

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES



Comisiwn Ffiniau
Llywodraeth Leol
i Gymru



Local Government
Boundary Commission
for Wales

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES IN THE
COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

REPORT AND PROPOSALS

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REPORT AND PROPOSALS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 We the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) have completed the review of Community Boundaries in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent as directed by you in your Direction to us dated 31 March 2008 (Appendix 1).

2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

2.1 We propose that:

- the boundary between the Communities of Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina in the area of Bournville be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 3;
- the Community of Beaufort be dissolved and three new Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau be created following the boundaries shown in green on the map at Appendix 4;
- the boundary between the Communities of Beaufort and Brynmawr in the area of Twyncynghordy Road be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 7;
- the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo and Blaina be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 8;
- the Community of Ebbw Vale be dissolved and two new Communities of Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South be created following the boundaries shown in green on the map at Appendix 9; and
- the boundary between the Communities of Cwm and Ebbw Vale (Ebbw Vale South) be realigned to follow the boundary shown in green on the map at Appendix 11.

3. SCOPE AND OBJECT OF THE REVIEW

3.1 The purpose of the review is to consider whether, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, the Commission should propose changes to the present community boundaries. The review is being conducted under the provisions of Section 55 of the Local Government Act 1972 (the Act).

Procedure

3.2 Section 60 of the Act lays down procedural guidelines, which are to be followed in carrying out a review. In line with that guidance we wrote on 1 May 2008 to all of the Town and Community Councils in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent, the Members of Parliament for the local constituencies, the Assembly Member for the area and other interested parties to inform them of our intention to conduct the review and to request their preliminary views. We also publicised our intention to conduct the review in local newspapers circulating in the area and asked the

Councils to display public notices. Notification of the start of the review and the closing date for representations to be made (4 July 2008) was given on the web sites of both the Commission and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

4. DRAFT PROPOSALS

- 4.1 In response to our initial invitation, we received representations from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council, Brynmawr Town Council and Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council. In our Draft Proposals published on 5 March 2009, we considered the issues raised in the representations.
- 4.2 Suggested changes to community boundaries were made in the following areas: Abertillery and Llanhilleth, Nantyglo and Blaina, Beaufort, Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale.

Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina

- 4.3 In our Draft Proposals report we noted the suggestions from Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council, and Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council regarding a boundary change in the Bournville settlement area. We considered both suggestions and we noted that the major part of the settlement of Bournville is currently within the Community of Abertillery and it appeared to us to be more closely linked with that community than with the Community of Nantyglo and Blaina. We considered that it would be appropriate to realign the boundary to follow the course of the Ebbw Fach river to include the whole of the Bournville settlement within the Cwmtillery ward of the Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council area. We therefore proposed a change to the boundary between the two communities.

Beaufort and Brynmawr

- 4.4 We gave consideration to Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's request to amend the boundary between Beaufort and Brynmawr Communities in the Twyncynghordy Road area in order to address a boundary anomaly involving a newly built single residential property. Following a site visit we noted that it appeared that the only access to this property is via the Community of Beaufort due to a locked gate obstructing access along Twyncynghordy Road from Brynmawr. We considered therefore that it would be appropriate to realign the boundary to move the property from Brynmawr into Beaufort (map at Appendix 7).

Beaufort

- 4.5 We noted that that the Community of Beaufort, which is un-warded, had a long history of being divided into the three local government electoral divisions of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau. Since the Community of Beaufort does not have a Community Council it would not be possible, as part of any review of community electoral arrangements, to create Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau Community Wards to be co-terminous with the local government electoral divisions. A strict application of the rules governing principal area electoral reviews in future would leave the only choice for the area being to create a large multi-member electoral

division made up by the whole of the Community of Beaufort. In order to allow as much flexibility as possible during the next review of electoral arrangements for Blaenau Gwent we proposed that the current Community of Beaufort be separated into three new communities, namely the Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau (map at Appendix 4). We considered that, in the main, the existing electoral division boundaries would be appropriate as community boundaries. We did however propose some changes to the boundaries to ensure that they follow identifiable topographic features.

