

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 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

1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 1.1 There were no new interests declared. The Chairman declared an interest in agenda item 5, Review Timetable, 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 AUGUST 2009

- 2.1 These were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Electoral Reviews

- 3.1 Dates had been confirmed for the Powys and Gwynedd Council presentations.
- 3.2 The Secretary was in the process of informing Councils who had not yet submitted community reviews to the Commission that it would now no longer be possible to consider any such reviews until after the completion of the Electoral Review.
- 3.3 Draft Proposals Reports for Newport, Neath Port Talbot and Denbighshire were now in the process of being translated ready for publication.
- 3.4 Work on the Draft Proposals report for Flintshire was still ongoing as there were a considerable number of representations to consider.
- 3.5 The Isle of Anglesey County Council had still not submitted complete forecast electorate figures to the Commission. **It was agreed** that the incomplete forecast figures supplied would be used to produce a formula for calculating provisional forecast figures and that the Draft Proposals report would include an explanation as to how the figures were arrived by.

Annual Report and Workshops

- 3.6 It was noted that the Deputy Chairman would be unable to attend the Merthyr Workshop due to other commitments. It was noted that the Member would only be

able to stay in Wrexham for the night of the 6th October prior to the Wrexham Workshop.

4. RHONDDA CYNON TAFF ELECTORAL REVIEW – CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER SCHEMES

4.1 The Commission considered the amended schemes for Rhondda Cynon Taff requested at the previous meeting. **It was agreed** to adopt scheme 1a with the additional proposal to amalgamate the existing Aberdare West / Llwydcoed and Aberdare East electoral divisions.

5. REVIEWS TIMETABLE

5.1 The current situation in respect of the reviews timetable was outlined:

- The Newport, Neath Port Talbot and Denbighshire Draft Proposals were due to be published at the end of September, however this was now likely to be early October due to the time taken for translation and printing three reports at the same time. The deadline for representations for these proposals would then be December 2009 which would leave three months for the formulation and publication of the Final Proposals in order to meet the deadline set by the Welsh Assembly's remit letter;
- Draft Proposals for Flintshire would be presented to the October meeting;
- Draft Proposals for Rhondda Cynon Taff would be drafted and forwarded to Members for approval electronically after any amendments arising from legal advice had been incorporated. **It was agreed** that the Secretariat would only consult with Members on any legal advice which appeared to them to be unusual;
- Schemes for Anglesey would be produced for the October meeting;
- The deadline for initial representations for the Cardiff review had been set as the 22nd October;
- The Merthyr Tydfil review had commenced on the 16th September with a deadline date for initial representations being set for 19th November;
- The Bridgend review was due to commence on 24th September after the presentation to the community councils;
- The Conwy review was due to commence on 28th September after the presentation to Conwy County Borough Council;
- The meeting with the Chief Executive of Powys County Borough Council was due to be held on 25th September and the presentation to the Council was due to be held on 22nd October which would also be the date on which the review would commence;
- The meeting with the Chief Executive of Gwynedd County Council and presentation to the councillors was due to be held on 9th November. No date had been set for the presentation to the community councils;
- Final Proposals for the Caerphilly Community review had been published;
- Final Proposals for the Vale of Glamorgan Community review had been published;
- The Final Proposals report for the Blaenau Gwent Community review was being printed and would be published in due course;

- Representations for the Further Draft Proposals for the Swansea Community review would be presented to the October meeting. A draft of the Final Proposals report would be presented to the November meeting;
- A substantial number of representations had been received in respect of the Pembrokeshire Community review and a site visit had been organised for the end of September to inspect the proposed changes; and
- Torfaen County Borough Council were due to submit their community review to an executive meeting of the Council to be held during September.

6. WALES AUDIT OFFICE (WAO) REPORT – IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

- 6.1 It was noted that most of the recommendations had now been implemented and those which had not been completed had been delayed due to lack of resources necessary to action them. **It was agreed** that a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations would be provided to the WAO through the Commission's Sponsor Division and that the resource implications for the outstanding recommendations would be highlighted in this report.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME AND UPDATE

- 7.1 It was reported that the Commission's Welsh Language Scheme report had been produced slightly later than previous years and that the Welsh Language Board had requested it and also suggested that the Commission undertake a review of the Welsh Language Scheme. The Welsh Language Board had suggested that the Commission adopt a statement making it clear that the Commission accepts correspondence in both English and Welsh, however, Members considered that this was not necessary since the Commission conducted all business bilingually. It was considered that the current scheme was adequate in most respects and that reviewing the scheme could possibly require consultation which would have resource implications. **It was agreed** that the Secretariat would adopt practices for their scheme which were over and above the standard requirements, such as appointing the Deputy Chairman as the Commission's Welsh Language champion. **It was agreed** that the Commission would respond to the Welsh Language Board pointing out that the Commission took a proactive approach to the Welsh language and explaining that it was not possible to undertake a full review of the scheme at this time due to resources being required for the electoral review but that a full review with consultation would be carried out after the electoral review work had been completed.

8. ANNUAL REPORT AND WORKSHOP EVENT

- 8.1 The Commission considered the plan for the forthcoming Annual Report and Workshop events produced by the facilitator. **It was agreed** that a schedule would be adopted as follows:
- 10.20 to 10.30 a.m. Welcome in both Welsh and English and introductions, request that delegates around each table introduce themselves to each other (not to the whole Workshop);
 - Report on Electoral Reviews presented by the Chairman;

- Presentation on the Annual Report presented by the Deputy Chairman (or Member where Deputy Chairman not attending);
- Feedback on past Workshops presented by the Chairman; and
- The Commission's Strategic Plan presented by the Member.

8.2 In respect of the key questions for discussion it was suggested that the following questions would be adopted for the Workshops subject to liaison with the Facilitator:

- What are the strong and weak points of the Commission's Strategic Plan?;
- What are the key issues in the Commission's Strategic Plan for your authority?; and
- What are your general views on the Commission's performance.

8.3 **It was agreed** that the Secretary would feedback the Facilitator's comments and suggestions to Members as necessary

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 It was reported that two staff members from the Secretariat would be attending an Investors In People (IIP) event in Birmingham where they would be congratulated on the Commission achieving IIP status.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 The dates of the next meeting were set at:

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

Tuesday 24th November 2009 (following the Workshop)

Wednesday 16th December 2009 (following the Workshop).