LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD AT 10:00 AM ON 24 MAY 2023 AT HASTINGS HOUSE AND VIA MS TEAMS

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

LDBCW Officers attending: Mrs Shereen Williams (Chief Executive); Mr Tom Jenkins (Head of Policy and Programmes); Mr Dave Carr (Finance Manager); Mr David Burley (Head of Business); Mr Huw Blacker (Review Officer); Miss Carys Vaughan (Review Officer); Miss Caitlin Lowry (Team Support Officer).

Apologies: Mr Michael Imperato

Time Started: 9:59
Time Finished: 12:31

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1. It was **declared** that since the last meeting Dianne Bevan has been appointed as an independent member of the IRP.

2. Chair's Briefing

2.1. The Chair briefed the Commission on the recent appointments made to the IRP and the Commission.

- The Chair congratulated Dianne Bevan on her appointment to the IRP and confirmed that Kate Watkins has also been appointed as a new member to the IRP.
- Confirmation was given of the new Commission member, Ginger Wiegand. Ginger is currently awaiting public appointments sign off from her employer, the EHRC, and plans to join the next Commission meeting in June.
- It was **noted** that the Senedd reform financial impact assessment has been submitted.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 22 March 2023

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023 as a correct record of the matters considered, subject to minor amendments.

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 1) –** The Commission received 1 FOI request between 14 March 2023 and 16 May 2023.

4.3. **(Issue 2)** – It was **noted** that this item will be discussed under agenda item 9.

4.4. **(Issue 3) –** Work with the HR Branch on the restructure proposal for WG is ongoing.

4.5. **(Issue 4) –** A demonstration of the portal will be arranged for Commissioners at the June meeting.

4.6. **(Issue 5) –** No progress from WG has been made on the guidance.

4.7. **(Issue 6) –** It was **noted** that this issue will be removed from the Issues Arising paper and will be listed as a separate agenda item for future meetings.

4.8. **(Issue 7) –** A 2nd viewing of the proposed office space has taken place which includes a private conference room for the Commission, 2 smaller meeting rooms and 2 banks of desks which is sufficient for the future staffing needs of the Commission. The Commission is awaiting a response from WG's ICT lead regarding outlined ICT requirements. The need for physical separation from WG employees at the new premises was **noted**.

4.9. **(Issue 8) -** ORS has developed the research questionnaire to be used for the research project. It was **noted** that the questionnaire will be circulated in June with the first round of feedback due in September / October.

5. Transition Programme (for discussion)

5.1. The Chair updated the Commission on the progress of the Transition Programme.

- It was **noted** that the IRP last met 2 weeks ago.
- The Commission identified the need for a board and Chair to oversee the Transition Programme. It was **noted** that July would be a convenient time to appoint this Chair.
- IRP Communication work has identified the need for an accessibility policy.

5.2. **Action:** The Chair and CE to agree on a set of roles to be carried out by the Chair chosen to oversee the Transition Programme.

5.3. **Action:** CEM to draft an accessibility policy for IRP Communications work.

6. Future Work Programme

6.1. Consideration was given to the Future Work Programme.

7. Draft Welsh Language Annual Report

7.1. Consideration was given to the draft Welsh Language Report dated 16 May 2023 by the CE.

7.2. It was **noted** that the Commission has received no complaints regarding the Welsh language since the last Welsh Language Annual Report.

7.3. It was **noted** that the percentage of Welsh-speaking staff at the Commission has increased by 3pc since the last Welsh Language Annual Report.

8. Draft Operational Plan

8.1. Consideration was given to the Draft Operational Plan dated 16 May 2023 by the CE.

8.2. The Draft Operational Plan was **agreed**.

9. Reviews Progress Report

9.1. Consideration was given to the Reviews Progress Report dated 16 May 2023 by the HPP.

9.1.1. It was **noted** that the initial meeting in Pembrokeshire has been delayed by the ERO to allow for re-agreement of the council size policy.

9.1.2. It was **noted** that the CE and HPP recently met with the ERO for Flintshire to discuss a future Community Review. It was **noted** Gwynedd will be conducting their own Community Review.

9.2. Consideration was given to the Reviews Risk Register dated May 2023 by HPP.

9.3. **Action:** HPP to update and circulate review timeline for Swansea and Pembrokeshire.

10. Vale of Glamorgan Community Review

10.1. Consideration was given to the Vale of Glamorgan Community Review – Draft Proposal Options Report dated 12 May 2023 by the RM.

10.1.1. The statutory framework for Community Reviews under Section 26 was **noted**, specifically the purpose of Community Reviews, which is to support effective and efficient local government.

