

**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING
HELD 9.30AM ON 30 MARCH 2021 AT HASTINGS HOUSE AND VIA TEAMS**

This document is available in Welsh

Present: Dr Deborah Evans-Williams (Chair); Mr Ceri Stradling; Mr David Powell; Mrs Julie May and Mr Theodore Joloza.

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

Time Started: 09:37

Time Finished: 11:38

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 briefed the Commission on the earlier meeting with Lisa James from the Commission's Sponsor Division in Welsh Government (WG):

- The Commission has received correspondence from the Minister for Housing and Local Government (the Minister) requesting further information about the Cardiff, Caerphilly and Flintshire reviews. The Sponsor Division indicated that the response should include all relevant background information.
- WG are currently prioritising reviews according to those with the greatest variations with Orders being worked on in parallel as groupings of reviews are processed.
- The Commission acknowledged receipt of the Remit Letter for 2021/2022.
- The Monmouthshire Community Order will be signed off before the Monmouthshire Final Recommendations Report is published in June.
- All work on the Framework Agreement will be delayed until a new Government is in place following the 2021 Senedd elections.
- WG have published a Race Equality Action Plan and issued an email to public bodies asking them to consider the areas on 'Leadership and Representation' in the course of their work.

- Theo Joloza and Julie May have received a letter from the Minister with an offer to extend their appointments until 31 December 2021.
- 2.2. It was **noted** that as part of the post-review exercises, the Commission will need to look at the role of Commissioner for the future, including the job description as well as strengthening the Lead Commissioner duties.
- 2.3. **Action:** The CE is to ensure that the Commission review the role of Commissioner in the coming months.
- 2.4. **Action:** The CEM is to prepare relevant comms to be sent out to stakeholders following the completion of the ERP 2017 in June 2021.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 23 February 2021

- 3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 as a correct record of the matters considered subject to some minor amendments.

4. Issues Arising

- 4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 22 March 2021 by the CE on Issues Arising.
- 4.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report as a whole noting any issues for later discussion in the meeting, and updated progress was noted on the following issues:
- **(Issue 1) Change Programme**
The Staff Survey is ongoing until 19 April 2021 and there has been a high number of responses. The second Covid-19 survey closed today and has had 100% response rate.
 - **(Issue 2) Framework Agreement**
There will not be any progress until the new government is elected.
 - **(Issue 3) Electoral Reviews – Cardiff, Caerphilly and Flintshire**
A letter has been received from the Minister for Housing and Local Government requesting more information about the reviews and a response is being prepared.
 - **(Issue 4) FOI Requests**

The Commission did not receive any FOI requests between 16 February 2021 and 22 March 2021.

- **(Issue 5) WLC Consultation**

A response to the consultation will be submitted.

- **(Issue 6) Remit Letter**

This was received on 25 March 2021 and will be circulated to staff and Board Members. In addition to the expected content, the Commission is to look at the accessibility of its reports.

5. Review Progress Report

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 22 March 2021 by the HPP and the following were **noted**:
- 5.2. The Monmouthshire Review is the last review of the Electoral Review programme to complete. Final options are the next item on the Agenda and the Final Report will go the 13 April meeting with a mid-June publication deadline.
- 5.3. The changes to the Risk Register requested at the February meeting have been made.

6. Monmouthshire Electoral Review – Final options

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 23 March 2021 by the HPP.
- 6.2. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 1 of Govilon, Llanelly and Llanfoist Fawr and agreed Option 1. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Llanfoist Fawr and Govilon, and Llanelly.

The following reasons were noted in support of this decision:

- Provides an overall total of four members (currently four members).
- Retains one (33%) of the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- Creates one new multi-member ward in the area in line with the majority of the representations received.
- Removes two of the existing single-member electoral wards in the region.
- None of the wards are projected to have a level of electoral variance that is +/-25% of the proposed county average.

This option returns a total number of 4 members as per the existing membership.

The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Llanfoist Fawr and Govilon	Llan-ffwyst Fawr a Govilon
Llanelly	Llanelli

6.3. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 2 of Goetre Fawr, Usk and Llanbadoc and agreed Option 1. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Goetre Fawr, and Llanbadoc and Usk.

The following reasons were noted in support of this decision:

- Provides an overall total of three members (currently three members).
- Retains three (33%) of the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- Creates one new multi-member ward in the area in line with the majority of the representations received.
- Removes two of the existing single-member electoral wards in the region.
- None of the wards are projected to have a level of electoral variance that is +/-25% of the proposed county average.

This option returns a total number of 3 members as per the existing membership.

The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Goetre Fawr	Goetre Fawr
Llanbadoc and Usk	Llanbadog a Brynbuga

6.4. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 3 of Mitchel Troy, Trellech United and Raglan and agreed Option 2. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Raglan and Mitchel Troy and Trellech United.

The following reasons were noted in support of this decision:

- Provides an overall total of three members (currently three members).
- Provides an improvement in electoral parity.
- Retains one (33%) of the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- Creates one more multi-member ward in line with the majority of representations received.
- No ward exceeds an electoral variance of +/-25% of the county average.

This option returns a total number of 3 members as per the existing membership.

The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below with a mutation added to the Welsh:

English Name	Welsh Name
Mitchel Troy and Trellech United	Llanfihangel Troddi a Thryleg Unedig
Raglan	Rhaglan

6.5. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 4 of Bulwark and Thornwell, Larkfield and St Kingsmark and Chepstow Castle and agreed Option 4. This option comprises the four electoral wards of Bulwark and Thornwell, Chepstow Castle and Larkfield, Mount Pleasant and St Kingsmark.

