

LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT HASTINGS HOUSE.

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

LDBCW Officers attending: Mr. Steve Halsall (Chief Executive); Mr. Matt Redmond (Deputy Chief Executive); Mrs Rachel Williams (Business Support Manager); Mr. David Carr (Finance Manager); Mr. Tom Jenkins (Review Officer); Mr. Ross Evans (Review Officer); Mr. Daniel Mosley (Review Officer), Mr. Ralph Handscomb (Review Officer); and Mrs Catherine Thomas (Review Assistant);

Time Started: 09:30

Time finished: 15:30

1. Declarations of Interest.

- 1.1 Mrs. May declared a personal interest in the matters considered under 10 below (Neath Port Talbot Community Review) and left the meeting during the consideration of this matter.

2. Chairman's Announcements

- 2.1. The Chair welcomed Mrs Julie May. Mrs May had been appointed as a Commissioner at the Commission from September 2015.
- 2.2. The Chair welcomed Mr Theodore Joloza. Mr Joloza had been appointed as a Commissioner at the Commission from September 2015.
- 2.3. Best wishes were extended to Mrs Rachel Williams on her return to work.
- 2.4. The Chief Executive stated that officials from Welsh Government would shortly meet him to discuss future reviews of town and community councils.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 21 July 2015

- 3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2015.

4. Issues Arising

- 4.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 24 July by the Chief Executive on Issues Arising.
- 4.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report as a whole, and updated progress on the following issues were noted:

- (Issue 1) General Questionnaire – The implementation of the questionnaire to be deferred until after the Initial Review program is complete.
- (Issue 3) Community Council size methodology – It was **Resolved** that the Chief Executive would provide a briefing on this within the October 2015 Commission meeting. **Chief Executive**
- (Issue 4) Community reviews Desk instructions – The desk instructions have been tested and are now in a position to adopt the updates. **Deputy Chief Executive**
- (Issue 10) Flintshire Community Review – This is due to published prior to the October Commission meeting. **Review Officer**
- (Issue 11) Treasury Solicitors – Government Legal Department have provided a response to the Business Support manager, which will be processed in due course. **Business Support Manager**
- (Issue 13) Welsh Language Scheme Annual Report – Although a matter was still awaiting a response from the Welsh language Commissioner, the Commission’s Welsh Language Scheme will be published on the LDBCW website.
- (Issue 14) Online Consultation Portal. Following discussions with the suppliers, a new tender had been requested to include all matters required. **Chief Executive**
- (Issue 15) Annual Report – The Annual report is to be published and then will be laid before the Welsh Assembly. **Chief Executive**
- (Issue 16) Inter-Commission Meeting – The Inter-Commission meeting will be attended by Mr. Watkin, Mr. Powell, Mrs. May and Mr. Halsall. **Chief Executive/Commissioners**
- (Issue 18) Bank Mandate – A meeting has taken place with the bank to arrange changes. The Commission is currently awaiting a response from the bank. **Finance Manager**
- (Issue 21) Review Programme communications – The Chair and Chief Executive will attend a meeting with Leaders of the WLGA, in the event of an invitation being received, to indicate the Commission’s views on the draft Direction. **Chief Executive**
- (Issue 23) Office Accommodation –It was reported that the ownership of Hastings House had been vested in The Ethical Property Company and that preliminary indications showed terms and conditions for the occupation by the Commission were likely to be acceptable. Welsh Government Estates are to be asked to secure the Commission’s interests. **Chief Executive**
- (Issue 24) Seaward Boundaries – The Commission has sought Legal advice for potential reviews of prospective tidal lagoons in Wales. **Chief Executive**

(Issue 25) The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – A paper will be prepared for the October meeting. **Chief Executive**

5. Draft Directions

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 14 September 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive in regard to the draft Directions proposed by Welsh Government for the implementation of the Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015 when enacted and suggestions for the Commission.
- 5.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the report and to agree the draft response, subject to amendments, the final version to be agreed by Commissioners and sent to Welsh Government prior to 9th November. **Deputy Chief Executive**

6. Review of Community and Electoral Review Quality Assurance Procedures

- 6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 3 September 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive and the new Quality Assurance process was explained.
- 6.2. The Commission **Noted** the report and **Accepted** the new process to be implemented.
- 6.3. It was **Resolved** that the process will be monitored with the upcoming review work – ongoing – **Deputy Chief Executive.**

7. Investors in People

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 27 August 2015 by the Chief Executive.
- 7.2. The Commission warmly welcomed the IIP report and the positive comments made by the Assessor, in addition to retaining IIP accreditation.
- 7.3. The Commission **Noted** the IIP Report.
- 7.4. It was **Resolved** that the Chief Executive and Business Support Manager will work on implementing the recommendations within the report.