Brynmawr, and Nantyglo and Blaina

- 4.6 In our Draft Proposals report we noted the suggestions from Brynmawr Town Council and Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council regarding a boundary change in the Brynmawr South Ward of Brynmawr Community and the Nantyglo Ward of the Nantyglo and Blaina Community areas.
- 4.7 Brynmawr Town Council suggested a change to the boundary to incorporate a large number of residential properties within their community. We noted however, that the only access to these properties was through Nantyglo and Blaina and this appeared to us to indicate that the properties were appropriately included within the Nantyglo and Blaina Community.
- 4.8 Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council made a suggestion that would move a smaller area from Nantyglo and Blaina into Brynmawr and incorporate the Blaenant Industrial Estate, Brynmawr Primary School and Health Centre within the Nantyglo and Blaina Community. We noted however that this suggested realignment would remove Brynmawr Primary School and Health Centre from the Brynmawr area.
- 4.9 We considered that, because of developments that have taken place in this area since the existing community boundary was defined, the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo and Blaina is, in parts, no longer clearly defined. We were of the view that it is desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government to make changes to the community boundary to ensure that it follows identifiable topographic features. We considered both suggestions and proposed that it would be more appropriate to realign the boundary using a modified version of the suggestion made by Nantyglo and Blaina to realign the community boundary to the south of Brynmawr Primary School therefore keeping Brynmawr Primary School and Health Centre within the Brynmawr area (map at Appendix 8). This proposal would not involve the transfer of any electors.

Cwm and Ebbw Vale

- 4.10 We noted the suggestion by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to realign the boundary between the Communities of Cwm and Ebbw Vale as the current boundary clearly divides several properties within an established estate. After conducting a site visit to check the viability of the Council's suggested boundary change, we proposed that it would be appropriate to realign the boundary to follow the adjacent road around the Cwm Community to include those properties currently in Ebbw Vale within the Cwm Community boundary. We did note however that this would leave some properties on Hall Street, whose only access appears to be from

the Cwm community area, within Ebbw Vale. We welcomed further comments in respect of this area before we considered our Final Proposals.

Ebbw Vale

- 4.11 We noted that the Community of Ebbw Vale, which is un-warded, had a long history of being divided into the two local government electoral divisions, namely Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South. Since the Community of Ebbw Vale does not have a community council it would not be possible to create new community wards to be co-terminous with the local government electoral divisions. As with Beaufort (4.5), in order to allow as much flexibility as possible during the next review of electoral arrangements for Blaenau Gwent, we proposed that the current Community of Ebbw Vale be dissolved and two new communities be created from the existing Community of Ebbw Vale, namely the Communities of Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South (map at Appendix 9).

Tredegar

- 4.12 We noted the suggested ward boundary changes made by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council within the Community of Tredegar. We pointed out that this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we had received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the Tredegar Community, we therefore made no proposals for changes to the ward boundaries for the Community of Tredegar at the Draft Proposals stage. We did suggest however that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council considered a review of the community wards for Tredegar Community Council.
- 4.13 We made no proposals for changes to the remaining community areas within the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent.

5. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 In response to our Draft Proposals report we received representations from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council (with a 98-signature petition), Brynmawr Town Council, and Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council, Councillor Mark Edwards (Cwmtillery Electoral Division, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council). A summary of these representations can be found at Appendix 2.

6. ASSESSMENT

Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina

- 6.1 In our Draft Proposals report we proposed a change to the boundary between the Communities of Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina such that the whole of the settlement of Bournville lies within the Community of Abertillery. In response to our Draft Proposals report we received objections to the proposal from Nantyglo and

Blaina Town Council. They consider that Bournville is nearer to Blaina than anywhere else and there are historic links between the two settlements. We received agreement to our Draft Proposal from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council (supported by a petition from Bournville residents), Councillor Edwards who represents the Cwmtillery electoral division (which covers the Cwmtillery ward of the Community of Abertillery and Llanhilleth Council) and the Bournville Residents and Tenants Association.

