



Comisiwn Ffiniau
i Gymru

Boundary Commission
for Wales

Boundary Commission
for Wales

Public Hearings: Aberystwyth

Transcript of the Public Hearing

Aberystwyth AM

Key

SP:	Stephen Phillips, Assistant Commissioner (Chair)
SW:	Shereen Williams, Secretary to the Commission
RP:	Roger Pratt, Conservative Party
PR:	Councillor Pete Roberts, Liberal Democrat Party
JL:	Joe Lock, Labour Party
AMH:	Aled Morgan Hughes, Plaid Cymru
TA:	Tom Adams, Labour Party
GL-D:	Gwenllian Lansdowne-Davies, Assistant Commissioner
AM:	Alan Midhar, Assistant Commissioner
AC:	Andrew Cledes, Assistant Commissioner
PL:	Patrick Loxdale, Conservative
HH:	Havard Hughes, Conservative =

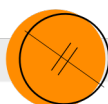
[Transcript starts at 00:00:14]

SP: Croeso cynnes iawn ichi i gyd. Welcome to Aberystwyth. My name is Stephen Phillips, I'm one of four Assistant Commissioners with the Boundary Commission on this review. My colleagues to my immediate right, Gwenllian Lonsdown-Davies, to her right Andrew Cledes, to my left Alan Midhar and to his left, the Secretary to the Commission, Shereen Williams. We are responsible, as Assistant Commissioners for analysing the, the representations received and then presenting our, our recommendations in due course to the Commission, or Commissioners I should say, as to whether the initial proposals should be revised or not. We're independent, we're not here to debate the pros and cons of the initial proposals contained in the document, copies of which are available on the desk outside.

This is the fifth and final hearing across Wales, the secondary consultation period has run in parallel with the, the five hearings and closes today. Representations can be made in writing via the Commission Portal and other means, but it is important that those representations are received today otherwise they will, will not be considered. All representations in Welsh or English will be, will receive precisely the same treatment, as indeed will those made orally at these hearings.

[00:01:52:03]

The, we have a fairly busy schedule today. I propose to allow, I don't propose to allow cross-examination, but I'm, I'm trying to chair this hearing as flexibly as possible to allow everyone to have the opportunity to have their say. I will ask the speakers to approach the lectern, to state their name, the area f..., that, that they're from, not, not a home address, but give us some idea of precisely the locality and to state whether or not they're speaking in a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation. Please keep to your allotted time allowance, or you do risk being stopped. There's a colleague somewhere up behind there who will give you the five minute warning and we would ask you to try and tell us why you are making your proposal and the rationale for it. If you wish to address the hearing in English or Welsh, that's fine. If you could state that when you approach the lectern, it would be helpful. In a few moments, I will ask Shereen to outline a, a few other



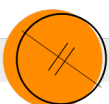
housekeeping matters and where we've got to in terms of the process generally. As I say, I'll be looking to chair as flexibly as possible, but on the other hand, to make sure that we get through the business as expeditiously as possible. So, on that basis, Shereen, do you wish to add anything?

SW: Bore da. Welcome everyone. Today's proceedings are, is being live streamed and recording is in place for transcription purposes. If you are planning to Tweet, please tag us @BCommWales. As mentioned by Steve, reports and copies of guidance to the reviews available at the front desk and a simultaneous translation service is available and you'll find a headset on your chairs. Today's hearing will sit until 8.00pm and as Steve mentioned again, this is the last of the five public hearings and also the closing day for our consultation period.

When we launched our proposals in September, we received over 1,200 representations and a, a large number of these were specific to areas. When more, the representations we received that covered the whole of Wales were primarily from the political parties. Some of the highlights include objections to the community of Llangynor being included in the Llanelli constituency, the inclusion of Ponnytyclun in the proposed Cardiff West constituency. There was a number of representations that opposed the division of the Cynon Valley. A number of representations wanted Dinas Powys to remain as part of the Vale of Glamorgan, there were objections to the Swansea East and Neath constituency that was focused on the combination of parts of Swansea with parts of Neath Port Talbot. A number of representations argued that the Pontardawe Upper Swansea Valley area should be included in a Swansea constituency. A significant number of representations opposed the proposals for Aberconwy and Dwyfor Meirionydd. The main objections to Wrexham was due to the inclusion of Brymbo and Minera in the neighbouring Alyn and Deeside constituency. The proposed Newport West and Caerphilly constituency received strong opposition due to the combination of two separate local authority areas. However, there was broad support for Monmouthshire, Torfaen, and the Newport East constituencies. There was a small number of representations that opposed the combination of Blaenau Gwent with Rhymney into a single constituency, on the basis of deprivation issues. However, there was no alternative provided to the Commission in those representations. Objections relating to Delyn was due to the name and the preference for Clwyd East instead and Montgomeryshire and Glyndwr received broad support, with a small number opposing the name of the constituency. As I mentioned earlier, the last, this the last of our public hearings and our Consultation Portal will close at 11:59pm tonight. Following that, the Assistant Commissioners will consider all the written and oral representations and, of the public, from the public hearings and they will submit their recommendations to our Commissioners during, i..., in June. The Commission hopes to publish our revised proposals in October this year and will then run our four-week consultation period that will keep us on track for publishing our final recommendations in time for the first of July 2023.

