

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD ON
15th OCTOBER 2008 AT CADW ROOM, ST. GEORGE'S HOTEL, LLANDUDNO**

Commissioners

Mrs. S G Smith (Chair)
Mr P J Wood (Deputy Chair)
Rev H M Davies

Secretariat

Mr. E H Lewis (Secretary) [Part]
Mr. S R Halsall
Mr. D Carr
Mr. R Handscomb
Mrs. Abbie Prescott-Bird

1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

1.1 There were no new interests declared.

2. MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON 9th SEPTEMBER 2008

2.1 These were agreed subject to minor changes.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Members' Interests

3.1 It was reported that progress in determining best practice in other organisations was ongoing and would be presented to a future meeting.

Sustainable Procurement

3.2 The Secretariat had commenced participation in the Green Dragon environmental scheme and were working on achieving the scheme's level 2 status. This was noted.

Wrexham Community Review

3.3 The Report and Proposals for the further Wrexham Community Review had been published within the deadline set by the Welsh Assembly's Directions. This was noted.

Community Council Election Results

3.4 It was reported that the some Anglesey community councils had been omitted from the table in error. These had now been included and the correct list had been forwarded to the Sponsor Division.

Conwy Community Council

3.5 A letter had been sent to Conwy County Borough Council offering to extend the representations deadline to the end of the first week of November rather than the end of November as originally requested by the Council. No response from the Council had been received to date.

Meeting with the Assembly Local Government Minister

- 3.6 It was noted that the Commission had not received any feedback from the Sponsor Division in respect of Members' meeting with the Local Government Minister. It was considered that in view of the important issues being raised at these meetings there should be a note made of the discussion which should then be reported to the next Commission meeting. **It was agreed** that this issue would be raised with the Sponsor Division.

4. CARDIFF COMMUNITY REVIEW – COUNCIL'S PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It was reported that Cardiff Council had completed their community review and had issued their report to the Commission. The Secretariat had undertaken a site visit to the areas covered by the Council's report. The Council's report had made the following recommendations:

- A change to the boundary between the communities of Old St. Mellons and Trowbridge;
- Changes to the names of the existing Roath and Plasnewydd Communities.

The report had also considered and rejected proposals for changes to the boundaries of the Communities of Rhiwbina, Whitchurch, Heath, Lisvane and Llanishen.

- 4.2 In respect of the Council's proposed change to the boundary between the communities of Old St. Mellons and Trowbridge it was reported that the site visit had identified several places where the proposed boundary could be improved slightly in terms of access. Additionally, at the southernmost part of the boundary the Council had proposed that Canopus Close be transferred from Old St. Mellons into Trowbridge although the Secretariat considered that it would be preferable if Canopus Close were transferred from Old St. Mellons into the Community of Rumney since the only access to the properties in Canopus Close was through Rumney. **It was agreed** that the Commission would adopt the Secretariat's amendments to the Council's proposed boundary change.
- 4.3 Cardiff Council had rejected a suggestion that the boundary between the Communities of Whitchurch and Rhiwbina be realigned to transfer a row of houses at Ash Grove from the Community of Rhiwbina into the Community of Whitchurch. It had been established during the site visit that the suggested boundary change excluded a large number of similar properties in Caedelyn Road and the adjoining area. It was considered that extending the boundary to include a larger area of Rhiwbina within Whitchurch than had been originally suggested would not be desirable. **It was agreed** that the Commission would accept the Council's decision to reject the suggested change.
- 4.4 Cardiff Council had rejected a suggestion that the boundary between the Communities of Lisvane and Llanishen be realigned to include Woodside Court and Mill Road within Lisvane. It had been established during the site visit that the suggested boundary offered no significant improvement on the existing boundary. **It was agreed** that the Commission would accept the Council's decision to reject the suggested change.