- 6.2 We have considered all of the representations and remain of the view that the whole of the settlement of Bournville should be included within a single community area. We note that, despite disagreement with regards to the percentages, all parties are in agreement that the majority of Bournville residents are currently within the Community of Abertillery. We have confirmed with Blaina Gwent Community Council that the total number of electors in the Bournville settlement is 157 with 98 electors within Abertillery and 59 within Nantyglo and Blaina. We have also noted the public support for our Draft Proposal as evidenced by the petition and the representation from the Residents and Tenants Association. We therefore remain of the view that the whole of the settlement of Bournville should be included within the Community of Abertillery.
- 6.3 We have noted the suggested minor amendment to the boundary we proposed within our Draft Proposals report to include within the area of Bournville the former Glanyrafon School Yard an area which was not clearly defined on the Ordnance Survey map. Following a site visit to the area it has been determined that there is a clear distinction between the former school yard and the adjoining Waste Transfer Depot. We consider that it would be appropriate to modify our proposed boundary so as to include the former school yard within the Community of Abertillery. We are of the view that the proposed change is desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore propose a change to the boundary between the Communities of Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina as shown on the map at Appendix 3.

Beaufort

- 6.4 In our Draft Proposals report we proposed to separate the current Community of Beaufort into three new communities, namely the Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau based on the current Electoral Divisions of the same name but with some minor boundary changes. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council wrote in support of the proposal and agreed to some of the boundary changes but did not agree to the boundary change to transfer small part of Beaufort Rise, Riverside and Lower Square from Beaufort to Badminton. We have given further consideration to this proposal and are now of the view that the boundary in this area should remain the same as the current Electoral Division boundary. We are of the view that the separation of the current Community of Beaufort into the Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau is desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore propose the formation of the Communities of **Badminton**, **Beaufort** and **Rassau** with boundaries as shown on the map at Appendix 4 (with the addition of the minor change to the Badminton boundary as considered at 6.5 below). A detailed map of the boundary between Badminton and Rassau is at Appendix 5 and a detailed map of the boundary between Badminton and Beaufort is at Appendix 6.

Beaufort and Brynmawr

- 6.5 In our Draft Proposals report we proposed a change to the boundary between the Communities of Beaufort and Brynmawr because of access issues in respect of a single residential property. The only representation we received in respect of this proposal was the letter in support from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. We remain of the view that the proposed change is desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore confirm our proposal for a change to the boundary between the Community of Beaufort (the new Community of Beaufort as defined at 6.4 above) and the Community of Brynmawr as shown on the map at Appendix 7.

Brynmawr, and Nantyglo and Blaina

- 6.6 In our Draft Proposals report we proposed a change to the boundary between the Brynmawr South Ward of Brynmawr Community and the Nantyglo Ward of the Nantyglo and Blaina Community. We have noted Brynmawr Town Council's objections to this proposal and their support for their original proposal that would see the transfer of the Lakeside housing development into Brynmawr. We have also noted the support for our Draft Proposal from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council.
- 6.7 In our Draft Proposals report we considered that as the only access to the Lakeside housing development was through Nantyglo and Blaina, this indicated to us that the properties were appropriately included within the Nantyglo and Blaina Community. Having considered the representations we remain of the view that the existing boundary in this area is appropriate in terms of effective and convenient local government and therefore make no proposals for change.
- 6.8 Our Draft Proposal considered the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo and Blaina to the East of the Lakeside area where we were of the view that the boundary in this area was no longer clearly defined. We proposed a boundary that we considered to be appropriate in terms of being clearly defined and including areas together that are homogenous. Having considered the representations we have received in respect of this proposal we remain of the view that the change proposed would be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore propose the change to the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo and Blaina as shown on the map at Appendix 8. This proposal would not involve the transfer of any electors.

Ebbw Vale

- 6.9 At Draft Proposals stage we proposed that the current Community of Ebbw Vale be dissolved and two new communities, the Communities of Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South be created to be based on the existing Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South electoral divisions with two minor boundary amendments. We have noted that in their representation Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council indicated their support of our proposal. Having considered this, the only representation we received in respect of this proposal, we remain of the view that the change we proposed would be of benefit in terms of effective and convenient local government. We therefore propose the formation of the Communities of

Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South with boundaries as shown on the map at Appendix 9 (with the addition of the minor change to the Ebbw Vale South boundary as considered at 6.10 below). A detailed map showing the amendments to the existing electoral division boundary is at Appendix 10.