[00:06:29]

Thank you for giving me your time today, I'll hand you over back to Steve, so today's proceedings can, can start.



SP: Thank you Shereen, I should have said, actually, whilst I'm not allowing cross-examination as such, I will allow questions from the floor to the speakers and, indeed, I and my colleagues may have points of clarification as well during the course of the day. So, without further ado, I'll propose to move to our first speaker, which is Mr Roger Pratt. The floor is yours, sir.

RP: Thank you.

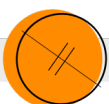
SW: There we are. Thank you, diolch.

RP: Good, good morning, bore da. Thank you very much indeed. My name is Roger Pratt, I'm the boundary review director for the Conservative Party. Previously, I was the director of the party in Wales, and I live near Abergavenny in Monmouthshire. I'm grateful for this opportunity, Tom and I have been round most of the English hearings. Unfortunately, Tom was ill with Covid and didn't come to a few of them, but I've done nine English ones, but it is very pleasant in Wales that you get an opportunity to sum up your position at the last hearing as well as outlining the position at the first hearing. I'm very grateful for that and very grateful for all the work that the Commission have done.

So, this complements our original submission, which obviously is in the representations. It's 9809 and I have given the secretary of the Commission this morning, and I think she has given each of the Commissioners our final response to the consultation, which looks, looks like that. Now you may say that the, the map looks exactly the same as on the original one, if you look at it very carefully, and you would have to look at it very carefully, there are actually five ward changes from our initial proposals and I will go on to discuss those and hopefully, the map does show those, those five changes. So, you have got that and obviously it's in addition to the presentation I made in Cardiff and the presentation today.

[00:09:53]

So, we support the allocation of 32 seats to Wales, obviously 31 on the mainland, plus the protected seat of Ynys Môn, which I will say no more about. We're, we're going to, like our, in our initial proposals where, like the Commission, we went through alphabetically each of the proposed constituencies at the Cardiff hearing and on this occasion and in our final representation, we are looking at it by local authorities, and we have basically grouped five groups, which I think is a, a very good way of doing it. In other places, they call them sub-regions and, we think these are good, they combine local authorities, they're likely to be very compliant with the rules. And the only difference between our sub-regions, in effect, with those with the Commission, is that the Nelson ward is, under the Commission proposals, included in Mid and South Glamorgan, so effectively Gwent and Mid and South Glamorgan would be combined and in our proposals they're not. We put Nelson into Gwent, so we have those areas, and we also have West Glamorgan and Powys, part of Powys, Dyfed and North Wales, including part of Powys. And that's how I will look at each of the areas. I don't intend to go through everything in great detail because our representations do that and basically, our final representation, this is sort of building on our final representation, but in our final representation, we put the representation numbers of, of things, representations



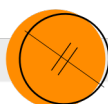
we are referring to, I'm not going to do that this morning, but we will, they are in, all in that final document.

So, we have always looked at the boundaries in relation to the rules, the rules for redistribution of seats, and that is how we have judged the Commission proposals, our proposals and any counterproposals. Particularly, one looks at local government boundaries, boundaries of existing constituencies and local ties, but obviously, geographical considerations are also important in parts of Wales. So we will look at everything in relation to that.

So, if we look first at South East Wales, in Gwent. So, covering the local authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Torfaen, we think there is very broad support for the four seats of Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney, Monmouthshire, Newport East and Torfaen. There's very little objection to those, there are one or two counterproposals, which I'll come to later, but this.... We have Monmouthshire coterminous; we have Torfaen coterminous, both of which are very compliant with rule 5.1b. We note that all four members of parliament, some from the Labour party, one from the Conservative party, all four members of parliament support those four constituencies, the Labour party do, the Liberal Democrats do and there are widespread support. And therefore we think that there is really no, I don't say no alternative, but clearly, they have widespread support and we trust that those four constituencies will be decided as the original Commission proposals.

[00:13:38]

There is clearly more concern about the whole question of Newport West and Caerphilly and Islwyn. We support the constituencies as, as proposed as do the Labour party. I only, our only addition is that, that the Nelson ward should remain within Islwyn and there are a lot of representations on that, we think that is much better under the rules because, clearly, it is a Caerphilly ward, it is separated from Ystrad Mynach, with which it has close ties. We put it back with Ystrad Mynach in the Islwyn constituency, you don't need to do anything else but that, that the numbers are right, 'cause Islwyn is low and with the Nelson ward added in, linking with Ystrad Mynach, this improves the position, improves local ties under rule 1b and it improves local government links because it means that Caerphilly is reduced in the number of constituencies that Caerphilly local authority is in and it also, on the other side, helps in terms of local government links. So the local government links are better, the local ties are better and we think there is a very strong case for Nelson to be included. Now as far as the counterproposal is, in terms of Newport West and Caerphilly and Islwyn doesn't affect any other constituencies, but we would reject it. We think that it's much better for Newport West and Caerphilly to be on, as the Commissioners proposed, and Islwyn to be as proposed. We particularly note that the Member of Parliament for Islwyn, Labour member of parliament, Chris Evans, at the Cardiff public hearing and, and in writing, made a very strong case for the Commission's proposed Islwyn constituency, to which we would obviously add Nelson. And we think if you, if you look at the links, one constituency clearly has to be linked with Newport, I don't think anyone doubts that. If you look at the links, we believe the links are much better between Caerphilly and, Caerphilly and Newport West than they are with the rest of the Islwyn proposed constituency, or proposed parts that they would take in to



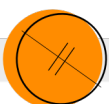
Newport with, with Islwyn, Mr David's proposal, he's very concerned, he, Caerphilly's broken up into four and he wants it broken up into three, but in doing so, he also ensures Islwyn, which is broken up into two, is broken up into three, whereas ours, again, has Caerphilly in three, 'cause we bring Nelson back and Islwyn is still in, in two.

