

# **LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD AT 9.30AM ON 28 SEPTEMBER IN HASTINGS HOUSE AND VIA TEAMS**

## **This document is available in Welsh**

**Present:** Mrs Debra Evans-Williams (Chair); Mr Ceri Stradling; Mr David Powell and Mrs Julie May

**LDBCW Officers attending:** Mrs Shereen Williams (Chief Executive); Mr Tom Jenkins (Head of Policy and Programmes); Mr David Burley (Head of Business); Mr Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mr Rhydian Fitter (Communications and Engagement Manager); Mr Math Williams (Team Support Officer).

**Guest :** Mr Howard Jones (Investors in People) .

**Time Started: 09:30**

**Time Finished: 11:05**

**Apologies:** No apologies were made.

## **1. Investors In People – Feedback**

- 1.1. Mr Howard Jones congratulated the LDBCW in retaining its accreditation and status.
- 1.2. The Commission's benchmark score was higher than average – although down slightly from its 2018 score.
- 1.3. Key successes of the Commission were highlighted and it included inspiring leadership, group decision making, positive performance management, formal and informal learning and development strategies alongside a culture of continuous improvement.
- 1.4. The Commissioners thanked Mr Jones for his feedback and congratulated the team on its successes amidst pressures of the pandemic, staff changes and other issues.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

## **3. Chair's Briefing**

- 3.1. The Chair briefed the Commission on the earlier meeting with Lisa James from the Commission's Sponsor Division in Welsh Government (WG):
  - Five Orders have been published.

- It is anticipated that all remaining decisions will be made by the end of October.
- Welsh Government are planning to organise a post-review feedback session with the 22 local authority leaders. The Commission will be invited to participate and will be able to share the changes that are being considered for ERP 2023.
- The recruitment of new Commissioners was also discussed at the meeting and it was agreed that any further discussions on recruitment will take place following this meeting.

#### 4. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 27 July 2021

- 4.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021 as a correct record of the matters considered, subject to some minor amendments.

#### 5. Issues Arising

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 20 September 2021 by the CE.

- 5.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report noting any issues for later discussion in the meeting, and updated progress was noted on the following issues:

- **(Issue 1)** The Commission staff have completed Insights Training and all staff have been asked to complete the Team Activity follow-up. Following the completion of the majority of the Change Programme, a final update will be provided at the next meeting and it was **agreed** that an Annual Development and Training action plan is developed to replace it.
- **(Issue 3)** In the last week prior to this meeting the Minister has made decisions on Newport, Conwy and Blaenau Gwent. There are currently only five reviews awaiting decisions including Cardiff, Flintshire and Caerphilly.
- **(Issue 5)** Following the advice received from the Commission's legal advisor, it was **agreed** that the Community Review Guidance would be redrafted, and publication delayed to 2022.

#### 6. Reviews Progress Report

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 21 September 2021 by the HPP.

- 6.2. It was **noted** that all electoral reviews had been completed.

- 6.3. It was **agreed** that the Risk register was updated to reflect the current status of the reviews.

## 7. ERP 2023

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 20 September 2021 by the HPP.
- 7.2. It was **agreed** to approve the 2023 ERP Policies report by the HPP subject to some minor amendments.
- 7.3. It was **agreed** that the HPP would present a draft report of policy and practise to the November meeting in order to be discussed.

## 8. Budget Report 2021- 22

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 28 September 2021 by the FM and the current budget position for 2021- 22 was **noted**.
- 8.2. It was **noted** that the Commission's budget was underspent overall at the end of August 2021. The most significant area of underspend was in Staff Costs which was mainly due to one staff member leaving early.
- 8.3. The FM reported the most significant instances of underspends in the budget and outlined the main reasons for them together with any future expenditure commitments for those budgets.
- 8.4. Members were also **informed** that the Commission may have to employ additional translators to aid processing representations received in the BCW Initial Proposals consultation period.

## 9. ARAC Meeting 26 July 2021

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 28 September 2021 by the FM.
- 9.2. FM reported the outcome of the ARAC's consideration of the standing agenda items together with the additional items on the agenda. The main item dealt with was the audit of the Commission's annual report and accounts for 2020-21. Members noted the outcome of the audit which was that there were no uncorrected misstatements or other significant issues to report and that it was the Auditor General for Wales' intention to issue an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements.

- 9.3. Members noted the outcome of the ARAC meeting of 26 July 2021 and the main points arising from the meeting.

## 10. Risk Management - Risk Register

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 28 September 2021 by the FM.
- 10.2. It was **noted** that all changes to the risk register agreed at the previous meeting had been implemented. It was **agreed** that the risk register now accurately reflected the risks currently faced by the Commission and that no further changes were necessary at this time.

## 11. ICT Deep Dive

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the outcome of the ICT deep dive workshop which took place on 17 August 2021. The request for the deep dive was made at the November 2020 ARAC meeting and would include a Commissioner and Qualifications Wales Head of IT.
- 11.2. It was **noted** that the findings showed the Commission's existing cyber security posture and measures were effective and met the existing risk appetite requirements of the Commission.
- 11.3. It was **noted** there should be a different risk appetite for those computer devices provided to staff or Commissioners not covered by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Qualifications Wales. It should be added to the ICT risk register as IT11. As part of the security mitigating actions a screen-shot should be provided annually that all the latest system patches had been applied. The HoB would create a user guide for the process.
- 11.4. It was **noted** that the BCW Portal should be considered an emerging risk for the ICT risk register and be added as IT12.
- 11.5. It was **noted** that an addition be made to the Operational risk register for the 'Deliberate act by disgruntled individual' as OP21.
- 11.6. It was **agreed** by the Commission to accept the suggested risk register changes and that the Commission will continue to explore actions in the future, using the risks identified in the deep dive.

## **12. Green Dragon Awards**

- 12.1. The HoB **requested** that the Commission replace the existing Green Dragon environmental audit scheme and adopt a system similar to that currently employed by the Welsh Government, where environmental performance formed part of an overall report on its estate.
- 12.2. It was **noted** that the cost in administrative time and effort together with the cost of engaging an assessor provided little value and a more efficient solution be sought.
- 12.3. It was **agreed** environmental performance be added to the Annual Report and be combined with the section on biodiversity and the Commission will not be seeking reaccreditation of the Green Dragon Award.

## **13. Current Business Continuity Arrangements (Verbal Update)**

- 13.1. It was **noted** that staff numbers in the office are almost returning to pre-pandemic levels. Staff will continue to work from home on Fridays unless there is a business need for staff to be in the office.

## **14. Calendar of Events**

- 14.1. The Commission **noted** the Calendar.
- 14.2. It was **noted** that the next ARAC meeting on the calendar, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October is correct, as is different from the minutes.
- 14.3. **Action:** TSO to update the Calendar of events with the agreed changes.

## **15. Any Other Relevant Business**

- 15.1. No other relevant business.

## **16. Date of Next Meeting: 26 October 2021**