Cwm and Ebbw Vale

- 6.10 In our Draft Proposals report we considered a change to the boundary between the Communities of Cwm and Ebbw Vale (shown on the map at Appendix 8). We did express concerns however that the proposal would exclude properties on Hall Street whose only access is from the Cwm community area. In response, in their representation, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council supported the change but suggested we modify the proposal so as to include Hall Street in Cwm. We received no other representations in respect of this proposal. We have made a further site visit to the area and have considered an appropriate amendment to the boundary change we proposed in our Draft Proposals report so as to include Hall Street within the Community of Cwm. The amended boundary utilises footpaths in the area including the footpath that follows the line of the dismantled tramway until it meets the existing community boundary. We are of the view that the change to the boundary between the Communities of Cwm and Ebbw Vale as now amended would be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. We therefore propose the change to the boundary between the Communities of Cwm and Ebbw Vale (Ebbw Vale South as proposed at 6.9 above) as shown on the map at Appendix 11.

Tredegar and Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Ward Boundaries

- 6.11 We note the suggested community ward boundary changes made by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council in their representation. Three of the changes they mention concern the boundaries of the Tredegar Community wards (Georgetown, Sirhowy and Central and West). As we pointed out in our Draft Proposals report this review is being carried out under Section 55 of the Act which allows us to make proposals for the electoral arrangements of a community that are consequential on a change to the community boundary. As we had received no suggestions for a change to the boundary of the Tredegar Community, we therefore make no proposals for changes to the ward boundaries for the Community of Tredegar. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council also suggested a change to the boundary between the Abertillery and Cwmtillery wards of the grouped Community of Abertillery and Llanhilleth. Although we are proposing a change to the boundary between the Communities of Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina that involves the Cwmtillery ward of the grouped Community of Abertillery and Llanhilleth this is in an area that is well away from the proposed change (considered at 6.1-6.3 above). We do not therefore consider that the change suggested to the Cwmtillery and Abertillery Community Ward boundaries can be considered as being consequential to the change we are proposing to the Community boundary between Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina. As we stated in our Draft Proposals report (and at 8.3 below), we do not consider that the small increase in the number of electors in the Cwmtillery Community ward requires a consequential change to the electoral arrangements of the Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council.

- 6.12 The changes suggested to the Tredegar and Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Ward Boundaries need to be considered as part of a review of Community electoral arrangements which may be carried out by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council under Section 57(4) of the Act. We suggest therefore that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council consider a review of the electoral arrangements of Tredegar Town Council and Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council. As we are due to undertake a review of the electoral arrangements of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council by 30 June 2011 we would urge the County Borough Council to review their community electoral arrangements as a matter of urgency. If such a review is not completed and an Order made by the time we start our review then we will be obliged to use the community wards as they then stand when considering the pattern of electoral divisions.
- 6.13 We make no proposals for changes to the remaining community areas within the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent.

7. PROPOSALS

- 7.1 Having considered all of the evidence available to us we propose that the boundaries of the Communities of Abertillery, Beaufort, Brynmawr, Cwm, Ebbw Vale and Nantyglo and Blaina, should be realigned in the area under review to follow the boundaries shown in green on the maps at Appendices 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 11.
- 7.2 Detailed maps to a larger scale showing the proposed new boundaries can be inspected at the offices of the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and at the office of the Commission in Cardiff.

8. CONSEQUENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 In considering the various changes to the community boundaries it was also necessary for us to take account of the consequential effects on the electoral arrangements for community councils and the principal authority, which would result from these changes. This section of our report details our proposals for consequential changes to the electoral arrangements. The electoral statistics used in this report were provided by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Community Council Electoral Arrangements

- 8.2 The Community Council of Abertillery and Llanhilleth is formed by a grouping of the Communities of Abertillery and Llanhilleth and is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Abertillery, Cwmtillery, Six Bells, Aberbeeg and Llanhilleth. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C*
Abertillery	Abertillery	3,381	5	676
	Cwmtillery	3,637	5	727
	Six Bells	1,899	3	633
Llanhilleth	Aberbeeg	1,891	3	630
	Llanhilleth	1,779	3	593
		12,587	19	662

* Electors per Councillor

- 8.3 Under our proposals for the boundary between the Community of Abertillery and the Community of Nantyglo and Blaina, the number of electors in the Cwmtillery ward will increase by 59 to 3,696. The following table shows the resultant number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C
Abertillery	Abertillery	3,381	5	676
	Cwmtillery	3,696	5	739
	Six Bells	1,899	3	633
Llanhilleth	Aberbeeg	1,891	3	630
	Llanhilleth	1,779	3	593
		12,646	19	666

- 8.4 We are of the view that the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each Community Council ward. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements of the Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council.

