

# LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

## MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015 AT HASTINGS HOUSE.

**Present:** Mr Owen Watkin (Chair); Mr Ceri Stradling; and, Mr David Powell.

**LDBCW Officers attending:** Mr Steve Halsall (Chief Executive); Mr Matt Redmond (Deputy Chief Executive); Mr David Carr (Finance Manager); Mr Tom Jenkins (Review Officer); Mr Ralph Handscomb (Review Officer) and Miss Caroline Roe (Office Assistant).

**Apologies:** Mrs Rachel Williams (Business Support Manager); Mr Ross Evans (Review Officer)

**Time Started:** 9:30 am

**Time finished:** 11:50 am

### 1. **Declarations of Interest**

1.1. No declarations were made

### 2. **Chair's Announcements**

2.1. The Chair announced that the National Assembly Committees intend to publish their Reports on evidence given on the Local Government Bill in early May-

2.2. The Chair announced that he and other members of the Commission would be having a meeting with the Minister for Public Services on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April.

2.3. The Chair announced that there will be a meeting between the Commission, Independent Remuneration Panel and Welsh Government on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April regarding stakeholder engagement

### 3. **Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 10 March 2015**

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

### 4. **Issues Arising**

4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 31<sup>st</sup> March by the Chief Executive.

4.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the report as a whole and updated progress on the following issues were noted:

- Issue 1 (IT Strategy)** a verbal update was given by the Review Officer. The Commission is currently having all computers updated to Windows 7 by Atos. Despite some initial problems having been encountered this issue is currently progressing. The next step is to have the new version of MapInfo 12.5 installed on the computers at the Commission.
- Issue 2 (Post Review Questionnaire)** the questionnaire is having some final amendments and should be ready by the end of the month.  
**Action: Office Assistant and Review Officer**
- Issue 4 (Principal Area Reviews)** the Commission agreed to revisit this in November 2015
- Issue 9 (BCW/ LDBCW Memorandum of Understanding)** the Commission have signed the MOU, it is now with Cabinet Office for their signature.
- Issue 29 (Meeting IRP & WG)** the Commission discussed the upcoming meeting and the topics that would arise at the meeting.

## 5. White Paper: Power to Local People

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive. The report provided a draft response letter to the White Paper published on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February and the aspects where it may affect the Commission and its operations.
- 5.2. It was **Resolved** to agree the content of the letter and it was **agreed** that the Deputy Chief Executive would make minor amendments prior to its submission to Welsh Government.  
**Action: Deputy Chief Executive**
- 5.3. It was **Agreed** to send the final response to Welsh Government prior to the meeting with the Minister on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

## 6. Operation Plan

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 31<sup>st</sup> March by the Chief Executive Officer. The Commission decided to make a minor amendment to section Four of the operational plan.
- 6.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the draft Operational Plan subject to the minor amendment in section Four.
- 6.3. It was **Agreed** that the Operational Plan would be sent to Welsh Government once the amendment had been made.

## 7. Governance Statement 2014-15

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 by the Finance Manager.
- 7.2. The Commission acknowledged that the Finance Manager would not be able complete the Governance Statement until the Commission had received the internal audit report from Deloitte. The Commission also **agreed** to make an amendment to section 3.6 of the statement, relating to acceptance of tenders.
- 7.3. It was **Resolved to accept** the report subject to the response from Deloitte and the minor amendment in section 3.6 of the statement.  
**Action: Finance Manager.**

## 8. Risk Management

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 by the Finance Manager. There were no new issues to be considered and hence no changes to the Risk Register. It was noted that induction procedures for new Commission members are to be reviewed.  
The Commission **Resolved to note and accept** the report.

## 9. Budget Report

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 by the Finance Manager. The Report outlined the year-end position after budget surrenders and increased software costs, noting that there was still some clarification required over electricity charges and the buildings insurance levied by the Hastings House landlord.
- 9.2. It was **Resolved to note and accept** the Report.

## 10. Report on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2015

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015 by the Finance Manager, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February and to the Report of the Chair of the Committee. It was noted that the Committee had agreed to adopt an annual self-assessment of internal audit services and would consider the Pensions Risk register and a Business Continuity test. Changes to both internal and external future audit arrangements for the Commission were noted.
- 10.2. The Commission **Resolved to note and agree** the Minutes and the Reports, subject to requesting the Committee to include consideration of how the Commission deals with fraud issues.

## 11. Reviews Progress Report

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 11.2. There was no change to progress on electoral reviews. An update was given to the Commission on the progress that has been made on the ongoing community reviews of Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Flintshire, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taff, and Vale of Glamorgan.
- 11.3. The Commission **Noted** the report.

## 12. Calendar of Events

- 12.1. The Commission agreed to move the May and July Commission meetings. The May meeting will now take place on the 14<sup>th</sup> May with the July meeting now taking place on the 21<sup>st</sup> July.
- 12.2. The Calendar of Events was **Noted**.

## 13. Wales Audit Office : Change of Audit Arrangements

- 13.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 by the Finance Manager outlining changes imposed by the Wales Audit Office contracting arrangements, by which the Auditor General proposed that future financial audit will be undertaken by his staff.
- 13.2. The Commission **Noted** the report.

## 14. Any Other Relevant Business

- 14.1. The Commission discussed the appointment of the Independent Member of the ARAC, it was **Agreed** to initially explore the possibility of extending the appointment by 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> September, - subject to agreement by the Independent Member - and to consider the position at the next meeting.
- 14.2. The Staff survey results will be discussed at the next Commission meeting and a Workforce Subcommittee meeting will take place following the meeting to discuss the results further.

## 15. Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 14th May 2015.