



BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD

1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011

June 2011

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Membership of the Commission: -

The Speaker, The Rt. Hon John Bercow MP, Ex-Officio Chairman

The Hon Mr Justice Lloyd Jones, Deputy Chairman – appointed 18 December 2006 and re-appointed in October 2009.

Mr Paul Wood, Commissioner – first appointed 1 May 2008 until 30 April 2013

Mr John Bader, Commissioner – first appointed 1 May 2008 until 30 April 2013

The Registrar General for England and Wales (Assessor)

The Director General of Ordnance Survey (Assessor)

Mr E H Lewis, Joint Secretary (Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales Secretariat) – appointed 1 January 2002

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The Commission welcomes correspondence and telephone calls in English or Welsh

Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales

Annual Report 2010 to 2011

FOREWORD

During the year, the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales has completed several interim reviews of Parliamentary constituency boundaries. Details of these interim reviews will be found within this report.

The Parliamentary Voting Systems and Constituencies Act 2011 will bring about a fundamental change in the Parliamentary constituencies in Wales. In accordance with the new legislation we formally announced on 3 March 2011 the commencement of a general review of constituencies in Wales. This review will be known as the 2013 Review.

I am most grateful to the Commissioners, the Secretary and the Secretariat for their assistance throughout the past year.

Sir David Lloyd Jones
Deputy Chairman

June 2011

INTRODUCTION

The Sponsor

1. The Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales is an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored and wholly funded by the Cabinet Office (CO)¹. The Commission submits reports to the Secretary of State and it is his statutory duty to lay them before Parliament. Where the report recommends that alterations are required to Parliamentary constituency boundaries or the boundaries of the Assembly electoral regions, he must also lay before Parliament the draft of an Order in Council for giving effect to our recommendations. Should he decide to modify the recommendations, he must also lay a statement of his reasons for so doing. The Lord Chancellor appoints the Deputy Chairman, the Secretary of State appoints one of the members of the Commission, the Assistant Commissioners, and the two Joint Secretaries (see Membership below).

The Commission

2. The Commission is constituted under Section 2 and Schedule 1 of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended). It is an independent, non-political, and totally impartial body and every opportunity is taken to emphasise very strongly that the results of previous elections do not, and should not, enter into the Commission's considerations. The effects of the Commission's recommendations on future voting patterns are also not considered. In its guidance notes for Assistant Commissioners the Commission advises that such factors should not enter into consideration at public inquiries.
3. From the establishment of a permanent Commission in 1944 until 1 January 2002, the Secretariat was staffed in London, at arm's length from the Sponsor Department, by officials of the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and its two predecessors, the General Register Office and the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. The ONS provided accommodation and other ancillary services to the Commission. The staff and other costs incurred by the ONS in supporting the Secretariat were recovered from the Sponsor Department on a quarterly in arrears basis. With effect from 1 January 2002, officials of the Secretariat to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBCW), located in Cardiff, have staffed the Secretariat.

Membership

4. The Speaker of the House of Commons is the ex-officio Chairman of all four Parliamentary Boundary Commissions in the United Kingdom. The appointment of the Speaker emphasises the independence, impartiality, and non-political nature. The Speaker plays no part in the conduct of reviews. The Deputy

¹ From May 2010 the Cabinet Office (CO) assumed responsibility from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in respect of the Commission

Chairman, who presides over the meetings, is a High Court Judge: the Honourable Mr Justice Lloyd Jones (Sir David). The Members are Mr Paul Wood and Mr John Bader.

5. By agreement, the Secretary of State for Justice appoints one member to the Commission; the Secretary of State for Wales appoints the other.
6. The Commissioners are part-time appointees who meet, whenever the work programme demands, at the offices shared with the LGBCW in Cardiff. One meeting was held during the period covered by this report. Since the passing of the Boundary Commissions Act 1992, the Commission Members (not including the Deputy Chairman) have been paid a daily fee agreed by the Sponsor Department with the Treasury for work carried out on behalf of the Commission and, with the Deputy Chairman, are entitled to recover any expenses (such as travel and subsistence) incurred on Commission work.
7. The Commission has established both a Code of Practice and a Register of Members' Interests, which are updated annually. Copies of these documents are available on request.
8. The Commission has two statutory assessors. One is the Registrar General of England and Wales who is the Director of ONS, and the other is the Director General of Ordnance Survey. Deputies represent both at Commission meetings; Ms Alison Whitworth on behalf of the Registrar General and Ms Michaela Gordon on behalf of the Director General.
9. There is a Joint Secretary: Mr Edward Lewis, who heads the Secretariat, who was appointed by the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice.

The Secretariat

10. The role of the Secretariat is to service and assist the Commissioners in the conduct of their reviews and in executing their decisions. The Secretariat is based at the offices of the Secretariat to the LGBCW in Cardiff and liaison about staffing and accommodation now takes place with the Welsh Assembly Government.