- 8.5 The Community of Nantyglo and Blaina is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Blaina and Nantyglo. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C
Nantyglo and Blaina	Blaina	3,595	8	449
	Nantyglo	3,478	8	435
		7,073	16	442

- 8.6 Under our proposals for the boundary between the Community of Abertillery and the Community of Nantyglo and Blaina, the number of electors in the Blaina ward will decrease by 59 to 3,536. The proposal for the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo and Blaina will have no effect on the number of electors. The following table shows the resultant number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C
Nantyglo and Blaina	Blaina	3,536	8	442
	Nantyglo	3,478	8	435
		7,014	16	438

8.7 We are of the view that the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each Community Council ward. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements of the Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council.

8.8 The Community of Beaufort, which does not currently have a Community Council, has 8,008 electors. Under our proposals for a change to the boundary between Beaufort and Brynmawr the number of electors in Beaufort will increase by 2. Under our proposals for the existing Community of Beaufort, three new Communities will be created: Badminton with 2,561 electors, Beaufort with 2,942 electors and Rassau with 2,505 electors. As there are no proposals for the three new community areas to have community councils there are no consequential proposals to be made with regard to their electoral arrangements.

8.9 The Community of Brynmawr is currently divided, for Community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Brynmawr North and Brynmawr South. The following table shows the number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C
Brynmawr	Brynmawr North	2,066	8	258
	Brynmawr South	2,169	8	271
		4,235	16	265

8.10 Under our proposals for the boundary between the Community of Brynmawr and Beaufort the number of electors in Brynmawr North ward will decrease by 2 to 2,064. The proposal for the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Nantyglo and Blaina will have no effect on the number of electors. The following table shows the resultant number of electors and councillors for each ward.

Community	Ward	Electors	Councillors	E/C
Brynmawr	Brynmawr North	2,064	8	258
	Brynmawr South	2,169	8	271
		4,233	16	265

8.11 We are of the view that the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each Community Council ward. We therefore make no proposals for changes to the electoral arrangements of the Brynmawr Town Council.

8.12 The Community of Cwm does not currently have a Community Council but currently has 3,343 electors. Under our proposals the number of electors in Cwm will increase by 88 to 3,431. As the community area does not have a community council there are no consequential proposals to be made with regard to the electoral arrangements.

8.13 The Community of Ebbw Vale, which does not currently have a Community Council, has 6,423 electors. Under our proposals two new communities will be created: Ebbw Vale North with 3,486 electors and Ebbw Vale South with 2,937

electors. As there are no proposals for the two new community areas to have community councils there are no consequential proposals to be made with regard to their electoral arrangements.

County Borough Council Electoral Arrangements

- 8.14 The Cwmtillery electoral division consists of the Cwmtillery ward of Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council and currently has 3,637 electors represented by 3 Councillors. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Abertillery and Nantyglo and Blaina would mean the number of electors in the Cwmtillery electoral division would increase by 59 to 3,696.
- 8.15 The Badminton electoral division currently consists of that part of the Community of Beaufort specified in relation to the district ward of Badminton in column 2 of the schedule to the Blaenau Gwent (Electoral Arrangements) order 1986 and currently has 2,551 electors represented by 2 Councillors. As a result of the proposal to split the Community of Beaufort into three new Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau, the Badminton electoral division will consist of the community of Badminton which because of the proposed minor change to the boundary between Badminton and Rassau would mean the number of electors in the Badminton electoral division would be 2,561 represented by 2 Councillors..
- 8.16 The Beaufort electoral division currently consists of that part of the Community of Beaufort specified in relation to the district ward of Badminton in column 2 of the schedule to the Blaenau Gwent (Electoral Arrangements) order 1986 and currently has 2,973 electors represented by 2 Councillors. As a result of the proposal to split the Community of Beaufort into three new Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau, the Beaufort electoral division will consist of the community of Beaufort. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr and Beaufort would mean the number of electors in the Beaufort electoral division would increase by 2 to 2,942.
- 8.17 The Rassau electoral division currently consists of that part of the Community of Beaufort not contained in the Badminton and Beaufort wards and currently has 2,484 electors represented by 2 Councillors. As a result of the proposal to split the Community of Beaufort into three new Communities of Badminton, Beaufort and Rassau, the Rassau electoral division will consist of the community of Rassau which because of the proposed minor change to the boundary between Badminton and Rassau would mean the number of electors in the Rassau electoral division would be 2,505 represented by 2 Councillors.
- 8.18 The Nantyglo electoral division consists of the Community of Nantyglo and Blaina and currently has 3,478 electors represented by 3 Councillors. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Brynmawr, and Nantyglo and Blaina would have no effect on the number of electors in the Nantyglo electoral division
- 8.19 The Cwm electoral division consists of the Community of Cwm and currently has 3,343 electors represented by 2 Councillors. The proposed change to the boundary between the Communities of Ebbw Vale and Cwm would mean that the number of electors in the Cwm electoral division would increase by 88 to 3,431.