8. Initial Review Planning

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 3 September 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

- 8.2. The Commission considered the amendments to the planning and the costing of the review programme in light of the Draft Direction.
- 8.3. The Commission **Noted** the report.

9. Lead Commissioner Resource Planning

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 8 September 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 9.2. The Commission considered the role of the Lead Commissioner and the time commitment of the role for the upcoming reviews
- 9.3. The Commission agreed to supply media training to Lead Commissioners as part of the role and this would be undertaken before the start of the review programme.
- 9.4. The report was **Noted**.

10. Neath Port Talbot Community Review

- 10.1. (The Declaration made by Mrs. May was noted.)
- 10.2. The Commission considered the schemes put forward by the Review Officer dated 20 August 2015; The Commission **Accepted**:
- Scheme 1
 - Change to the community boundary between Cwmavon and Port Talbot
 - Scheme 2
 - Change to the community boundary between Port Talbot and Tai-Bach
 - Scheme 4
 - Change to the community boundary between Margam Moors and Sandfields East
 - Scheme 5
 - Change to the community boundary between Baglan and Briton Ferry
 - Scheme 6
 - Change to the community boundary between Onllwyn and Seven Sisters
 - Scheme 7
 - Creation of the new Community of Baglan Moors
- 10.3. It was **Agreed** that in the case of the community boundary between Margam and Tai-Bach (Brombil Gardens) to publicly consult on Option C of the Report, for the consultation on Scheme 3, the reason being that the Commission's preferred option differs significantly from the Council's proposal. The Commission's preferred option would provide better access and communication links for the electors with the Tai-Bach community.
- 10.4. It was **Agreed** that this would be a limited consultation of 6 weeks and a mailshot

would be sent out to the electors affected. **Review Officer**

- 10.5. It was **Noted** that the implementation of the proposals listed above had no consequential effects on the electoral arrangements of other wards.

11. Risk Management

- 11.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 September 2015 by the Finance Manager.
- 11.2. It was **agreed** Corporate Risk CR3 concerning quality of work produced by the Commission was to be moved to become an Operational Risk after recognition of work done to strengthen the QA processes. If necessary, in the future this process could be reversed and the risk re-assigned to the Corporate Risk register. **Finance Manager**
- 11.3. It was **Agreed** that the consequences and mitigating action on Risk CR7 would be updated to cover the Welsh Government's consultation on the draft Ministerial Directions.
- 11.4. Members **agreed** that the Commission's Risk Appetite could now be increased slightly to reflect the new level of confidence gained due to the improvements made and acknowledged by Welsh Government following the Mathias Report. It was **agreed** that the risk status rating for green risks should be increased from 3 to 4. **Finance Manager**

12. Budget Report

- 12.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 September 2015 by the Finance Manager.
- 12.2. After reviewing the possible underspend of £30-40,000 it was **noted** that the additional staffing, media training for Commissioners, and the Online Consultation Portal costs would require further work on budget allocations later in the year. Some of these items would also require the need for additional funding from Welsh Government and Cabinet Office following the commencement of the local government and parliamentary reviews. **Finance Manager**
- 12.3. The report was **accepted**.

13. Reviews Progress Report

- 13.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 September 2015 by the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 13.2. It was **Resolved** to note the Report on the current status of reviews.

14. Calendar of Events

- 14.1. The calendar was **agreed** but future consideration will need to be given to Commissioner training commitments and availability for initial review meetings once the programme is finalised.

15. Any Other Relevant Business

Wales Audit Office: Consultation on Fee Rates and Fee Scales 2016-17

- 15.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 9 September 2015 by the Finance Manager to inform Members of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) consultation on fees for 2016-17.
- 15.2. It was **agreed** to respond to the consultation thanking the Wales Audit Office for including the Commission on its list of consultees and noting the intention that there will not be an increase in fees for 2016/ 17. **Finance Manager.**

Pembrokeshire Electoral Arrangements Order 2013.

- 15.3. Consideration was given to the proposed place names for electoral Wards following the views of the Translation Service of Welsh Government. It was **Agreed** that the Commission favoured the following
- Fishguard North East – *Gogledd-ddwyrain Abergwaun*;
 - Llanddewi Velfrey and Lampeter Velfrey – *Llanddewi Felfre a Llanbedr Felfre*;
 - Llanrhian, Mathry and Pencaer – *Llanrhian, Mathri a Phen-caer*;
 - Milford Haven North East- *Aberdaugleddau Gogledd-ddwyrain* ;
 - Tenby North – *Dinbych- y -pysgod Gogledd.*

Action - Review Officer

16. Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 15 October 2015