4.5 Cardiff Council had rejected a suggestion that the boundary between the Communities of Heath and Rhiwbina be realigned to include a large area of properties from Heath into Rhiwbina. It had been established during the site visit that the suggested boundary divided properties of similar age and character and did not appear to be a natural one. **It was agreed** that the Commission would accept the Council's decision to reject the suggested change.

4.6 It was considered that since some of the proposals included changes which were not consulted on as part of the Council's original review, a further limited consultation process would be necessary. **It was agreed** that the Secretariat would contact Cardiff Council to agree this additional consultation process.

5. THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COMMUNITY REVIEW – DRAFT PROPOSALS

Penarth / Sully

5.1 The Secretariat had undertaken a site visit to look at the anomaly in the boundary between the Communities of Penarth and Sully and to ascertain whether the proposed realignment of the boundary was viable. The realignment of the boundary to run along the back of several properties and bring them wholly within Penarth Community was found to be suitable. **It was agreed** that this proposal would be included in the Draft Proposals Report.

Pendoylan / Welsh St. Donats

5.2 It was reported that Pendoylan Community Council had provided the Secretariat with a map showing the line of their suggested change to the boundary between their Community and Welsh St. Donats to transfer Warren Farm into their Community. The site visit had confirmed that the suggested boundary was clearly defined and that access to Warren Farm was through Pendoylan. However, the Commission were not of the view that this minor change to the boundary would be desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government. **It was agreed** further views on this suggested change to the boundary would be sought as part of the Draft Proposals.

Wick / St. Brides Major

5.3 Wick Community Council had provided the Secretariat with a map showing the line of their suggested changes to the boundary of their Community. These were:

- i. Realigning the boundary to include within Wick two footpaths leading from Heol Las to the cliff tops;
- ii. Realigning the boundary to include Sealand Farm within Wick; and
- iii. Realigning the boundary to include East and West Monkton Farms within Wick.

5.4 The Commission noted that the two footpaths mentioned at point i. were already either within or, in part, formed the boundary of the Community of Wick and therefore no realignment of the boundary was necessary. In respect of Sealand Farm it was considered that although access to the Farm was through Wick the

existing boundary appeared to be clearly defined and preferable particularly as the extent of the surrounding land belonging to the Farm was not known. In respect of East and West Monkton Farms it was also considered that as the extent of the surrounding land belonging to the Farm had not been identified, the existing boundary was to be preferred. **It was agreed** to proceed with the Draft Proposals Report.

6. **BLAENAU GWENT COMMUNITY REVIEW – SITE VISIT AND DRAFT PROPOSALS**

Brynmawr / Nantyglo and Blaina

- 6.1 It was reported that it had been established during the site visit that the Commission's suggested amendment to the realignment of the boundary proposed by Nantyglo and Blaina Community Council was preferable to the Council's suggested boundary as it retained Brynmawr Clinic and Primary School within the Community of Brynmawr. It had also been ascertained that the western part of the proposed boundary made sense as it divided an old workshop building from newer retail outlets to the south and would also transfer into the Community of Brynmawr a bus depot currently in Nantyglo and Blaina with access only through Brynmawr. **It was agreed** that this proposed boundary would be included in the Draft Proposals Report.

Cwm / Ebbw Vale

- 6.2 The proposed boundary had been viewed by the Secretariat and was well defined. It did not address the problem of several buildings in the vicinity in Ebbw Vale which only had access through Cwm. It had been established during the site visit that there was no clear line behind these buildings along which the boundary could be realigned. **It was agreed** that it would not be possible to include the adjacent buildings in the proposed realignment of the boundary and that the Commission would adopt the proposed boundary which followed the road to the north of the existing boundary

Ebbw Vale North / Ebbw Vale South

- 6.3 The site visit had established that the boundary between the Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South electoral divisions would make a suitable community boundary subject to two realignments in the vicinity of a row of shops and a disused steelworks. These realignments had been suggested to take account of access to the respective sites in both instances. **It was agreed** that the Commission would adopt the boundary including the suggested realignments as the boundary between the proposed Communities of Ebbw Vale North and Ebbw Vale South.