- 8.20 The Ebbw Vale North electoral division currently consists of that part of the Community of Ebbw Vale specified in relation to the existing district ward of Ebbw Vale North in column 2 of the Schedule to the Blaenau Gwent (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1986 and currently has 3,481 electors represented by 3 Councillors. As a result of the proposal to split the Community of Ebbw Vale into two new Communities of Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South the Ebbw Vale North electoral division will consist of the community of Ebbw Vale North which because of the proposed minor change to the boundary between Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South would mean the number of electors in the Ebbw Vale North electoral division would be 3,486 represented by 3 Councillors.
- 8.21 The Ebbw Vale South electoral division currently consists of that part of the Community of Ebbw Vale not contained in the Ebbw Vale North ward and currently has 2,942 electors represented by 2 Councillors. As a result of the proposal to split the Community of Ebbw Vale into two new Communities of Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South the Ebbw Vale South electoral division will consist of the community of Ebbw Vale South which because of the proposed minor change to the boundary between Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South would mean the number of electors in the Ebbw Vale South electoral division would be 2,937 represented by 2 Councillors.
- 8.22 We are of the view that for all of the above electoral divisions the changes to the number of electors as a consequence of the proposed boundary changes are not so significant as, at this time, to require either an increase or a decrease in the number of councillors representing each electoral division. We have been directed to complete a review of the electoral arrangements for all of the principal councils in Wales by 30 June 2011. We will therefore be shortly looking in detail at the electoral arrangements for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and will take into account any changes that arise from these proposed changes to community boundaries.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 We wish to express our gratitude to Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and the Community Councils for their assistance and to all persons and bodies who made representations to us.

10. THE NEXT STEPS

- 10.1 Having completed our consideration of the review of Community Boundaries in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent and submitted our recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Act.
- 10.2 It now falls to the Welsh Assembly Government, if it thinks fit, to give effect to these proposals either as submitted by the Commission or with modifications, and if the Welsh Assembly Government decides to give effect to these proposals with modifications, it may direct the Commission to conduct a further review.

10.3 Any further representations concerning the matters in the report should be addressed to the Welsh Assembly Government. They should be made as soon as possible, and in any event not later than six weeks from the date that the Commission's recommendations are submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government. Representations should be addressed to:

Democracy Team
Local Government Policy Division
Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

MR P J WOOD (Chairman)

REV. HYWEL MEREDYDD DAVIES BD (Deputy Chairman)

Mr D J BADER (Member)

E H LEWIS BSc. DPM FRSA FCIPD (Secretary)

September 2009

THE WELSH MINISTERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 PART IV

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR
WALES (REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES)(COUNTY
BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT) DIRECTION 2008**

The Welsh Ministers give the following Direction to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales in exercise of the powers conferred upon the Secretary of State by section 56 of the Local Government Act 1972⁽¹⁾ which powers are now exercisable by the Welsh Ministers⁽²⁾:

1. In this Direction:

"the Act" ("y Ddeddf") means the Local Government Act 1972;

"the Commission" ("y Comisiwn") means the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales.

2. Pursuant to section 56(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers direct the Commission to conduct a review of the community boundaries in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent for the purpose of considering whether or not to make such proposals in relation to the area reviewed as are authorised by section 54 of the Act and what proposals, if any, to make; and the Commission must, if they think fit, formulate such proposals accordingly.

Dr Brian Gibbons



Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Date 31 (3) 08

⁽¹⁾ 1972 c.70; section 56 was amended by the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994.

