

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 15th JULY 2009 AT CARADOG HOUSE, CARDIFF.**

Commissioners

Mr P J Wood (Chairman)
Rev. H M Davies (Deputy Chairman)
Mr J Bader (Member)

Secretariat

Mr. E H Lewis (Secretary)
Mr. S Halsall
Mr. D Carr
Mrs L Brough
Mrs. A Prescott-Bird
Mr R Handscomb

1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 1.1 There were no new interests declared. The Chairman declared an interest in agenda item 7, Neath Port Talbot Electoral Review, as his wife was a Community Councillor for Crynant Community. **It was agreed** that it was unnecessary for the Chairman to withdraw from the discussion.

2. MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON 17th JUNE 2009

- 2.1 These were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Management Statement and Financial Memorandum

- 3.1 The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) was with the Commission's Sponsor Division being adapted to suit the Commission. It was expected that the final MSFM would be ready for signing soon.

Conferences

- 3.2 The Commission's stand at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Annual Conference had been a success. Members considered that it had been an excellent opportunity for raising the Commission's profile. The Chairman and Secretary had met with the Chief Executive and Leader of the WLGA and had a useful discussion which had given both sides a clearer understanding of each others views.

Video Conferencing

- 3.3 The Secretary would be meeting with the National Museum for Wales within the next few days to take this forward.

Electoral Reviews Guidance Booklet

- 3.4 The next print run of the Guidance Booklet would be in September which would allow for the inclusion of any points arising from Members' meeting with the Welsh

Assembly Local Government Minister as well as the correspondence already received from the Minister.

Annual Workshops

- 3.5 A facilitator had been identified and hired for the forthcoming workshops in the autumn.

Engaging with the Public

- 3.6 The Secretary would make inquiries about press statements with officers of the National Museum for Wales during his forthcoming meeting with them. **It was agreed** that a draft press statement would be prepared for the next Commission Meeting.

4. VALE OF GLAMORGAN COMMUNITY REVIEW – FINAL PROPOSALS REPORT

- 4.1 It was reported that the Commission's legal advisor had considered the draft of the Vale of Glamorgan Draft Proposals report and had suggested a change to the proposal. A change to the electoral arrangements in the Boverton ward of Llantwit Major was agreed by the Commission. **It was agreed** that the amendment be incorporated in to the Final proposals report which could be translated and published.

5. BLAENAU GWENT COMMUNITY REVIEW – FINAL PROPOSALS REPORT

- 5.1 It was reported that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council had suggested a change to the proposed boundary between Cwm and Ebbw Vale to incorporate Hall Street within Cwm. **It was agreed** that the Council's suggestion would be adopted. **It was agreed** that the Final proposals report could be translated and published.

6. NEWPORT ELECTORAL REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER SCHEMES

- 6.1 Members had asked for two further electoral schemes for Newport which had been prepared for the meeting. It was considered that Scheme 6 had merit, but would need some alteration to give better overall ratios for councillors to electors and parity in variance from the county average. The amended scheme 6 would mean a reduction in councillors from 50 to 45 and the reduction in Electoral divisions from 20 to 12. **It was agreed** that Scheme 6 would be amended as discussed for the Draft Proposals Report.

7. DENBIGHSHIRE ELECTORAL REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER SCHEMES

- 7.1 Members considered the two further electoral schemes for Denbighshire. It was considered that Scheme 4 had merit, but would need some changes taken from Scheme 5 to give better overall ratios for councillors to electors and parity in variance from the county average. The amended scheme 4 would mean a reduction in councillors from 47 to 40 and the reduction in Electoral divisions from 30 to 18. **It was agreed** that Scheme 4 amended as discussed would be adopted for the Draft Proposals Report.

8. NEATH PORT TALBOT ELECTORAL REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER SCHEMES

- 8.1 Members considered the two further electoral schemes for Neath Port Talbot. It was considered that Scheme 5 gave the best overall ratios for councillors to electors and parity in variance from the county average. Scheme 4 would mean a reduction in councillors from 64 to 58 and the reduction in Electoral divisions from 42 to 19. **It was agreed** that Scheme 5 would be adopted for the Draft Proposals Report.

9. FLINTSHIRE ELECTORAL REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF INITIAL REPRESENTATIONS AND SCHEMES

- 9.1 The Commission noted the initial representations received and draft schemes formulated by the Secretariat. **It was agreed** that the Secretariat would produce two more schemes in order to see whether it would be possible to further improve democratic parity and variance from the 1:1,750 ratio.

10. REVIEWS' PROGRESS

- 10.1 An outline of the situation was given to Members. It was expected that:
- Draft Proposals Reports for the Newport, Neath Port Talbot and Denbighshire electoral reviews would be presented to the August meeting and published in September;
 - Schemes for the Anglesey and Rhondda Cynon Taff electoral reviews would be presented to the August meeting;
 - Further schemes for the Flintshire electoral review would be presented to the August meeting;
 - The Merthyr Tydfil electoral review would begin on 16 September at the same time as the meeting with the Council;
 - The Cardiff electoral review start commence on 21 July at the same time as the meeting with the Council;
 - The Conwy electoral review had been brought forward on the timetable to 24 September;
 - The Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Vale of Glamorgan electoral reviews had been moved back on the timetable to allow time for the Welsh Assembly to make Orders for the recently completed community reviews;
 - The Pembrokeshire Community Review had still not been received from the Council although some mapping data had been received about this.

- 10.2 Final Proposals for the Review of Preserved Counties of Powys and Mid Glamorgan had been published. Final Proposals for the Caerphilly Community Review and Further Draft Proposals for the Swansea Community Review had been published.
- 10.3 **It was agreed** that the initial letters for the next tranche of reviews would be addressed to the council leaders in order to speed up the process.
- 10.4 It was reported that nothing had been received from Torfaen County Borough Council or Carmarthenshire County Council about the community reviews they were supposed to be undertaking. Both authorities had been contacted about this and replies were being awaited. **It was agreed** that depending on the responses received from Torfaen and Carmarthenshire the Secretariat would write to both authorities again informing them that the electoral reviews for their authorities would proceed using the existing communities and community wards if they had not submitted anything to the Commission in time.

11. WALES AUDIT OFFICE REPORT – IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

- 11.1 Members noted the position and progress made on the Strategic Plan which had been drafted and was ready for consultation at the planned workshops in the autumn. It was noted that further progress had been made in respect of communicating with stakeholders as the Commission had an information stand at the Welsh Local Government Association conference and another was planned for the One Voice Wales annual conference in October. In respect of performance measures the Commission had applied for Investors in People with interviews imminent.

12. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WALES – DRAFT CORPORATE STRATEGY

- 12.1 Members considered the draft corporate strategy. They noted that it included a set of strategic ambitions but needed priorities and milestones. **It was agreed** that the Secretary would draft a response to the Environment Agency providing Members' observations on the draft strategy.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13.1 Members' noted the draft Annual Report for 2008-09. **It was agreed** that electronic copies would be forwarded to Members for track-changed feedback by email.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.1 The dates of the next meeting were set at:

Tuesday 11th August 2009 at 10.45 am

Thursday 17th September 2009

Wednesday 7th / 8th October 2009 (following the Workshop)

Tuesday 24th November 2009 (following the Workshop)

Lgbc6m/2009

Wednesday 16th December 2009 (following the Workshop).