**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES
MEETING HELD ON 26 July 2016 AT HASTINGS HOUSE.**

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

**LDBCW Officers attending:** Mr. Steve Halsall (Chief Executive); Mr. Matt Redmond (Deputy Chief Executive); Mr. Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mr. Tom Jenkins (Review Officer); Mr. Daniel Mosley (Review Officer); Mr. Ralph Handscomb (Review Officer); Mrs. Caroline Redmond (Office Assistant);

**Time Started:** 09:30
**Time Finished:** **12:00**

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

1. **Declarations of Interest**

1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

**2. Chairman's Announcements**

2.1. The Chair announced that a revised Local Government (Wales) Bill will be re-introduced at a future point in this Assembly, the Secretariat will monitor and inform the Commission as appropriate.

2.2. The Chair extended an invitation to the Chair of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to observe one of the Commission meetings, with a suggestion of the September meeting, subject to availability.

**3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 28 June 2016**

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016 as a correct record of the matters considered.

**4. Issues Arising**

4.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 13 July 2016 by the Chief Executive on Issues Arising.

4.2. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report as a whole noting the issues for later discussion at this meeting, and updated progress on the following issues was also **noted**:

- (Issue 5) Electoral Reviews – Electoral Statistics – Contact has been made with all 22 Local Authorities and the collection of statistics for the local government electorate is ongoing. **Deputy Chief Executive and Review Officers**
- (Issue 7) Staffing – recruitment of Two Review Officers – The recruitment of two additional Review Officers is open until 3 August for posts to start in October. **Business Support Manager**

- (Issue 9) Travel and Subsistence – A paper will be presented to the Commission at the next meeting. **Business Support Manager**
- (Issue 11) Legal Services – Awaiting response from the Government Legal Department. **Business Support Manager**
- (Issue 12) Welsh Language Standards – The Final Compliance Notice was received by the Commission recently, a paper will be presented at the next Commission meeting. **Business Support Manager and Chief Executive.**
- (Issue 16) Annual Report – The final draft of the Annual Report will be presented to the next Commission meeting for approval, subject to the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee. **Chief Executive.**
- (Issue 17) IT Strategy – A paper will be presented to the Commission at a later date, exploring the options available to the Commission in relation to its future IT strategy. **Deputy Chief Executive.**

5. **Electoral Reviews – Timetable and Budget**

5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 18 July 2016 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

5.2. The Secretariat has created a timetable of reviews for all 22 Local Authorities to be completed by March 2021, in line with the Cabinet Secretary's announcement. The programme was created using the same methodology – which had been consulted on in 2013 – with some minor modifications to the parameters.

5.3. The Commission **Agreed** to use the most up-to-date statistics when formulating its timetable.

5.4. The Commission **Agreed** to the timetable proposed by the Secretariat which incorporates the Cabinet Secretary's intentions, but also includes the intentions of Monmouthshire County Council to complete its Community Review, which it suspended in 2013.

5.5. The Commission **Agreed** that it will provide the Cabinet Secretary with the timetable to seek approval, in addition to briefing a number of key stakeholders before publication subject to the aforementioned approval by the Cabinet Secretary. The Commission **Noted** that the Timetable would be incorporated within the Policy and Practice document.

**6. Electoral Reviews – Policy and Practice**

6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 18 July 2016 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

6.2. The Commission considered the updated Policy and Practice and **Agreed**, subject to some minor grammatical amendments, in addition to the following amendment to paragraph 51, to read as follows;

- Redraft paragraph 51 – *"…<u>The Commission will take into account the Welsh language characteristics of a community when conducting a review</u>. The Commission will utilise the census data to attempt to ensure that it does not put forward proposals which would undermine the use of the Welsh language."*

6.3. The Commission **Accepted** the policy, and will include it in the briefing to the Cabinet Secretary and other key stakeholders as the basis of the method by which the Commission will conduct these electoral reviews. The Commission **Noted** that the Timetable and Council Size Model would be incorporated within the Policy and Practice document.

## 7. Electoral Reviews – Council Size Model

7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 18 July 2016 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

7.2. The Commission considered the updated Council Size model which has been updated with the most recent statistics provided by the Local Government Data Unit and the 22 Local Authorities.

7.3. The Commission **Agreed** the Council Size Model, subject to some minor grammatical amendments.

7.4. The Commission **Accepted** the model and will include it in the briefing to the Cabinet Secretary and other key stakeholders as the basis of deciding the size of the various Councils that will be created throughout these reviews. The Commission **Noted** that the Council Size Policy would be incorporated within the Policy and Practice document.

## 8. Risk Management – Risk Register

8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 15 July 2016 by the Finance Manager concerning the Commission's Risk Management.

8.2. The Commission **Noted** the changes made to the Risk Register in regards to the proposed electoral review programme, and the development of the Commission's IT strategy for the short and long term.

8.3. The Commission **Accepted** to downgrade CR6, CR8, CR9 and CR11 to the Operational Risk Register.

## 9. Budget Report

9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 13 July 2016 by the Finance Manager.

9.2. The Commission **Noted** the report and **Accepted** that there will be changes to the funds allocated to various budget categories in the coming months, as a response of the intended recruitment of staff to fill the two Review Officer vacancies.

## 10. Reviews Progress Report

10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 18 July 2016 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

10.2. The Report was **Noted.**

## 11. Calendar of Events

11.1. The Calendar of Events was **Noted.**

## 12. Any Other Relevant Business

12.1. None

**Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 23 August 2016**