⁽²⁾ See the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/672) which transferred the functions of the Secretary of State to the National Assembly for Wales. The functions of the Assembly were subsequently transferred to the Welsh Ministers by schedule 11 to the Government of Wales Act 2006 (2006 c.38).

Summary of Representations Received in Response to the Draft Proposals

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council wrote to confirm that it had considered the draft proposals and made the following observations:

- Beaufort, Rassau and Badminton – Agree with the minor boundary changes and that they should be communities in their own right.
- Beaufort / Brynmawr – Agree the transfer of Amberleigh House from Brynmawr to Beaufort.
- Beaufort/ Badminton – Do not agree to the boundary changes in relation to transfer small part of Beaufort Rise, Riverside and Lower Square from Beaufort and Badminton and those areas remain in Beaufort. The remaining boundary changes are accepted. It is proposed that the present boundary for the area be retained.
- Cwm and Ebbw Vale South – Agree the A4046 road as the boundary and include hall Street in the Cwm community.
- Ebbw Vale community – Agree that the Ebbw Vale community be dissolved and that two new communities of Ebbw Vale North and South are created.
- Tredegar Central and West and Sirhowy – Agree the anomaly which transfers a number of properties at Brynmeadow Close / Lakeside from Central and West ward to the Sirhowy ward.
- Abertillery/Cwmtillery – That Abertillery Park and one farm be transferred from the Cwmtillery ward to the Abertillery ward.
- Brynmawr and Nantyglo – Agree the proposal to amend the boundary between Brynmawr and Nantyglo communities, transferring Blaenant Industrial Estate to Nantyglo and the Bus Depot to Brynmawr.
- Bournville – Agree that inclusion of Griffin Terrace, Glanyrafon Terrace and the Tylers Arms in the same area, in addition the whole of that area should be in the Cwmtillery ward.
- Tredegar, Vale Terrace and Pochin Terrace – Council felt that as there were differing views in relation to this area that the inhabitants be consulted as to which ward they would prefer to be situated.
- It was also agreed that there was an anomaly to the boundary between Sirhowy ward and Georgetown ward in respect of housing at Hartford Gardens, Tredegar. The boundary should be amended to reflect this accordingly. 18 properties and 33 electors would be involved.

Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council advised that the Community Council are in accord with the recommendation to transfer the remaining 20% of Bournville (currently within Nantyglo and Blaina) into Cwmtillery ward. The village would then be united into one electoral area in accordance with residents' wishes. Representatives of Bournville Tenants and Residents Association attend most community meetings in Cwmtillery and consider themselves to be part of Cwmtillery ward. At a recent meeting it was the unanimous wish of local residents to become part of Cwmtillery Ward within the Community of Abertillery and Llanhilleth. There was an additional request for the school yard of former Glanyrafon School to be included in the boundary realignment. This is an important point as the site is locally considered part of Glanyrafon Terrace, with access.

The Community Council also sent in a petition with 98 signatures from residents of Bournville which stated:

We the undersigned – being residents of the Village of Bournville – are of the very firm opinion that we should be one community, not divided between Abertillery and Blaina – as is the case at present.

It is our wish to be part of Abertillery and in the Electoral Ward of Cwmtillery.

Brynmawr Town Council stated that it is the Council's repeated contention that a more sensible path for the boundary line between Nantyglo & Brynmawr would be for it to run from the Blaina Road A467 bypass roundabout in a westerly direction along the Waun Pond Embankment Road i.e. Pond Road towards Winchestown. At the junction with Golf Road the line should proceed right (in a roughly north westerly direction) until it reaches the unadopted lane which links it with the west side pathway skirting the "Machine Pond" which eventually links with the Beaufort Community Boundary. The areas to the north and east of this proposed new path of the boundary would then form part of the community of Brynmawr. This proposal also accords with the Commission's own view "that it is desirable... to make changes to the community boundary to ensure that it follows identifiable topographic features' (Para 4.8 of the Draft Proposals Report).

The Council would like to reiterate that this proposal has geographic homogeneity as well as historic connotations. The "Lake/Pond" is called the Waun Pond. This links with the far more historic name for Brynmawr of Waun Helygen and the local expression in years past of people from Nantyglo, that they were "going up the Waun" i.e. to Brynmawr. Furthermore, the occupiers of the Lakeside Commercial Development all insist that their businesses are in Brynmawr. This is also the claim of the residents of the Lakeside Housing Development that they, too, live in Brynmawr.

