LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2017 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 Ross Evans (Review Officer); Mrs Cher Cooke (Review Officer); Mr Daniel Mosley (Review Officer); Miss Deb Jones (Business Support Officer); Mrs Caroline Redmond (Office Assistant)

Time Started: 09:30
Time Finished: 11:15

Apologies: Mrs Rachel Williams (Business Support Manager); Mr Farhan Khan (Review Officer)

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

2. Chair's Briefing

2.1. The Chair welcomed Deb Jones, the new Business Support Officer to the Commission.

2.2. The Chair briefed the Commission on the recent meeting he and the Chief Executive had with officials conducting a Welsh Government review of the operational arrangements of the sponsorship of Public Bodies to discuss a number of issues.

2.3. The Chair mentioned the recently announced Welsh Government's intention to conduct a review of the function and make-up of Wales' Community Councils.

2.4. The Chair stated that he was to attend a 'Civil Service Live' event in Cardiff this week.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 23 May 2017

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2017 as a correct record of the matters considered.

4. Issues Arising

4.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 12 June 2017 by the 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 2)** Staffing – The Business Support Officer has started in post, and the Review Officer vacancy was still being advertised.
- **(Issue 3)** Consultation Portal – Discussions are still ongoing with the developer.
- **(Issue 6)** IT Strategy – The Business Case has been sent to Welsh Government. The Deputy Chief Executive gave a further briefing on a number of ICT issues.
- **(Issue 7)** Inter-Commission Meeting – The Chief Executive gave an update on the arrangements.

5. Welsh Language Report 2016/17

5.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 20 June 2017 by the Business Support Manager.

5.2. The Commission proposed a number of minor changes to the Compliance and Scheme Management responses within the Annual Report.

5.3. It was **Agreed** that, subject to a few minor amendments, the report should be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner and published on the LDBCW website.
Action: Business Support Manager

6. Accommodation

6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 20 June 2017 by the Business Support Manager.

6.2. The Commission **Noted** the contents of the Report and set out the steps to take in resolving the Accommodation issue.

6.3. It was **Agreed** to give the Chief Executive authority to instruct Hugh James Solicitors on the recommended course of action.

Action: Chief Executive and Business Support Manager

7. Risk Management – Risk Register

7.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 08 June 2017 by the Finance Manager.

7.2. The Commission **Noted** the updated risk register and **agreed** the following changes.

- CR7: increase inherent and residual risk scores to better reflect urgency of risk;
- CR7: redraft mitigating actions to better reflect actions to be undertaken by Commission rather than include actions which can only be undertaken by Welsh Government;
- CR6/7: amend the Risk Radar to correctly show both CR6 and CR7 risks rather than two CR6 risks.

Action: Finance Manager

8. Budget Report

8.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 08 June 2017 by the Finance Manager.

8.2. The Commission **Noted** the report.

8.3. It was reported that the current underspend of £31K was mainly due to outstanding invoices due from the Ministry of Defence in respect of their staff member currently on secondment to the Commission as a review officer. In addition to this there were still several outstanding claims for Members' fees and expenses for April and May.

8.4. In respect of the overpayment of accommodation costs it was explained that this was due to an error made in the payment of the annual business rates to Cardiff City Council with the annual amount being paid rather than a single monthly instalment. The amount overpaid had since been refunded to the Commission by the Council.

9. Reviews Progress Report

9.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 20 June 2017 by the Deputy Chief Executive.

9.2. The Commission **Noted** the report.

9.3. It was **Agreed** that Ceredigion County Council should be contacted to find out their preference for the publication dates of the Electoral Review Draft Proposals Report.
Action: Review Officer

10. Wales Audit Office (WAO) Fee Regime Consultation

10.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 20 June 2017 by the Finance Manager.

10.2. The Commission **Noted** the report.

10.3. It was **Agreed** to support the WAO's preferred solution of making changes to the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013 to ensure that fees charged did not exceed the cost of the work undertaken. It was **agreed** that the proposed change to payment of audit fees to centralised payment by Welsh Government would be supported but with the proviso that it would not have an adverse effect on the Commission's working relationship with the WAO and their auditors, including the agreement of audit plans and reports. A response will be drafted and submitted to WAO.
Action: Finance Manager

11. Calendar of Events

11.1. The Commission noted the calendar.

12. Any Other Business

12.1. There was no other business to discuss.

Date of Next Meeting: 25 July 2017