

## LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2018 AT HASTINGS HOUSE

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

**LDBCW Officers attending:** Mr Steve Halsall (Chief Executive); Mr Matt Redmond (Deputy Chief Executive); Mr Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mr David Burley (Business Support Manager); Mr Ross Evans (Review Officer); Mr Daniel Mosley (Review Officer); Mr Farhan Khan (Review Officer); Mr Ralph Handscomb (Review Officer); Mrs Caroline Redmond (Office Assistant)

**Time Started:** 09:30

**Time Finished:** 12:00

**Apologies:** No apologies were made.

### 1. Declarations of Interest

1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

### 2. Chair's Briefing

2.1. The Chair briefly outlined the principal points arising from the meeting between the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services and the Commission on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018, and from the seminar held by the Electoral Commission on the same day.

2.2. The Chair also briefed the Commission on a meeting attended by him and the Chief Executive with Tracey Burke, the Director General of Education and Public Services Welsh Government, responsible for the Sponsor Division for the Commission. It was agreed to review the Framework Document at a forthcoming meeting of the Commission, to include recent developments, such as ICT. The Chair informed the meeting that Angharad Thomas Richards had been appointed successor to Frank Cuthbert as Head of Democracy, Diversity, and Remuneration Team within the Sponsor Division.

### 3. Minutes of the Commission Meeting held on 23 January 2018

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 as a correct record of the matters considered.

#### 4. Issues Arising

- 4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 12 February 2018 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 3)** IT Strategy – a verbal update was given by the Deputy Chief Executive, the Secretariat have agreed a plan and timeline with Qualification Wales for the transition of the IT systems and a project plan will be presented to the Commission at a future meeting.
  - **(Issue 4)** Accommodation – Negotiations regarding the new lease are ongoing. March 2018. It was Agreed to authorise the Chief Executive to determine the final terms of the lease, and the consequential financial details, within the understandings established to date;
  - **(Issue 5)** Accommodation – A business case for the new lighting is being drafted and the decorating of the office has begun.
  - **(Issue 6)** Community Reviews Guidance – A copy of the agreed document has been sent to WG for comment prior to publication. March 2018.

#### 5. Commission Meeting Terms of Reference

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 7 February 2018 by the Finance Manager.
- 5.2. The Commission noted the report and **Agreed** the terms of reference with minor amendments.

#### 6. Risk Management – Risk Register

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 7 February 2018 by the Finance Manager.
- 6.2. The Commission noted the report and **Agreed** the register with a minor amendment to the mitigating action regarding the future Welsh Government/ Cabinet Office recruitment exercise on risk CR2.

#### 7. Budget Report

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 8 February 2018 by the Finance Manager.

- 7.2. The Commission noted and **Agreed** the proposed transfer of funds between the budget categories.
- 7.3. In view of the estimated underspend on the annual budget the Commission **Agreed** to surrender a further £20,000 Grant-in-Aid back to Welsh Government sponsor division.
- 7.4. The Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive are to compare the projected budget with the actual spend to make future budget requests more reflective of actual expenditure.

## **8. WAO Consultation: Code of Audit Practice of the Auditor General for Wales**

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 7 February 2018 by the Finance Manager.
- 8.2. The Commission noted the report and **Agreed** a consultation response to be submitted before the end of the consultation on 26 March 2018.

## **9. Torfaen Electoral Review**

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 13 February 2018 by the Review Officer.
- 9.2. The Commission **Agreed** the report, subject to a few minor changes.
- 9.3. **Proposed ward names.** Consideration was given to a list of names where alternative suggestions had been made by the Welsh language Commissioner. In the cases of Blaenavon; Coed Eva; Llanyrafon East and Ponthir; Panteg; St. Dials; Trevethin and Penygarn; Upper Cwmbran; and Wainfelin it was **Agreed** to keep the spellings as used in the relevant Order(s). As far as Pontypool is concerned this will need to be referred back to the Welsh Language Commissioner, because it was decided to utilise the name of the community – Pontymoile – as the name of the electoral ward.

## **10. Reviews Progress Report**

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 13 February 2018 by the Deputy Chief Executive
- 10.2. The Commission **Noted** the report and the Lead Commissioners fed back on the recent meetings with the Group Leaders in Ceredigion and Gwynedd on the Draft Proposals.

## **11. Calendar of Events**

11.1. The Commission noted the calendar.

## **12. Any Other Business**

12.1. Discussions were held around proposed changes to governance and sponsorship arrangements within Welsh Government, by the proposed creation of a Public Leaders Forum to which the Commission would be answerable. The Chair and CEO had been invited to attend a workshop at Welsh Government offices on March 15<sup>th</sup>, and a report on discussions will be given to the next Commission meeting.

12.2. A request was received from the Scottish Boundary Commissions asking that preparations for the 2018 Inter-Commission meeting ought to include examples of best practice and collaborative working, and that possible agenda items be forwarded to them.

**Date of Next Meeting: 27 March 2018**