In terms of the Islwyn, Newport links, we do believe that Argoed and Penmaen are very strongly linked to Blackwood and there are very poor links between those wards and Newport, whereas there are strong links to Blackwood and those would be broken by these proposals and so we do think that on balance, the proposal is better if you include, if you have it, as the Commission have proposed it, plus on our suggestion of the Nelson ward.

So, in terms of Mid and South Glamorgan, which covers the local authorities of Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan, there's, we've note very strong support for Aberaman to be included in the Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare proposed constituency, very lot, large number of support those two wards, north and south Aberaman. Lot of support, strong support, which we detail in our, our proposals. And so we would take those two wards in, we know that there are concerns about other, the breaking up in other ways of Cynon Valley, but it isn't possible for Mountain Ash to be included. Therefore, we would include one ward, which has ties with Mountain Ash, into the Pontypridd constituency and we would also include Taff's Well, a two, two wards are taken out of Rhondda Cynon Taff to be linked with Cardiff. We think is, this is unsatisfactory and so we improve the local government links, you can't unfortunately bring both the Pontyclun and the Taff's Well ward. We would bring the Taff's Well ward back and include in it a Pontypridd constituency and we also note there's general support for the Rhondda constituency and we, indeed, endorse that.

[00:18:46]

So, we note there is concern about Cardiff South and Penarth, that constituency being proposed with detached parts. There was a, a, a number of items of evidence about that. There's no link between Splott and Trowbridge, I think in one of the representations, they suggested that you as, as Commissioners might like to walk, walk between Splott and Trowbridge without getting wet, and they don't think you, you can do so. I'm sure you're not going to do that, but there is, there is, they are effectively in detached parts and therefore, if you just add the Rhymney ward into Cardiff South and, and Penarth, you ensure that the constituency, constituencies, the one constituency in Wales, which is over quota, it therefore has to reduce in size. We would take Llanrhymney out, we would not include Dinas Powys, 'cause there's no need to, so our constituency would all be within the current Cardiff South and Penarth constituency, so it's better under rule 5.1c in terms of the existing constituencies and you ensure there is no detached part. We note the Liberal Democrats also support that and there are a number of others that support our suggested Cardiff South and Penarth constituency. We also note that there are a number of proposals to combine Llandaff and Llandaff North. Quite a number of proposals, which again we outline in our detailed representation, and we would put those two wards together within Cardiff West. We do note considerable concern about Dinas Powys being excluded from Vale of Glamorgan. The one constituency in the, in Wales which is the right size, is the Vale of

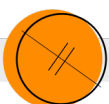


Glamorgan, it's the only one which is the right size. We do not think there is a need, therefore, to change it, so it is much more compliant with rule 5.1c and we dot..., note that, that concern. We note Alun Cairns representations at the Swansea hearing and, also a lifelong resident of Dinas Powys, Vince Driscoll, at the Cardiff hearing. We note the, this is the proposal also by the Liberal Democrats, who have that constituency. So, we strongly urge that Dinas Powys remains within the Vale of Glamorgan constituency.

Now if I move on to West Glamorgan and Powys, so Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend and the Brec..., and Brecon and Radnor constituency. We note clearly there is concern regarding the proposed Brecon and Radnor constituency, but we do believe, this is the least worst option, and I'll often, the Commission have to go with least worst options, unfortunately. Brecon and Radnor has to expand, there is no alternative, that is the what has to happen. So, there are really effectively two alternatives to including the Upper Swansea Valley, the, those Neath areas, those Neath wards in Brecon and Radnor, there are two alternatives. One is including Monmouthshire, I would actually move under certain proposals, into Brecon and Radnor, where I've got nothing against Brecon and Radnor, actually Monmouthshire coterminous is very compliant with the rules. It's got a lot of support and it is, we think, very sensible. And it would meant the knock on effects would affect the whole of Gwent, the whole of south Wales east and it would therefore, we think it would be much worse under the rules if Monmouthshire was taken out to so, Monmouthshire was divided, so it would no longer be coterminous, which I say, which I say has lots of support, including all four groups on Monmouthshire council, unanimous support from Monmouthshire council, support from the Labour party, support from the Liberal Democrats. So, we do believe that using Monmouthshire to add to Brecon and Radnor would be wrong and worse under the statutory factors under the rules. We note that the, the representation, the main representation that would include Monmouthshire is Plaid Cymru's representation. They divide Monmouthshire into three, which is worse than even the current position. The proposals of the Commission improve it, the, the current position. Plaid Cymru would make it even worse by dividing it into three. Torfaen, which again is very neatly coterminous, would divide, be divided into two. They would also split the small local authorities of Methyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent, which we think is very unfortunate, very much against rule 5.1b and therefore the effects of doing anything with Monmouthshire, we think are, are much worse than the proposal to include the Upper Swansea Valley.

