7 (Lease of Accommodation) – Expand on the mitigating actions taken by WG in relation to the transfer of the lease.

9. Budget Report

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 09 August 2017 by the Finance Manager.
- 9.2. The Commission **Agreed** the virement's proposed by the Finance Manager.
- 9.3. The Commission **Noted** and **Agreed** the report.

10. Draft Annual Report 2016-17

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 09 August 2017 by the Finance Manager.
- 10.2. The Commission **Agreed** to the Annual Report subject to the drafting of a foreword from the Chair.
- 10.3. The Commission **Agreed** to replace the summary accounts in the 2016-17 Annual Report with a full set of accounts.
- 10.4. The Commission noted the position regarding the historic practice of publishing a different annual report to that included with the annual accounts. The Commission **Agreed** that for future years only one annual report would be published which would be the version accompanying the annual accounts.

11. Ceredigion Draft Proposals

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 11 August 2017 by the Review Officer. The Chair left the meeting at this point whilst matters relating to Aberystwyth were determined.
- 11.2. The Commission Agreed to the recommended Option 3 for the area of Aberystwyth which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Aberystwyth Central; Aberystwyth North; Aberystwyth Penparcau; Aberystwyth Rheidol; Bronglais and Llanbadarn Fawr; and Faenor.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision;

- Improved the electoral parity within the area, whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible
- Creates one multi-member ward in addition to those that currently exist, this was deemed appropriate due to the urban nature of the area.

- Best addresses the existing levels of electoral variance in the area, whilst conforming closely to the representation received by Ceredigion County Council and the representation received by the County Councillor for Faenor.

11.3. The Commission agreed to the recommended Option 4 for the area of Cardigan which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Aberporth and Y Ferwig; Beulah and Llangoedmor; Cardigan; and Penbryn.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Best addresses the existing levels of variance in the area, while keeping communities whole
- The wards proposed all have appropriate and viable communication links.
- This option keeps rural and urban communities in separate electorate wards, a preference of the commission and also keeping in line with representations received asking for this to be taken into account

11.4. The Commission agreed to the recommended Option 4 for the area of Lledrod which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Llangybi and Llanddewi Brefi; Lledrod; Melindwr; and Tregaron with Llangeitho.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision.

- Option best addresses the level of variance in the area, none of the wards remain greater than +/-25% of the county average.
- Gives consideration to a large proportion of the representations received, including representations submitted by Lledrod Community Council.
- Reduces the number of councillors for the area to bring it within the Commissions council size aim.

11.5. The Commission agreed to the recommended Option 2 for the area of New Quay which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Llandysilio-gogo and Llangrannog; Llandysul North and Troedyraur; Llandysul South; and New Quay with Llanllwchaearn.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision;

- Provides significant improvement in electoral parity whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible

- No multi-member wards are created
- Appropriate communications links between the proposed electoral wards

11.6. The Commission agreed the recommended Option 3 for the area 'Ceredigion Spine' which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Aberaeron; Borth; Ceulanamaesmawr; Ciliau Aeron; Lampeter; Llanarth; Llandyfriog; Llanfarian; Llanfihangel Ystrad; Llanrhystyd; Llansantffraed; Llanwenog; Tirymynach; Trefeurig and Ystwyth.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision;

- Provides significant improvement to electoral parity, with none of the proposed wards greater than +/- 25% of the county average
- Retains a large percentage of the current arrangements
- Creates no multi-member wards
- Takes as many recommendations for the County Council representation as possible where appropriate.
- To accept the Secretariat's recommendation as opposed to the proposal by the County Council for Llanfihangel Ystrad community, and thereby avoid creating a split community in an area which already has appropriate levels of electoral parity.

11.7. The Commission **Noted** that the above agreed options resulted in a decrease of councillors by 4 from 42 to 38.

11.8. The Commission **Agreed** the list of names for the proposed Electoral Wards and that it was to be sent to the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government.

12. Gwynedd Draft Proposals

12.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 15 August 2017 by the Review Officer.

12.2. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 5 for the area of Arfon which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Arllechwedd; Bethel ac Y Felinheli; Bethesda; Cwm y Glo; Deiniolen; Llanberis; Llanrug; Penisarwaun; Tregarth a Mynydd Llandygai.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area, whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible.

- Creates 2 multi-member wards in Bethesda and Bethel ac Y Felinheli which due to the urban nature of the communities was considered appropriate.
- Creates three spilt communities, one to reflect the urban and rural nature of Pentir and the other from the proposed Council scheme (Llanddeiniolen) in addition the existing split community of Llandygai.
- A high level of variance for Tregarth a Mynydd Llandygai (34.63%) was accepted due to the topography and lack communication links to other areas.

12.3. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 2 for the area of Bangor which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Dewi; Garth a Menai (Bangor); Glyder; Hendre (Bangor); Hiracl; and Marchog.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area
- Creates no multi-member wards, abolishing the two multi-member wards that already exist
- To accept the proposed boundary change suggested by the Council and the subsequent Secretariat proposed changes to Bangor City Council as it improves the electoral parity of the area and the City Council itself.

