

**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING  
HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2019 AT HASTINGS HOUSE**

*This document is available in Welsh*

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

**LDBCW Officers attending:** Mrs Shereen Williams (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 Huw Blacker (Review Officer); Mr Farhan Khan (Review Officer);

**Time Started:** 09:30

**Time Finished:** 12:15

**Apologies:** Mr Tom Jenkins (Review Manager); Mrs Cath Thomas (Review Assistant); Mrs Caroline Redmond (Office Assistant); Mr Matthew Farrell (Review Officer)

**1. Declarations of Interest**

1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

**2. Chair's Briefing**

2.1. The Chair requested that Julie James Minister for Housing and Local Government be invited to meet the Commission.

2.2. The briefed that the Chief Executive should arrange to meet Chris Llewellyn the new Chief Executive of the Welsh Local Government Association.

2.3. WG are considering the Analysis of the Extension to the electoral franchise.

2.4. Congratulations were offered to Tom Jenkins on his promotion to the Review Manager post.

2.5. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Shereen Williams to her first meeting of the Commission as Chief Executive and wished her every success in her new post.

2.6. The Chair asked that it be recorded in the minutes the Commission's appreciation and thanks to Mr Steve Halsall, the recently retired Chief

Executive, for his commitment, leadership and sound advice which he gave throughout his period with the Commission. The Commissioners wished him a long, healthy and fulfilling retirement.

### **3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 18 December 2018**

- 3.1. The Welsh Language Compliance Notice, to be raised in the February Commission meeting
- 3.2. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2018, following a number of minor amendments, as a correct record of the matters considered.

### **4. Issues Arising**

- 4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 23 January 2019 by the Deputy 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 4)** Small Workplace Health Award
  - **(Issue 3)** HR Policies
  - **(Issue 5)** JEGS Review
  - **(Issue 6)** IIP Recommendations.

### **5. Ceredigion Electoral Review - Report**

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 23 January 2019 by the Review Officer.
- 5.2. The Commission considered that paragraph 124 of the Report should be expanded to clarify why the Draft Proposals in the area have been changed back to the Existing Arrangements.
- 5.3. The Report was agreed subject to a number of minor amendments,

### **6. Merthyr Tydfil Electoral Review - Report**

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 23 January 2019 by the Review Officer

6.2. The Report was agreed subject to a number of minor amendments.

## **7. Blaenau Gwent Electoral Review - Options**

7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 17 December 2018 by the Review Officer.

7.2. The Commission agreed Option A for Region 1 which contains the electoral wards of:

Georgetown, Sirhowy and Tredegar

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improves the overall level of electoral parity in the area.
- Retains the majority of the current arrangements
- Returns no four-member wards.

7.3. The Commission agreed Option A(1) for Region 2 which contains the electoral wards of:

Beaufort, Ebbw Vale North, Ebbw Vale South and Rassau and Garnlydan

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improves the overall level of electoral parity in the area.
- Retains the majority of the current arrangements
- Returns no four-member wards.
- Retains the existing Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South electoral wards

7.4. The Commission agreed Option A for Region 3 which contains the electoral wards of:

Abertillery, Blaina, Brynmawr, Cwm, Cwmtillery, Llanhilleth and Nantyglo

The following reasons were noted in support of the decision:

- Improves the overall level of electoral parity in the area.
- Retains the majority of the current arrangements
- Returns no four-member wards.
- Does not split any communities in contrast to Option B,

## **8. Blaenau Gwent Electoral Review - Report**

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 17 December 2018 by the Review Officer.
- 8.2. The Commission considered that an additional paragraph be added in chapter 4 explaining the difference between the 2017 electorate figure supplied by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and the population eligible to vote figures supplied by the ONS.
- 8.3. The Report was agreed subject to a number of minor amendments.

## **9. Reviews Progress Report**

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 29 January 2019 by the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 9.2. The report states that the Carmarthenshire Options would be looked at in March, and that 17 of the 22 reports have commenced.
- 9.3. The content of the report was noted.

## **10. Appointment of Temporary Review Manager**

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 29 January 2019 by the Deputy Chief Executive
- 10.2. The report notes that one of the Commission's Review Officers was successful in obtaining the temporary post.
- 10.3. The content of the report was noted.

## **11. Receipt of Fees**

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the Report by the Finance Manager. Members **agreed** the Receipt of Fees Policy and a review date set for January 2022.

## **12. Recovery of Losses to Public Funds**

- 12.1. Consideration was given to the Report by the Finance Manager. The Recovery of Losses to Public Funds Policy was **agreed** subject to minor amendments and a review date set for January 2022.

## **13. Risk Management – Risk Register**

- 13.1. Consideration was given to the Report by the Finance Manager. In respect of risk CR6 it was noted that there were two undated signed copies of the lease, one signed by the landlord and the other signed by the Commission. The Commission considered that there should be one dated copy of the lease signed by both parties.
- 13.2. It was **agreed** that the Secretariat would obtain a dated copy of the lease signed by both parties.  
**Action:** Finance Manager. **By:** 15 February 2019

#### **14. Budget Report**

- 14.1. Consideration was given to the Report by the Finance Manager. The Commission noted that Welsh Government had acknowledged their surrender of £20,000 Grant-In-Aid. The Commission noted and **agreed** the proposed changes to the budget categories.
- 14.2. It was reported that the Secretariat was currently considering the options for the procurement of the audio visual hardware for the ICT project and other hardware requirements.
- 14.3. The Commission noted the current budget situation and estimated year end position.

#### **15. ICT Transformation Project Progress Report**

- 15.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 21 January 2019 by the Business Support Manager.
- 15.2. The website development work was ongoing with the developer liaising directly with Welsh Government. Training of Commission staff will commence in February prior to the sites 'going live'. It was hoped that beta testing would commence in January 2019.
- 15.3. The audits for Cyber Essentials Plus and Office 365 Security Review were ongoing.

#### **16. Calendar of Events**

- 16.1. The Commission noted the calendar.

**17. Any Other Business**

17.1. There was no other business to discuss.

**Date of Next Meeting: 26 February 2019**