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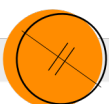
If the other alternative is to include part of Montgomeryshire, so the constituency is totally within Powys, we believe this would break up the historic area of Montgomeryshire, which no doubt Mr Williams will speak about later. It would break up this hosteric and, this historic area, it would also be unpopular. Last time the Commission did have to link Brecon and Radnor with Montgomeryshire because there was no alternative. These is an alternative this time, there was no alternative then, and that got tremendous opposition; very large numbers o..., of opposition and I think at the Wrexham hearing, Ian, Ian Harrison, former members of parliament, Glyn Davies and Robert, Robert Harvey both spoke about keeping Montgomeryshire together. It would also, if you do that, it would break ties with Newtown, because Newtown would have to go south and the areas immediately



to the north, which have very strong ties with Newtown, would be broken. So it would be worse under rule 5.1b and we do not believe that you should split Montgomeryshire. One other point I would make is if either Monmouthshire or Montgomeryshire were included with Brecon and Radnor, Brecon and Radnor is currently the largest constituency in area in Wales. It continues to be that under the proposals and under either of these proposals, it would be even larger than the proposal which is to include the wards from Neath. We do, however, believe that there is a very strong case to recognise the area in the name of the constituency. We, we believe that it is wrong to call it Brecon and Radnor. Now a lot of the objections are because they think it is a Brecon based constituency and it's Brecon and Radnor. So if you actually recognise the area in the name, we think that is, is much better. We've put three alternative, possible alternatives, Cwm Tawe, Pontardawe or Upper, the Upper Swansea Valley. We'd accept any of those, there are ha..., are others that have been suggested and as long as the na..., as long as the area is included in the name, which we think is vitally important, then we are happy.

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Although we talk about it being the least worst option, it also does have advantages. Ystrad, Ystradgynlais links well with Ystalyfera and Pontardawe. I don't think anyone denies the links between Ystradgynlais and Ystalyfera and indeed, a number of representations refer to this. Although they perhaps don't like linking with Brecon, they say, but of course the area does link with Ystradgynlais, so there's a lot of, a lot of people s..., say that. Indeed, the Labour party representation does. Now currently, the Ystradgynlais area makes up 12% of the existing Brecon and Radnor constituency, so 12% is in Ystradgynlais. In fact, Ystradgynlais is the largest settlement, it's larger than Brecon, it's the largest settlement within the current Brecon and Radnor constituency. And the member of parliament for Brecon and Radnor will speak about this later on. I just hope she will arrive as soon as possible, but she is driving from London. She, she will go further in into this later on today. But the point is, although it, it's 12%, an important part of the constituency, the member of parliament holds surgeries there as, as she will let you know. She holds surgeries in Ystradgynlais, she goes to Ystradgynlais for Ystradgynlais people. She doesn't expect Ystradgynlais to come to, to Brecon. And the same, even more so, would be true if the Neath wards were added to Brecon and Radnor. So the Upper Swansea Valley areas would make up about a third of the constituency, so more or less a, a third, Ystradgynl..., a third in the Upper Swansea Valley, a third Radnor and a third Brecon. Very, very roughly, the other two-thirds, but effectively a third. So it would be a, a crucial part of any member of parliament's constituency. They would clearly hold surgeries there, they would clearly go there, meet constituents there. They would not expect constituents to come to Brecon, they would e..., go there, so it's the member of parliament who has to move, not the, not the electors who the, mem..., member of parliament will have. I would be very surprised if a member of parliament who was elected for that constituency, if that as proposed, would not have a, an office or a sub-office in the part, the Upper Swansea Valley part of the constituency. So I do think there, this is, although we say the least worst option, it is also, we think a credible option. There are good links between Ystradgynlais and Ystalyfera, and we think the alternatives are much worse under the rules and we urge you to recommend the Brecon and Radnor constituency as proposed, except we do urge



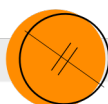
you to change the name so that area, that third of the constituency coming in, is recognised in the name of the constituency.

So, so we note, very considerable concerns regarding the Bridgend constituency, particularly all the representations suggesting that Bridgend is split. It's one of the more serious breaking of local ties in the proposals and we have put in an alternative, which just covers the two constituencies. The proposed Aberavon and Porthcawl constituency and the proposed Bridgend constituency, we have suggested alternatives which we think better meet the existing constituencies. So you have the Bridgend constituency plus, and, and you have effectively an Aberav..., Aberavon or Port Talbot and Maesteg constituency. We think that is a better, certainly meets the criteria in terms of the rules, existing constituencies, much better and in terms of local ties, it restores those local ties in Bridgend that are broken by the Commission. So, we do think there is considerable merit in our proposal there.