Tredegar

- 6.4 It was reported that the site visit had established that the suggested realignment of the boundary between the Sirhowy Ward and the Central and West Ward of the Community of Tredegar was well defined. **It was agreed** that the Commission would suggest in their Draft Proposals that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council give consideration to realigning the ward boundary as suggested.

Beaufort / Brynmawr

- 6.5 It was reported that the site visit had established that the suggested realignment of the boundary between the Communities of Beaufort and Brynmawr was clearly defined and preferable to the existing boundary as the only access to the property at the end of Twyncynghordy Road was through the Community of Beaufort. **It was agreed** that the Commission would include this proposed realignment of the boundary in their Draft Proposals.

Beaufort / Rassau / Badminton

- 6.6 The Secretariat had inspected the boundary between the electoral divisions of Beaufort, Rassau and Badminton in the Community of Beaufort in order to ascertain whether they would make suitable community boundaries. Prior to the site visit several areas along the boundary had been identified as potentially anomalous and realignments had been suggested. The suggested realignments in these areas had been found to be clearly defined on the ground. **It was agreed** that the Commission would adopt the boundary including the suggested realignments as the boundary between the proposed Communities of Beaufort, Rassau and Badminton.

7. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- 7.1 The Secretary had drafted a Glossary of Terms as requested at a previous meeting. Members noted this document.

8. PLAIN ENGLISH PROPOSALS

- 8.1 It was reported that the Secretary had investigated the possibilities available to the Commission for establishing Plain English practices. Three options were available:

- Take account of the Plain English guide and implement it without any outside assistance;
- Subscribe to the Plain English Campaign corporate membership paying an annual fee for access to all services; or
- Purchase ad hoc services from Plain English as and when required.

- 8.2 It was considered that it may be beneficial to try to establish good practice from other sources such as the English and Journalism Departments of universities such as Cardiff University and also check whether there was any training available for staff and Members. Other AGSBs could be approached to establish whether they had plain English policies.

- 8.3 **It was agreed** that the Commission would take the following action:

- Send a short report (the recent Wrexham further community review Final Proposals report) to the Plain English Campaign to be benchmarked; and
- Investigate the possibility of obtaining advice from PR consultants.

9. REVIEW OF RISK REGISTER

- 9.1 The Commission noted the proposed changes to the Risk Register which had been suggested to reflect the current situation regarding Merlin transformation, Mapping software, appointment of Members and office security.
- 9.2 It was considered that the risk of the Commission's objective to complete the all Wales electoral review by 2012 (risk ref. 9.1 – corporate risk C) being impacted by the delayed issue of Directions by the Welsh Assembly Government was becoming serious. **It was agreed** that a much clearer idea of when the Welsh Assembly Government would be issuing the Directions would be acquired for the Commission's November Meeting.
- 9.3 If by the November meeting it seemed unlikely that the Welsh Assembly Government would be able to issue Directions to the Commission by the end of December then the rating for this risk would need to be increased to Likelihood – 4 / Impact – 4 which would place it in the red zone of the corporate risk matrix. It would then be necessary to make the Welsh Assembly aware that this risk had become serious and urgent. A plan would need to be drafted working backwards from the deadline date for the completion of the reviews in order to demonstrate how serious the situation had become. The plan would then be sent to the Minister explaining the situation and stating that unless Directions were received soon then the Commission would require additional resources in order to complete the review.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 A letter from Independents@Swansea requesting clarification on the Commissions' position on the Community of Townhill was tabled. **It was agreed** that a reply would be drafted and referred to the Commissions' legal advisor before being distributed to Members for their approval.
- 10.2 It was reported that Ian Thomas would be leaving the Secretariat to take up a position in the Welsh Assembly and that a recruitment exercise would be undertaken shortly to find a replacement. The Commission extended their best wishes to Mr Thomas.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 11.1 Dates for future meetings were as agreed as follows:

Wednesday 26th November at 10:45 a.m.