Statutory Duties

11. The Commission's primary statutory function is to keep under continuous review the distribution of seats at Parliamentary elections, to conduct regular reviews of the boundaries of Parliamentary constituencies and to make reports with recommendations to the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended). The Commission may also undertake discretionary or Interim reviews in one or more constituencies where the Commissioners believe this appropriate.

The Parliamentary Voting Systems and Constituencies Act 2011 has made substantial changes to the legislation governing distribution of Parliamentary seats. Additionally, there will now be a requirement for a review of Parliamentary constituencies to be conducted during the lifetime of each Parliament. It is anticipated therefore that, following the completion of the 2013 Review, there will be a requirement to complete the next review by the Autumn of 2018.

The Act also removed the link between the Parliamentary constituencies and those of the Welsh Assembly. New legislation is now anticipated to put into place a mechanism for the regular review of the Welsh Assembly constituencies.

Liaison with Other Bodies

12. The Secretariat has maintained regular contact with the other Boundary Commissions by means of meetings and exchange of information. The Commission was due to be represented at a meeting of the Parliamentary and Local Government Boundary Commissions, which was scheduled to take place in Edinburgh in April 2010 but this event was cancelled due to travel difficulties. It is anticipated that this event will be rescheduled to later in the year. Regular contact was also maintained with the Welsh Assembly Government and Ordnance Survey.

The Commission was represented at a meeting of the Parliamentary and Local Government Boundary Commissions which took place on the 3 and 4 April 2010. A further meeting was hosted in Cardiff on 21 March 2011 to enable a full discussion on the implications of the new Act.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

13. To keep under continuous review the representation of Wales in the House of Commons and in the National Assembly for Wales (now amended by the 2011 Act).

Specific Objectives for 2010/2011

14. The Commission sets its own objectives for each year. For 2010/2011, an objective was set to undertake a series of interim reviews of the Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies. These included a review of the Parliamentary constituencies of Brecon and Radnorshire, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, Cardiff North and Cardiff South and Penarth, Cardiff South and Penarth and the Vale of Glamorgan, and Ogmore and Pontypridd. These reviews arose as a result of changes to Local Government boundaries consequent to reviews conducted by the LGBCW. All of these interim reviews were completed by the end of the financial year.

Welsh Language Scheme

15. The Commission is required by the terms of our Welsh Language Scheme to submit annual reports to the Welsh Language Board on the operation of the scheme.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

16. The following table compares the actual expenditure with the budget, during the financial year covered by this report, and shows any differences.

Budget and Expenditure by Subhead – 2010/2011

Budget Component	Budget	Expenditure	Difference
	(£)	(£)	(£)
Salaries and NI	167,400	59,317	-108,083
Overheads	31,000	29,487	-1,513
T&S	4,364	4,267	-97
Miscellaneous	23,210	14,870	-8,340
Running Costs Total	225,974	107,941	-118,033
Advertising	15,000	14,389	-611
OS costs	0	0	0
Inquiry Fees	0	0	0
Commissioners' Fees	7,600	7,583	-17
Commissioners' T&S	900	862	-38
Miscellaneous	7,550	4,815	-5,727
Other Current Total	31,050	27,649	-3,401
Grand Total	257,024	135,590	-121,434

17. The table below shows the planned and actual Secretariat staff levels by quarter during the financial year.

Staff Complement – 2010/2011

Grade	1/4/2010		1/7/2010		1/10/2010		1/1/2011	
	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Joint Sec.	0.50	0.23	0.50	0.52	0.50	0.29	0.50	0.50
WAG Band E	0.50	0.07	0.50	0.20	0.50	0.25	0.50	0.29
WAG Band C	2.00	0.10	2.00	0.65	2.00	0.62	2.00	1.11
WAG Band A/B	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.12	0.50	0.07	0.50	0.09
Total	3.00	0.40	3.50	1.49	3.50	1.23	3.50	1.99

During the year, as a result of discussions between the two Commissions and the sponsoring bodies, agreement was reached to strengthen the staff complement of the Secretariat through the increase of the number of directly employed staff. The plan envisaged 7 directly employed staff members and the remainder of the complement being staff seconded from other public bodies.

The recruitment process commenced during the last quarter of the last financial year and it is anticipated that additional staff will have taken up their posts during the first quarter of the next financial year.

Monitoring Expenditure

18. Each quarter, the Secretariat provides the sponsoring department with a report detailing quarterly expenditure and forecast over/ under spends.

OUTLINE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011/2012

Programme

19. In the present financial year, the budget will be £718,614 and the staff complement will be 7 full time equivalents. Our specific objective will be:

To undertake the necessary work involved with the 2013 review. This will include the publication of initial proposals, together with the holding of a series of public hearings early in 2012.

It is also anticipated that amended proposals may be published during the summer 2012.