We note the alterna..., the alternative arrangements for the three Swansea constituencies. We support the proposals in terms of these. However, we do note the considerable concern in Neath about linked with Swansea. We think if you actually put Neath first as it's very much the largest part, rather than Swansea first, that would help. We don't say that completely assuages it, but it does help a bit if Neath came first. We also believe that Gower, which is the largest part of the Gower and Swansea West constituency, should come first in the name as the Gower Society have suggested. We reject the alternatives, we reject the alternatives, partly because they divide the Mumbles Community Council and one of the advantages of the Commission proposal is it unites a number of community councils, including the Mumbles Community Council, which is currently divided. They put it together and that is a very strong point with the Mayals ward is partly, is, is currently in Swansea and there are proposals to take it back into Swansea, thus breaking up the Mumbles community council. We think this is a disadvantage, we don't think there is widespread local support for changes in Swansea and we urge you to accept them, and we note the representations of, of Lindon Jones, Paxton Hood-Williams and Lyn Joyce at the hearing in Swansea.

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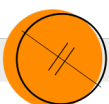
So, if we move to Dyfed, the proposed four constituencies in Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Carmarthenshire. We note that all four qualifying parties support the, this combination and the allocation of two constituencies to Ca..., Carmarthenshire and two to the combination of Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. And we note there is a lot of support for the Ceredigion constituency. We don't note much opposition from the wards that are taken in from Pembrokeshire. The main opposition appears to be on the size of the constituency, and obviously, you have to have large constituencies in, in Wales, in certain areas. So you keep Ceredigion whole, I think that is essential, I don't think anyone suggests anything else, and then we think you, the Commission have added the correct wards to, to Ceredigion. We note there is a, a suggestion that Maenclochog rather than St Davids should come into the constituency, but we note last time, when Maenclochog was suggested being linked with Ceredigion, there were a lot of objections. We think, similarly, will be objections to this. Mr Crabb I think's put in a written representation, but I'm sure he is, he would object to, to that.



We note there is widespread support for areas to be inclu..., to be added to the Carmarthen constituency. I think Llangynor is a no-brainer in terms of adding Llangynor to the Carmarthen constituency. That is widely supported by the Community Council, by local people, by Plaid Cymru, by the Labour leader of Carmarthenshire and, and ourselves. There's widespread support for that. You could do that without any other changes. The numbers don't, the numbers don't alter. However, I think we do have to decide whether or not you should do so..., more than that. There is local support for doing more and, particularly we note, in the St Ishmaels and pronoun..., if I can pronounce this right, Llangyndeyrn wards, there is strong support for their links with Carmarthen and the suggestion is that those two wards would, would come into Carmarthen as well as Llangynor and that clearly does mean that two wards have to move from Carmarthen to Llanelli. And there are, two alternatives which have been proposed as regards how that might be done and because they're going to Llanelli, we think you should probably accept the Llanelli town council's representation, which is that the wards of Saron and Penygroes move. So our, we would be happy to support St Ishmaels and Llangyndeyrn going with Llangynor into Carmarthen and the Saron and Penygroes wards corre..., correspondingly moved to Llanelli and we would support that. We would certainly reject the Plaid Cymru's suggestion that St Clear's, their three wards, St Clear's, Laugharne go into a Llanelli constituency. They have no links whatsoever with Llanelli and, indeed, we think there would be strong objections to those three wards moving to Llanelli, we don't think they've got any links with Llanelli. All their links are to Carmarthen and they should remain in Carmarthen, but we would support that alternative change.

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So if we move on to North Wales, to Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Wrexham, Flintshire, plus Montgomeryshire. We note the widespread support for the constituency, for the Wrexham constituency including Brymbo and Minera. Widespread, I don't say anger, but widespread concern that the two wards are proposed to be linked with Alyn and Deeside. This makes local government links worse, so if we bring Brymbo and Minera back into the Wrexham constituency, we noted both the members of parliament covering Wrexham, Sarah Atherton and Simon Baines, and Paul Rogers, who is the councillor for Brymbo, spoke about this at the Wex..., Wrexham public hearing. We think there is overwhelming support for Brymbo and Minera being included in Wrexham. You clearly then have something to do corresponding to reduce the electorate of the Wrexham constituency, and we note that there is some support for including Penycae and Ruabon in the same constituency as Pant, Johnstown and Rhos, as we have suggested with Montgomeryshire, so we have, have suggested that. And in terms of Montgomeryshire, if you add those to Montgomeryshire, it means you can actually reduce the size of the Montgomeryshire constituency, by taking out two wards, two Denbighshire wards and putting, putting them in a Clwyd East, Clwyd East constituency. We note there is some, some support for that, but most of the objections from the North Wales side to Montgomeryshire' and a large number of people in Montgomeryshire want Montgomeryshire to stay whole, but in terms of the area added, some of the concern is the size of the constituency, so actually our proposals reduce the size of the constituency. We also note some support for Bagillt being included in a Deeside based constituency. We think there is, is sense,



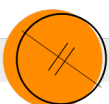
sense in that, so you take the existing Alyn and Deeside and you add more of Deeside rather than the, the wards close to Mold, which have ties to Mold as the Commission have proposed, so we do believe there is support for that and we particularly recommend the evidence of James Davies, member of parliament for Vale of Clwyd at the Wrexham hearing and we have detailed in our representation the other representations that support this.