The following reasons were noted in support of this decision:

- Provides an overall total of six members (currently five members).
- Retains one (33%) of the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- Creates one new multi-member and two single-member wards in the area.
- Removes one of the existing two-member electoral wards in the region.
- None of the wards are projected to have a level of electoral variance that is +/-25% of the proposed county average.
- Addresses the future variance issue of Chepstow Castle.

This option returns a total number of 6 members, an increase of one from the existing membership.

The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name

Bulwark and Thornwell	Bulwark a Thornwell
Chepstow Castle and Larkfield	Castell Cas-gwent a Larkfield
Mount Pleasant	Mount Pleasant
St Kingsmark	St Kingsmark

6.6. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 5 of Magor East with Undy and Magor West and agreed Option 1. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Magor East and Magor West. The Commission considered an alternative option to create three single-member wards in the area however this option would return high levels of variance.

The following reasons were noted in support of this decision:

- Provides an overall total of three members (currently three members).
- Retains all of the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- No ward exceeds an electoral variance of +/-25% of the county average.

This option returns a total number of 3 members as per the existing membership.

The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Magor East with Undy	Dwyrain Magwyr gyda Gwndy
Magor West	Gorllewin Magwyr

6.7. The Commission considered the proposals for the existing electoral wards for Region 6 of Drybridge and agreed Option 1. This option comprises the two electoral wards of Drybridge and Town.

The following reasons were noted in support of this decision:

- Provides an overall total of two members (currently two members).
- Retains none of the existing electoral wards.
- Creates no split communities.
- Creates two single-member wards in the area.

- None of the wards are projected to have a level of electoral variance that is +/-25% of the proposed county average.

This option returns a total number of 2 members as per the existing membership.

The Commission recommends adopting the names as recommended below:

English Name	Welsh Name
Drybridge	Drybridge
Town	Y Dref

The Commission therefore proposes a Council membership of 46 Members which is one member higher than the existing membership.

- 6.8. **Action** – the Region 3 map title is to be changed from MCC.
- 6.9. **Action** – a mutation is to be added to the Welsh names for Region 3.

7. Budget Report

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 March 2021 by the FM.
- 7.2. It was **noted** that funds had been transferred between the various budget categories to address estimated underspends and these were approved by the Commission. The position at the end of February 2021 showed an underspend of £12,949.
- 7.3. It was reported that the final Grant-in-Aid draw down for 2020-21 had now been made with a total of £765,197 being drawn down out of an allocation of £772,720 leaving £7,523 not drawn down at the year end.

8. Risk Management – Risk Register

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 16 March 2021 by the FM and the following amendments were **agreed**:
- 8.2. Flintshire and Caerphilly should be added with Cardiff to the mitigating actions for CR1 for completeness.

- 8.3. The residual risk score for CR2 can be downgraded to 15 due to a clearer understanding of the position regarding the possibility of further review work being requested by the Minister.
- 8.4. Mitigation can be added to CR3 regarding the Commission issuing a Press Release at the end of the Electoral Review programme informing the local authorities that the review programme has been completed. The 'Risk Description' should be amended to 'Reputation and future review programmes seriously damaged.'
- 8.5. **Action** – the FM is to update the Risk Register with the agreed amendments.
- 8.6. **Action** – the CE is to liaise with Lisa James/WG the potential damage that could be caused to the Commission's reputation, and future review programmes, if its recommendations are not implemented for the 2022 elections.

9. Report of ARAC Meeting 24 February 2021

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 5 March 2021 by the FM.
- 9.2. The contents were **noted**.

10. Chair of ARAC Annual Report 2020-21

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 March 2021 by the FM.
- 10.2. The contents were **noted**.
- 10.3. It was **agreed** that 5.1 regarding the annual risk assurance should be amended to 'reasonably assured' instead of 'substantially assured'.
- 10.4. **Action** – the FM to update 5.1 to 'reasonably assured'.

11. Draft Governance Statement 2020-21

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 5 March 2021 by the FM and it was **agreed** subject to the following minor amendments:
 - Para 3.5 – the spare footnotes on the members' meeting attendance table are to be removed.

- Para 3.8 – the Vale of Glamorgan review is to be added to the second and third paragraphs.
- Para 3.8 – ‘Meetings with local authorities are to be held remotely’ is to be added to the fourth paragraph.
- Para 7.3 – Remove ‘The Commission’ from the first line.
- Para 12 – to be reworded as the ICT security deep dive is being prepared for but is unlikely to be carried out during 2020-21.

11.2. **Action** – the FM is to update the Statement with the agreed amendments.

12. Whistleblowing Policy

12.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 5 March 2021 by the HB.

12.2. It was **agreed** to adopt the policy with the following minor amendments:

- Add to ‘Contacts’ an explanation of who TIAA Ltd are.
- Add the Chair as ‘Whistleblowing Champion’ on the Board.

12.3. **Action** – the HB is to update the policy with the agreed amendments.

13. Current Business Continuity Arrangements (Verbal Update)

13.1. Consideration was given to the verbal update provided by the CE.

13.2. It was **noted** that the office re-opened on 1 March with 3-6 members of staff attending at the same time and the office remains closed on Fridays. Staff can work at the office if they wish to, according to public health guidelines. Social distancing and the use of PPE continues and the office is to work on this basis until there is a change in direction or guidance from WG.

13.3. **Action** – ‘according to public health guidelines’ should be added to minutes and papers when working at the office is mentioned.

14. Calendar of Events

14.1. The Calendar was **noted**.

14.2. Any changes to the Calendar are to be emailed to the CEM.

15. Any Other Relevant Business

15.1. The CEM reported that there was no evidence of any intellectual property issues in relation to the Commission's logo.

16. Date of Next Meeting: 13 April 2021