

LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2017 AT HASTINGS HOUSE

Present: Mr Owen Watkin (Chair); Mr Ceri Stradling; Mr David Powell and Mrs Julie May.

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); Mr Ralph Handscomb (Review Officer); Deb Jones (Business Support Officer) and Mrs Catherine Thomas (Review Assistant)

Time Started: 09:30

Time Finished: 14:40

Apologies: Mr Theodore Joloza

1. Declarations of Interest

- 1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

2. Chair's Briefing

- 2.1. The Chair wished to thank the Secretariat for organising the recent Inter-Commission meeting held in Cardiff. He had received a number of comments from attendees, saying that the event was a success.
- 2.2. The Chair briefed the Commission on the speech Alun Davies AM, Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services made to the Inter-Commission dinner, and that an invitation will be extended for him to attend a meeting with the Commission to further explain the Commission's role.
- 2.3. The Chair noted the invitation from the Boundary Commission for Scotland for the 2018 Inter-Commission meeting.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 24 October 2017

- 3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2014 as a correct record of the matters considered.

4. Issues Arising

- 4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 7 November 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. Updated progress was also noted on the following issues:

- **(Issue 1) Staffing** – The appointment of a new Business Support Manager has been made and their official start date will be 1 January 2018.
- **(Issue 2) Consultation Portal** – Work is ongoing and that a first test of the site will be presented to the Deputy Chief Executive in due course.
- **(Issue 5) IT Strategy** – with a change of the Cabinet, the decision will now fall to the new Cabinet Secretary to decide.
- **(Issue 6) Inter-Commission Meeting 2017** – the event was well attended with a number of good discussions being held.
- **(Issue 7) Accommodation** – Further information is being sought from the landlord and the surveyors regarding the new lease.
- **(Issue 8) Community Review Guidance** – it is currently out for consultation.

5. Board Annual Self-Assessment Questionnaire

5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 31 October 2017 by the Finance Manager.

5.2. The Commission **Noted** the questionnaire. Members will complete the questionnaire and pass to the Finance Manager before 8 December 2017.

6. Risk Management

6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 November 2017 by the Finance Manager.

6.2. The Commission **Noted** the report with the following changes –

- CR6 – is to be removed with the publication of the Final Recommendations for the Review of the Seaward Boundaries of the County Borough of Neath Port Talbot and City and County of Swansea.

6.3. The Commission **resolved** to review CR5 at their December meeting and to continue to emphasise to Welsh Government the need to progress the IT arrangements.

7. Budget Monitoring

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 November 2017 by the Finance Manager.
- 7.2. The Commission **Noted** the report and **Agreed** to the proposed virement's.

8. Powys Electoral Review – Draft Proposals Report

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 14 November 2017 by the Review Officer.
- 8.2. The Commission **Noted** the report and **Agreed** the report subject to a number of proposed minor changes to the wording of a number of sections within the report.

9. Conwy Electoral Review

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 13 November 2017 by the Review Officer.
- 9.2. The Commission **Agreed** Option 5 for the Coast of Conwy, which contains the proposed electoral wards of:

Bryn, Colwyn, Conwy, Craig-y-Don, Deganwy, Eirias, Gele, Glyn, Gogarth and Mostyn, Kinmel Bay, Llanddulas and Llysfaen, Llandrillo yn Rhos, Llandudno Junction, Mochdre, Pandy, Penmaenmawr, Penrhyn, Pensarn and Pentre Mawr, Rhiw, Towyn, and Tudno,

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Retains the majority of existing electoral arrangements.
- Provides a substantial improvement to electoral parity.
- Reduces a four-member ward to a three-member ward (Llandrillo yn Rhos), which supports the Commission's policy.
- Supports the representation submitted by Llanfairfechan Town Council by retaining the two single-member wards of Bryn and Pandy. The Commission considered this option for the area to be the preferred option.
- Conforms to the 2011 review proposals for the proposed ward of Penmaenmawr, which were supported within the initial representations received from Councillor K. Stevens (Pant-yr-Afon/ Penmaenan).

- Resolves the high levels of under-representation within the existing electoral ward of Pensarn, by creating the three-member ward of Llandudno Junction.
- Addresses the projected level of under-representation, and improves the existing levels of electoral parity in Llysfaen by combining this area with Llanddulas into a two-member ward.
- Addresses the representation submitted by Abergele Town Council, who considers there is a need for an additional councillor, and creates an electoral ward with appropriate levels of variance by creating the multi-member ward of Pensarn and Pentre Mawr.

The Commission **Noted** two options for the proposed electoral ward of Gele; specifically, whether there was justification towards retaining the 3-member electoral arrangement, due to planned development in the area, or if the current arrangement should reduce by one councillor to better suit the existing levels of electoral variance. Further research is being conducted and evidence will be presented to the Commission at a future meeting, in order for an informed decision to be made. **Action: Review Officer**

- 9.3. The Commission **Agreed** Option 4 for Rural Conwy, which contains the proposed electoral wards of:

Betws-y-Coed and Trefriw, Betws yn Rhos, Caerhun, Eglwysbach and Llangernyw, Llanrwst with Llanddoged, Llansanffraid, Llansannan, Uwch Conwy, and Uwchaled.

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Retains the majority of existing electoral arrangements.
- Provides an improvement to electoral parity.
- In creating the multi-member ward of Llanrwst with Llanddoged the Commission acknowledges the proposal combines urban and rural communities. However, the Commission believe this proposal is appropriate and substantiated by effective communication links and geographies across the two areas, resulting in an electoral ward with appropriate levels of electoral variance.
- The Commission considered the options for communities west of the River Conwy and agreed to include the Community of Dolgarrog within the electoral ward of Betws-y-Coed and Trefriw. Although this creates a large rural ward it was validated by the strong communication links between the areas of Dolgarrog and

Trefriw and by retaining the existing arrangements for Caerhun. The Commission Agreed to include a paragraph within the proposals report to request comments upon the alternative proposal, to combine the Community of Dolgarrog with the existing electoral ward of Caerhun.

- The remainder of the proposed wards are single-member and are effective combinations of Community areas, based upon topography and rural communication links.

9.4. The Commission **Noted** that the above agreed options resulted in either;

- a decrease of councillors by five from 59 to 54 (with a two-member ward for Gele), or,
- a decrease of councillors by four from 59 to 55 (with a three-member ward for Gele).

9.5. 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 Translation Service.

9.6. The Draft Proposals report, including both options for the proposed electoral ward of Gele, will be presented at a future meeting. **Action: Review Officer**

10. Review Progress Report

10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 14 November 2017 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

10.2. The Commission **Noted** the report.

11. Calendar of Events

11.1. The Commission noted the calendar.

12. Any Other Business

12.1. There was no other business to discuss.

Date of Next Meeting: 19 December 2017