So, we do note considerable concern about Bangor being included in the Aberconwy constituency, I think this is the, probably the largest number of representations within, within Wales. We, we think some, some of the concern is actually about Bangor being with, with Aberconwy and yet, Bangor and Aberconwy were together in a constituency up until 2010. We also think some of the concern is the fact that Bangor is split. And it is unfortunate in terms of local ties to split, to split Bangor and we understand that, and I think this can be addressed in a fairly straightforward way without any changes elsewhere, and that is if the Pentir ward is.... Clearly the Bangor split is because Pentir is proposed to be in Dwyfor Meirionydd rather than into Aberconwy and therefore if Pentir was included and the numbers are right, you don't have to do anything else. Dwyfor Meirionydd is still right, Ban..., Aberconwy is still right if you put in the Pentir ward. And that is something we believe that can be done. We would also suggest that Bangor was recognised in the name, so they realised that they were part of the constituency, so Aberconwy and Bangor would be our suggestion for the name of that constituency and we would be happy with that, with the Pentir ward would be the change we suggest to address all the representations from that area. And a lot are, do come from Pentir and point out that Pentir is a, is a Bangor ward and it is split off from the rest of Bangor.

So, in our final document, we've compared the various counterproposals in terms of how best they meet the rules. We have a detailed ch..., table on all the political parties and also a number of the individual counterproposals. We didn't go through all of them because some of them didn't meet the rules or they were, we couldn't completely understand them, but we have looked at a number of the counterproposals and shown how they link in with rules 5.1b and 5.1c and we've shown what, how they are in terms of local government links and how they are in terms of the number of electors that are moved.

[00:41:48]

We particularly note how much worse Plaid Cymru and the Green Party are in respect of the rules. So in terms of rule 5.1b, which is the local authorities, in terms of one authority seat, having just one authority within a, in a seat, which is obviously a strong point under rule 5.1b, the Commission have 16 of those examples, we increase that to 18, Plaid Cymru have just 12 and the Greens have just 10. The Plaid, in addition, have a four local authority seat, the Commission only proposed three, two, three authority seats; we've reduced that to one and a four authority seat we think, is a serious bru..., breach of rule 1b. We note that in England, they, they have currently two constituencies with four local authorities. Both, one of those they propose becomes three, just three local authorities and in another case, the other case, there are proposals on the table, not from the Commission, but there are proposals on the table, to reduce that one from four to



three. So a four authority seat is very unusual and we don't believe it, it is a sensible suggestion unless there is no other alternative.

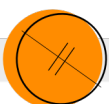
Also, in terms of local authorities, you can look at how many constituencies there are in each local authority and the smallest number is clearly the best, the smallest number, and overall, if you add the total up for the whole of Wales, all the local authorities in Wales, the Commission have 48, we have 45, Plaid have 53 and the Greens have 59. So again, the Greens and Plaid are much worse. So you would have thought that perhaps they'd done this because they improve the position with regard to moved electors. So, we have looked at the number of retained electors in the Commission scheme and the Commission retain 69.8% of electors in their existing constituency, we retain 70.3%, Plaid Cymru is just 63.5% and the Greens 59.6%. So we would argue that they are much worse under the rules.

So just going back, we have looked at all of this in respect of the rules and just a reminder that that is what is important to judge all the proposals on the basis of the rules. So we retain one constituency already compliant with rule two unchanged, that's the Vale of Glamorgan. We support all six councils wholly contained within new constituencies. I think Plaid have two rather than six. Our proposals considerably improve the position under rule 5.1b, three local authorities contain one less constituency, that's Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Wrexham and three constituencies include one less local authority, Alyn and Deeside, Cardiff North and Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare. So we're better under rule 5.1b. In terms of 5.1c, we move 12,000 fewer electors, over 12,000 fewer electors move constituency. We also improve the position under rule 5.1d. we restore a number of local ties, for example, between Nest..., Nelson and Ystrad Mynach, Dinas Powys and Barry, in Carmarthen between Aberdare and Abereb..., Aberavon, between Brymbo and Minera and Coedpoeth, path and between Mold and Mynydd Isa. We also restore ties if you accept our, our suggestion in Bangor, in Bangor as well and we, we've said about Carmarthen.

So, our, we suggest you should go with our original proposals, but we would make some important minor changes. Very important, we believe that Brecon and Radnor should include a reference to the name added to Brecon and Radnor to respect the third of the electorate which will come from the Upper Swansea Valley. We do believe there is a strong case for changes in Carmarthen in addition to Llangynor ward, we would take two wards in and put two wards in Llanelli, and we think there's a strong case for the Pentir ward being included with the Aberconwy constituency and that constituency having the name Aberconwy and Bangor.

[00:46:36]

So that is our overall proposal, we have our original document, our document that we've presented to you today, the final day and this representation and the representation in Cardiff. I'm very grateful for all the work the Commission have done and the Assistant Commissioners, I wish you well in your deliberations, you have a, an interesting job to make recommendations to the Commission and we look forward in due course, in October I think the Secretary said, to receiving the revised proposals and seeing how you've revised them. We hope you will revise them in line with our suggestions, we look forward to reading those revised proposals and commenting on them in due course. Thank you very much indeed.



SP: Thank you very much. Are there any questions from the floor? Points of clarification from colleagues?