10.2. It was **noted** that the Vale of Glamorgan (VOG) has a wide range of community sizes which has been reflected in the consideration of the council size policy. It was **noted** that lessons learned from the VOG council size policy will be shared with EROs ahead of future Community Reviews.

10.3. It was **noted** that a significant portion of the representations received during the VOG Community Review were submitted by the residents of one community.

10.4. Consideration was given to the options for the Barry Community Review. Option 5 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.5. Consideration was given to the options for the Penarth and Sully and Lavernock Community Review. Option 2 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.6. Consideration was given to the options for the Llantwit Major and Llanmaes Community Review. Option 1 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.7. Consideration was given to the options for the Cowbridge with Llanblethian, Penllyn and Llanfair Community Review. Option 5 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.8. Consideration was given to the options for the Dinas Powys, Michaelston le Pit and Leckwith and Llandough Community Review. Option 2 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.9. Consideration was given to the options for the Ewenny and St. Bride's Major Community Review. Option 1 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.10. Consideration was given to the options for the Llancarfan and Rhoose Community Review. Option 1 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.11. Consideration was given to the options for the Llanmaes and Llandow Community Review. Option 2 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.12. Consideration was given to the options for the Pendoylan and Welsh St. Donat's Community Review. Option 1 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.13. Consideration was given to the options for the Peterston-Super-Ely and St. Georges-super-Ely Community Review. Option 1 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.14. Consideration was given to the options for the St. Nicholas and Bonvilston and Wenvoe Community Review. Option 2 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.15. Consideration was given to the options for the St. Donats and Wick Community Review. Option 1 was chosen by the Commission from the draft proposals (please refer to Decision Making Standard templates for further information).

10.16. It was **requested** that verification be made that new Community boundaries do not cross new Parliamentary constituencies.

10.16.1. **Action:** ROs to consider interspersing boundary maps throughout future Community Review reports as opposed to at the end.

10.16.2. **Action:** ROs to verify that new Community boundaries do not cross new Parliamentary constituencies.

11. Budget Report 2022-23

11.1. Consideration was given to the Budget Monitoring report for the year-end 2022-23 dated 24 May 2023 by the FM.

11.2. The Commission noted the transfer of funds between budget categories to address estimated over-spends.

11.3. The budget position for the 2022-23 year-end was **noted** along with the reasons for the overall underspend, the majority of which related to the BCW parliamentary review.

12. Budget 2023-24

12.1. Consideration was given to the 2023-24 budget dated 24 May 2023 by the FM.

12.2. It was **noted** that an additional budget column has been added to show additional income for conducting Community Reviews on the provisional basis the five such community reviews would be conducted during 2023-24.

13. Budget Report 2023-24

13.1. Consideration was given to the Budget Report 2023-24 dated 24 May 2023 by the FM.

13.2. It was **noted** that there was an overall underspend of £8k to the end of April 2023. There were overspends in two budget categories relating to expenditure for Community Reviews which will be claimed back from Local Authorities in future. It was **noted** that the cost of individual community reviews is being tracked.

14. Risk Management – Risk Register

14.1. Consideration was given to the Risk Management Report dated 24 May 2023 by the FM.

14.2. The current position on risk was **noted**. The Commission considered that a new risk should be added in respect of the proposed future work programme. It was agreed that the Finance Manager and CEO would draft the new risk for approval at the June meeting.

14.2.1. **Action:** Finance Manager and CEO to draft new risk.

15. Terms of Reference and Work Plan

15.1. Consideration was given to the Terms of Reference and Annual Workplan dated 24 May 2023 by the FM.

15.2. The Commission agreed the Terms of Reference and Workplan and noted that the section regarding appointment of the CE was likely to change in future.

16. Draft Governance Statement 2022-23

16.1. Consideration was given to the Draft Governance Statement dated 24 May 2023 by the FM.

16.2. It was noted that the section regarding the Chair's and Members' appraisals would need to be reworded to say that they would be taking place during July 2023 due to some of the new members not yet having completed a full year.

17. Board Effectiveness

17.1. Consideration was given to the Board Annual Effectiveness Evaluation Questionnaire dated 9 May 2023.

17.2. It was **agreed** that the process for board effectiveness evaluation should be reviewed and be added as an item to the agenda of the July meeting.

17.3. Action: TS to add LDBCW Board Evaluation Questionnaire to the agenda of July meeting.

18. Calendar of Events

18.1. The Commission **noted** the Calendar.

19. Any Other Relevant Business

19.1. Consideration was given to the Firewall Business Case and was **agreed**.

Date of Next Meeting: 21 June 2023