They go on to say that the submission by Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council contains some specious argument. It is perfectly fortuitous that the Lakeside Housing Development fell within Nantyglo. Talk of "Community Tax" currently paid to Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council being transferred to the more prosperous Town of Brynmawr is total nonsense since any Community Tax is paid to the County Borough Council of Blaenau Gwent not to individual Town/Community Councils. It is patently illogical that the present boundary line between Brynmawr and Nantyglo should approach within 50 yards of Brynmawr's Main Square. Proposals from WAG and its former Agency, the WDA, envisage the demolition of the present NMC Factory and relocation of the Stagecoach Depot and the creation of an open pedestrian link between the Commercial Development and Brynmawr Town Centre.

The Council is also mystified by the transfer of The Blaenant Industrial Estate to Nantyglo & Blaina when the site has been in Brynmawr since its inception in the 70 / 80's. The Council wishes to retain the Estate as part of Brynmawr. It stands by its original boundary change proposals.

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council Members were quite surprised at the proposal by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to seek a referendum to decide the location of the Blaina / Cwmtillery Community Boundary. The town council is not aware of this boundary ever being a cause of controversy or dispute. Members were further surprised

at, and would challenge the claim by Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council that 80% of the village is in Cwmtillery.

- A head count of dwellings indicate 31 to be in Blaina and 54 in Cwmtillery, whereas.
- A headcount of electors gives a figure of 59 resident within Blaina and 98 in Cwmtillery.

Whilst recognising the larger number in both illustrations to be with Cwmtillery, the claimed figure of 80% is not justifiable. Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council considers that Bournville is "where it is" i.e. nearer to Blaina than it is to anywhere else. The town council cordially requests the Boundary Commission to reconsider the draft proposal in respect of

- Ribbon Development along the old A467 road.
- A Green Belt area located to the south of Bournville.

The green belt stretches some 300m to the Arreal View Housing Estate and provides the only natural boundary between the communities of Blaina and Cwmtillery.

Enclosed was a copy of the locality which indicated the existing community boundary and the suggested changes, coloured in red, of Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council i.e. that the proposed boundary leaves the Ebbw Fach river to join the slip road off A467 towards Bournville. The proposed boundary then continues in an easterly direction until it joins footpath No 33 1 /64 at that point the proposed boundary can turn north to re-join the existing ward boundary.

The above proposal, if adopted, will locate the whole Bournville within one mile of the High Street of Blaina and within the town council area of Nantyglo and Blaina with whom it has a longstanding historic link, indeed three former members of the town council are still resident of Bournville.

In addition the Council had the following comments to make regarding the Brynmawr / Nantyglo proposal:

Members warmly welcomed the draft proposal for the Nantyglo / Brynmawr Community Boundary. Members expressed the viewpoint that the draft proposal is representative of existing electorate and it provides clarity of purpose which is in accord with the topography of the area.

Members noted the reference by Brynmawr Town Council of 'going up the Waun' to illustrate that residents of Nantyglo used that expression when travelling to Brynmawr. To describe 'going up the Waun' as being a reference to Brynmawr is incorrect. The correct reference being that when children went to play or for a family day out, it was common to travel from the congested industrial area of Nantyglo to the un-spoiled area of land that surrounded the Waun pond.

The draft Community Boundary Proposal is representative of the pre-1974 County Boundary between Monmouthshire and Brecknockshire They enclosed a copy-map of the location, pre-1974, as obtained from the Gwent County Records Office which clearly shows the location of the Waun pond as being in Nantyglo Monmouthshire.

Cllr Mark Edwards of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council wrote with an observation regarding the proposed boundary change to Bournville. He stated that the green line marking the proposed new boundary at Glanyrafon Terrace was incorrect as there is no

identification of the old school site. It seems to have been 'lost' and the refuse yard is now encroaching onto the space. He asked the Commission to review and amend to reflect the actual land as it currently stands.

Bournville Residents and Tenants Association had discussed the draft proposals for Bournville the only concern raised was that the 'Old Glanyrafon School Yard' (incorrectly marked refuse yard on the Commission's plan) is not included in the realignment of the boundary. Residents have stipulated that they would like the area which is continuous with Glanyrafon Terrace to be included in the Cwmtillery ward.