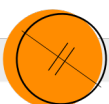
I have a couple. On Caerphilly and Caerphilly and Newport West, we've had strong representations to the effect, if you put to one side for the moment the, the actual makeup of the constituencies Caerphilly, Islwyn and Newport West, we've had strong representations to the effect that the, the, the links are with Cardiff, not Newport in terms of travel to work patterns, transport and so forth. Could you clarify a, you, you, you said there was a link between Caerphilly and Newport, that is correct, but cou..., could you say a little bit more about the ri..., the rationale for your support for the initial proposals based on the objections that we've received?

RP: Yes, surely. There's no doubt that there are links to Cardiff with Caerphilly, a lot of people I..., from Caerphilly link, link to Cardiff, there's no, no doubt about that, but I don't think the, the, the numbers work with, with Cardiff and there and it, i..., i..., you've got to link Newport with somewhere. And I, I think there are strong links and I particularly look at the links through the Bedwas to Trethomas ward, through that ward to Newport, linking in to, to Newport, is actually, I think, very very strong. It's very strong, it's a very good road, I've driven it a, a number of, of times from Bedwas, Trethomas into, into Newport, so there are links through there and then all the Newport links are, are together. We just think that that is better, the, the links between Argoed a..., and Penmaen in particular are, are poor and that is why we, we do believe that.

SP: Okay. Second question was in relation to mid Wales, sort of Brecon and Radnor and, and Montgomeryshire. We've had, as you say, a lot of representations about the, the historic county of Montgomeryshire. I'm not entirely clear why it's any more historic than anywhere else in Wales, so perhaps you could elaborate on that and in terms of Brecon and Radnor, I think you, you did mention the op..., the alternative of going north as it were, as opposed to south, but you say in, in the presentation, that that would be unpopular, and it would have knock-on effects in north Wales. The representations we've received indicate that it's equally unpopular in the Swansea Valley and there are knock-on effects in south Wales, so again perhaps you could elaborate a bit more on the rationale for your support for the initial proposals.

[00:50:28]

RP: Yes, yes surely. I, I, I there's no doubt whichever way you go it is, it, the, it is unpopular. So, if, if you look at the Swansea Valley, I, I think I've, I've made the case as to why I think the strong links with Ystradgynlais. I think, I think, people thinking it's Brecon and Radnor and forgetting it's Ystradgynlais as well and I think that is where, I think that is where the strong links are. In terms of Montgomeryshire, I think it is very historic, the, Mr Williams can no doubt tell you a bit more about the historic nature of the Montgomeryshire constituency. There were widespread, widespread objections last time when the Commission did, did do so. It also breaks local ties; I think that is important because obviously, Montgomeryshire is tied together, so the, it breaks local ties. Newtown, I think would have to come into the southern constituency, would have to come into a Brecon and Radnor constituency, but immediately to the north of Newtown, which clearly have all



their ties with Newtown, would not be included. And also, it would have, it would be slightly more difficult to then decide how you would do the northern constituencies 'cause more of north Wales would then have to be taken into Montgomeryshire in order to adjust that and that would cause additional problems in North Wales. Getting more of north Wales and some of suggested a Meirionydd and a, a Meirionydd and Montgomeryshire seat, which would be very, very large indeed, probably going from the coast, the, the Welsh, the Cambrian coast, right through to the English border. So, we believe it would have detrimental effects in Montgomeryshire and detrimental effects in north Wales because more of north Wales would have to be added to Montgomeryshire and you would then break further ties, you would probably have to have a, an even larger constituency and it would be very difficult. So, we do believe that the least worst option and often you have to go with the least worst option, is that Brecon and Radnor is as proposed by the con..., constit..., the Commission, albeit that we do believe that there should be a name change.

SP: Okay, thank you. My final point and I, I, I d..., this is more an appeal for assistance rather than point of clarification, I don't expect it to be answered now, but we've had a number of representations about the naming of Swansea West and Gower as you mentioned, but I haven't seen any figures which support the contention that the majority of the population of the Gower depends on where you draw the boundary on the west side of Swansea, with area like Dynfant and Killay if you get my drift? Now, I don't know whether there are any such figures available?

RP: Well, you, you, only need to add up the number of electors that come from Gower, the Gower constituency....

SP: Yes, but where.....?

RP: And the number of electors that come from the Swansea West constituency....

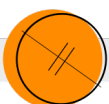
SP: Yes, but it depends on where, where, what you included in Swansea West or Gower, so some people would argue that Killay is part of Swansea West, some people will argue that it's part of the Gower. I, you know, I'm not debating the issue, but I think it, it's a, it's a genuine point that has been made in the representations, but I haven't seen any division of statistics.

RP: Basically, the way I, I, I've done it is I've taken the, the number of electors within the Gower constituency, so those are Gower...

[00:53:59]

SP: Alright.

RP: And the number of electors within the Swansea West constituency, I'm try..., trying to think which Killay is, Killay is in. Whether Killay is currently in Gower or whether it's currently in Swansea West, but. I think it's possibly in, currently in, in Swansea West. I don't I, I, I.....



SP: I think it is in Swansea West, but it, it's complicated by the fact that there are other proposals on the table to take certain wards in the Gorseinon Luchor area out of the Gower...