12.4. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 1 for the area of Caernarfon which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Cadnant; Canol Tref Caernarfon; Hendre (Caernarfon); Menai (Caernarfon) and Peblig.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area
- Creates no multi-member wards, abolishing the one multi-member ward that already exist
- Creates no community splits
- To accept the proposed boundary changes suggested by the Council and the subsequent Secretariat proposed changes to Caernarfon (Royal) Town Council as it improves the electoral parity of the area and the Town Council itself.

12.5. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 3 for the area of Clynnog - Llanllyfni which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Clynnog; Llanllyfni; Llanwnda; Nefyn; Penygroes; Tryfan; Waunfawr; Y Bontnewydd; Y Groeslon and Yr Eifl.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area, whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible.
- Creates no multi-member wards.
- Whilst it creates an increase in community splits in the area, it does recognise the range of communication links across the area.

12.6. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 1 for the area of Ffestiniog which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Bowydd a'r Rhiw; Diffwys a Maenofferen; and Teigl.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area
- Creates no multi-member wards
- To accept the Secretariat's amendment to the boundary change suggested by the Council as it is a more easily identifiable boundary. It was also agreed to accept the consequential arrangements to Ffestiniog Town Council as suggested by the Secretariat.

12.7. The Commission **Agreed** to Option 4 for the area of Meirionnydd which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Aberdyfi; Arthog a Llangelynin; Bro Dysynni; Corris a Mawddwy; Dolgellau; Gorllewin Tywyn and Morfa Tywyn.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improves the overall electoral parity in the area, whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible.
- Utilises a large amount of the Council's proposed scheme.
- Creates a community split in Tywyn, but the Commission considered it to be on a rural/urban divide and was appropriate in terms of providing effective local governance.
- Creates a multi-member ward in Dolgellau as the Commission considered that it is created from an urban area which is appropriate for multi-member representation.

12.8. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 3 for the area of Lleyn Peninsula which contains the proposed electoral wards of:-

Aberdaron; Abererch; Abersoch gyda Llanbedrog; Botwnnog a Llanengan; Criccieth; Efail-newydd a Buan; Llanystumdwy; Morfa Nefyn a Tudweiliog; Gogledd Pwllheli; and De Pwllheli.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area, whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible.
- Creates no multi-member wards.
- Whilst it creates an increase in community splits in the area, it does recognise the range of communication links across the area.
- To accept the Secretariat's recommendation to reject the proposed boundary change suggested by the Council for Llanengan Community as it does not achieve effective and convenient government for the area.

- 12.9. The Commission **Agreed** to the recommended Option 4 for the area of Penllyn-Porthmadog which contains the proposed electoral wards of in support of the decision:-

Abermaw; Brithdir, Llanfachreth, Ganllwyd a Llanelltud; Dolbenmaen; Dwyrain Porthmadog; Dyffryn Arduwy; Gorllewin Porthmadog; Harlech a Llanbedr; Llandderfel; Llanuwchllyn; Penrhyndeudraeth; Porthmadog Tremadog; Trawsfynydd and Y Bala.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improved the overall electoral parity in the area, whilst maintaining the integrity of the communities, as much as possible.
- Creates 1 multi-member ward in Harlech a Llanbedr which due to the urban characteristics made this arrangement appropriate.
- Creates one split community (Llangywer) in addition the existing split communities of Dolbenmaen and Porthmadog.
- After considering the communication links and the rural characteristics of Llanfrothen Community, the Commission accepted the Secretariat's proposal that it should be combined with the Community of Beddgelert, the Prenteg ward of the Community of Dolbenmaen and the Tremadog ward of the Community of Porthmadog into a single-member ward. This did not meet the view expressed by the Llanfrothen Community Council. However, it does achieve greater electoral parity for this area.

- 12.10. The Commission **Noted** that the above agreed options resulted in a decrease of councillors by 6 from 75 to 69.

12.11. The Commission **Agreed** the list of names for the proposed Electoral wards and that it was to be sent to the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Government.

13. Reviews Progress Report

13.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 15 August 2017 by Deputy Chief Executive.

13.2. The Commission **Noted** the increase in workload due to the number of reviews coming to the end of the initial consultation period.

13.3. The Commission **Agreed** the amendments to the Review Risk Register for Ceredigion and Gwynedd.

14. Calendar of Events

14.1. The Commission **noted** the calendar.

15. Any Other Business

15.1. The Commission **Noted** the proposed WAO consulting fees for FY 18/19 and **Agreed** to respond to the consultation noting the proposal not to increase the fees.

15.2. The Commission **Agreed** the formal response to the Freedom of Information request received on the 16 Aug 2017 from the Gorwel think-tank based in Cardiff.

Date of Next Meeting: 26 September 2017