

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Minutes of the meeting at 16:30 on Tuesday 23rd February 2021 via Microsoft Teams.

Present:

Mrs Justice Jefford	Deputy Chair
Aaron Sollis	Assessor (Ordnance Survey)
Huw Vaughan Thomas	Commissioner
Sam Hartley	Commissioner
Shereen Williams	Commission Secretary
Tom Jenkins	Commission Secretariat
Rhydian Fitter	Commission Secretariat
Hannah Toor	Commission Secretariat

Time Started: 16:30

Time Finished: 18:00

1. INTRODUCTION, OPENING REMARKS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 1.1. There were no declarations of interest made.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1. There were apologies for absence for Neil Park Assessor (ONS)

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1. The Commission **agreed** the minutes from the previous meeting held on Tuesday 26th January 2021.

4. ISSUES ARISING

- 4.1. The Secretary provided updates on Issues arising from the Commission meeting of the 26 January 2021

Issue 1 – Public Hearings

- 4.2. BCE will be making enquiries with the Constitution Team in Cabinet Office on the matter of including public hearings provision as part of a Bill. An update will be shared at the next Secretaries joint-meeting.
- 4.3. It was **agreed** to have public hearings as a rolling agenda item.
- 4.4. It was **agreed** that a decision would be made on how public hearings will be held prior to starting the first consultation period, with the ideal option being the Commission holding hybrid hearings.

Issue 2 – Legal Advice

- 4.5. BCE and BCW have agreed to the Cabinet Office Legal Advisers (COLA) approach to outsourcing the work to Counsel if they are unable to respond to legal queries.

Issue 3 – Impact Assessments

- 4.6. It has previously been agreed that the four Commissions would work closely on preparing the Impact Assessments for the 2023 Review.

5. RISK REGISTER

- 5.1. Consideration was given to the report dated 16 February 2021 by the HoPP and it was **noted** that the changes **agreed** at the last meeting had been made.
- 5.2. BCW 16 title to be amended to reflect that there is a risk with public hearings. It was **agreed** to increase the IL risk due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and virtual and hybrid hearings potentially being held.
- 5.3. BCW 3 has been **resolved**.
- 5.4. The Commission held a tender board which agreed on the preferred supplier to provide the online consultation portal. A contract is due to be drafted and signed and an update will be given by the HoPP at the next meeting.
- 5.5. **Action:** HoPP to update BCW 5 and BCW 16 on the risk register at the next meeting.

6. COMPLAINTS POLICY

- 6.1. The Commission considered the updated Complaints Policy and **agreed** to adopt the policy in its current form for the 2023 Review subject to the minor amendments being made:

- 6.2. To confirm the arrangements in relation to the section relating to 'use of public funds'.
- 6.3. **Action:** Secretary to implement the amendment.

7. INITIAL BRIEFING WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- 7.1. The Commission considered the updated initial briefings scripts and **agreed** to approve the additions and the slide deck for the meeting subject to minor amendments being made.
- 7.2. It was **noted** that the slides contain a large amount of detail and it was suggested that information on the slides be reduced.
- 7.3. It was **agreed** the secretariat would reduce the information needed on the presentation slides and to tailor the slides to the different groups.
- 7.4. It was **agreed** the Commission members and secretariat would log in 15 minutes prior to the meeting.
- 7.5. It was **agreed** to inform attendees that all attendees are to be on mute unless participating in the presentation.
- 7.6. It was **noted** the Commission have received questions in advance from the Conservatives and the Labour party. A number of the questions will be covered within the presentation.
- 7.7. **Action:** Secretary to reduce content on the slides.
- 7.8. **Action:** Secretary to send briefing pack to the Commission members.

8. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

- 8.1. The Commission considered the Communications Strategy dated 09 February 2021 by the Communications and Engagement Manager and it was **agreed** to revisit the budgeting allocation at the next meeting.
- 8.2. It was **noted** the Commissions budget total for 2022 is currently at £32,000 and the budget for 2023 is currently at £25,000. These budgets are based on the previous review , during the previous review the communications were outsourced.
- 8.3. It was **noted** that the Communications Strategy was well planned, however in order to deliver the strategy, it would require an increase in budget allocation.
- 8.4. **Action:** Communications and Engagement Manager to review the budget allocation of the strategy for the next meeting.

9. INITIAL PROPOSALS REPORT

- 9.1. The Commission considered the drafted Report Skeleton and **approved** the lay out and format of the report.
- 9.2. **Action:** A draft version of the report to be included on the agenda for April's meeting.
- 9.3. **Action:** The Commissioners to email the HoPP with comments prior to the papers being distributed in April.

10.2018 LESSONS LEARNED REPORT – RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE

- 10.1. Consideration was given to the report dated February 2021 by the Secretary and the progress on implementation of the lessons learnt recommendation was **noted**.
- 10.2. The Secretary provided an update within the report with the dates of the meetings with political parties, stakeholders and the procurement for the portal.

11.ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 11.1. A discussion was held in relation to the publication scheme and the nature of the documents being shared.
- 11.2. It was **noted** a clear policy needs to be in place on the disclosure relating to papers particularly where there is sensitive and confidential information.
- 11.3. **Action:** Secretary to bring a paper on disclosure to the next meeting.
- 11.4. The Secretary informed the Commission members that a presentation on the 2023 Review will be made at the Spring Welsh branch meeting of the Association of Electoral Administrators Wales on the 2nd March 2021.
- 11.5. HoPP gave an update on the Welsh Language Commissioners request to see the list of proposed names of constituencies in advance.
- 11.6. The Commission discussed the position and **agreed** the WLC will be invited to respond in the normal way in line with legal timescales.
- 11.7. HoPP gave an update on the Guide to Review which has been agreed and the proofread was returned on Monday. It is currently with the translators and is due to be returned on the 2nd March 2021. From there, it will be updated with branding, The Commission is aiming to publish the Guide following the MP's briefings, with hard copies sent out the following week.

- 11.8. It was **noted** in relation to the schemes meetings there will be 9 schemes to present, 3 schemes per session with the final session free for A.O.B.
- 11.9. **Action:** HoPP to send out scheme's briefings on 2nd March to the Commissioners along with hard copies.
- 11.10. Date of next meeting **agreed** Tuesday 27th April 2021.