LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD AT 10 AM ON 16 NOVEMBER 2022 AT HASTINGS HOUSE AND VIA MS TEAMS

Present: Mrs Bev Smith (Chair); Mr Michael Imperato; Mr Frank Cuthbert; Mrs Dianne Bevan.

LDBCW Officers attending: Mrs Shereen Williams (Chief Executive); Mr Tom Jenkins (Head of Policy and Programmes); Mr Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mrs Catherine Thomas (Business Support Officer).

Time Started: 10.20
Time Finished: 11.41

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

2. Chair's Briefing

2.1. The Chair informed the Commission that Lisa James from the Commission's Sponsor Division in Welsh Government (WG) was on leave so there was no meeting with WG to report on.

2.2. The Accommodation Paper would discussion would be deferred to enable the Secretariat to discuss additional accommodation options with WG.

2.3. The Chair and the CE attended an online meeting held by WG on the White Paper. There were a number of Electoral Administrators on the call and the focus was around the non-review aspects of the White Paper.

2.4. WG would soon be recruiting a fifth Commissioner to sit on both the LDBCW board and the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). Two changes had been made to the Job Description.

Action: The CE is to ask the Communications and Engagement Manager to advertise the post externally once it was live on the WG website.

2.5. The Commission was looking forward to hosting the annual Inter-Commission meeting on 25 November at the Mercure Holland House Hotel in Cardiff with a dinner the night before. It was **noted** that Michael Imperato could no longer attend the meeting and Richard Wyn Jones (speaker) had to withdraw from the event. Cathy Owens of Deryn Consulting would be has been invited instead.

2.6. The Chair informed the meeting that she would be chairing two WG 'Diversity in Democracy' events that are due to take place in Cardiff and Llandudno. The CE will attend the Cardiff workshop on 5 December.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 19 October 2022

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2022 as a correct record of the matters considered.

4. Issues Arising

4.1. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report noting any issues for later discussion in the meeting, and updated progress was noted on the following issues:

4.2. **(Issue 2) –** Preparation work for the Community Reviews has started and the Vale of Glamorgan review will commence in January. The CE attended a meeting with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's cross-party working group to provide additional information on the review process. The Caerphilly and Pembrokeshire reviews are due to start in the following months after the start of the Vale of Glamorgan review.

4.3. **(Issue 4)** – The Secretariat will be provided with a first demo of the new portal in the following week after this meeting.

4.4. **(Issue 5)** – CEX recruitment to be raised at the next meeting with Lisa James.

4.5. **(Issue 7)** – It was **agreed** to re-visit the issue of office premises at the December meeting.

4.6. **(Issue 8)** – The Technical Briefing Event will take place 15 December before the LDBCW meeting.

5. Budget Report 2022-23

5.1. Consideration was given to the report by the FM and the budget position to the end of October 2022 was **noted** and **approved**.

5.2. The Commission **noted** the virements between staff costs and furniture budgets to address a small overspend in the latter.

5.3. It was **noted** that the underspend was £81,690 at the end of October, mainly due to underspending on staff costs; additional staff were being recruited later than intended and there had been a delay in WG approving the new staff structure and the pay rise. It was estimated the underspend would be £110,000 by the end of 2022 depending on whether extra staff had been recruited, the new staff structure approved by WG and the pay rise deal agreed. If these did not go ahead, the underspend could be more. Some legal and portal costs were yet to come but provision had been made for these.

6. Risk Management

6.1. Consideration was given to the Report dated 2 November 2022 by the FM.

6.2. It was **noted** that there had not been any changes to the Corporate Risk Register since the last meeting.

6.3. The possible risks from the potential work programme were discussed and it was **agreed** to review these at a later meeting.

6.4. There was an informal update by Michael Imperato on the November ARAC meeting and it was **agreed** that, in respect of a deep dive, ARAC should identify the areas the Commission needs to look at for audit and then refer these to the Commission.

Action: The CE and Officers to prepare an item to be discussed at the Away Day in January, which will identify future assurance/governance risks and focus on the key areas the Commission needs to be concerned about.

6.5. There was a discussion about the Commission's current low risk appetite and the ARAC had proposed that this should be reviewed. It was considered that the current system for setting risk appetite was inadequate and unclear. It was **agreed** to add this to the agenda for the Away Day.

Action: The CE and Officers to prepare an item to be discussed at the Away Day in January regarding the Commission's risk appetite.

6.6. It was **noted** that a formal summary of the ARAC November meeting will be presented to the December meeting.

7. Discussion on WG White Paper

7.1. Consideration was given to the Report by the CE and it was **agreed** to look at the Commission's response again at the December meeting before it is submitted on 10 January. It was **agreed** that Commissioners would respond by email to any amendments if needed.
Action: The CE to restructure the Commission's response and present it to the December meeting.

8. Calendar of Events

8.1. The Commission **noted** the Calendar.

8.2. The Away Day was scheduled for 18 January.

8.3. It was **noted** that Frank Cuthbert is on Jury Service from 1 December and may not be able to attend the December LDBCW meeting.

9. Any Other Relevant Business

9.1. There was no AOB for discussion.

10. Date of Next Meeting: 15 December 2022