RP: Yeah, well we, we, we would oppose that because...

SP: Okay fine.

RP: But, but basically, the number of electors from the existing Gower constituency...

SP: Right, okay...

RP: I think, off the top of my head, I think it's about 53% to about 47% that come from Swansea...

SP: That, that's a helpful clarification. Thank you very much.

Okay, our next speaker is Councillor Pete Roberts. The floor is yours, sir.

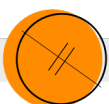
PR: Thank you Commissioners. Firstly, I have to begin with an apology. Like Roger's colleague I too have had Covid in the intervening time and that has taken about two and a half weeks out of my diary, so I've had far less time to prepare for today than I would normally do. So, rather than a lot of stuff on slides, there's a lot that I'm going to be filling in verbally and which will be going into our submission to you, which you will see this evening.

What I don't propose to do today is to go through a lot of the comments that I made at the first Cardiff hearing. I highlighted in that hearing a number of the areas where our proposals were supported by other comments that had come in and in, by and large, those stand today. I will touch on those verbally as I move through the presentation at the end, but there will be no slides for them.

[00:56:09]

What I want to focus on today are two things. The first is one substantive modification to our proposals from the regional hearing and the second part of that is an alternative that could be offered for the, the, a solution to the Trowbridge detached problem. This is one of the trickier problems I think, because Cardiff has such large wards, that making something balance has challenges elsewhere. So the second part of this is a proposal that sits within our wider proposals. It affects five of the constituencies we propose, which is very much an alternative that the Commission could consider, which retains our proposals within a structure that is acceptable to both, but also addresses a couple of concerns that have been raised throughout. It does have, one thing that is within the rules, but which I am not completely comfortable with, which is why I'm suggesting it as being alongside our proposals, rather than an absolute counterproposal.

So if I touch on the first one which I'm going look at. Looking at the Aberavon and Bridgend constituencies as we propose them. We focused very heavily on retaining the historic constituency of Bridgend in its entirety and in doing that, that creates challenges in making up the numbers. In our original solution, we incorporated

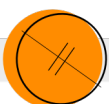


three wards from the top end of the valley that includes Maesteg, into this, which has the challenge of cutting Maesteg off from the lower part of the valley. This was picked up on by a number of presentations, most notably the member of parliament for Ogmore, in his comments and mindful to that and looking through the comments made by members of the public, we've looked at other opportunities in the area. We're also mindful that the Commission's proposals in splitting Bridgend away from, splitting it in two and taking the Porthcawl area and adding it to Aberavon, hit challenges that we highlighted around breaking up of communities and incorporating boundaries, which actually effectively ran through housing estates. So what we have looked at and reached a conclusion, is that we actually think there is a better solution in the area, by accepting that the Bridgend constituency is not retainable with its, within its current format and just adding things onto it, but actually, in order to retain the local ties, the inclusion of Maesteg West, Maesteg East and Caerau in with Bridgend to create a full valley running up from Bridgend to Maesteg, has a much stronger li..., community links and community ties. To balance this, we need to look at the wards of Cornelly and Pyle, which are to the north of the Porthcawl area, which are separated themselves from other communities and villages, either by indust..., industry or by open country. So we're suggesting a swap of these two wards, which are the two southern most ones in green, with the two most northern ones in the purple, between those two constituencies as we propose them, which gives greater community cohesion.

[01:00:35]

If we then chan..., turn to the Cardiff area, as I mentioned, sorry.... Yeah, sorry, I've already covered that. If we move to the Cardiff and the Rhondda area, comments were made in our initial proposals about incorporating four wards from Rhondda Cynon Taf into Cardiff West. We've looked at this and have some suggestions there. Comments were also made about the Heath and the Llanrhymney areas. Again, if we look at the Cardiff first, the need to retain Rhymney in a s..., Cardiff South war..., constituency, if recognised in order to maintain the possibility to walk from one end of the constituency to the other without getting your feet wet at high tide. In our original proposals, we had Heath, which is the, the red ward. Do I have a pointer? No I don't have a pointer. It's the red ward that is due north of where the pointer actually sits. We incorporated that into a Cardiff Central constituency. This was met with opposition by local members, and we tend to agree with those. We were uncomfortable with including this within Cardiff Central in our original proposals, but as I initiat..., initially said, Cardiff is very much a numbers game and without splitting electoral wards there are, it is very much piecing together what you can. Our preference would have been to have this particular pattern because it means the A48 represents a hard boundary for Cardiff Central, both in its adjoinments to Nea..., Heath and also further west. So we make the Cabalf..., Gabalfa the northernmost part of that and use the A48 as the boundary. To the east side of Heath is the main line running north-south and again, whilst we in our initial proposals, highlighted the fact that the line has a number of crossing points and a station that is shared by both the Neath and, the Heath and adjoining communities. We feel that this boundary is a much stronger and more natural one to be retained.

Moving into Cardiff West, our initial proposals had Pentyrch within the Cardiff North constituency. With the boundary changes that we're proposing for the west,

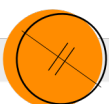


which I'll talk about on the next slide, it is now possible to move Pentyrch into Cardiff West, retaining it within its const..., current constituency, but also now linking it back with the St Fagans' area, which although not a material factor in these proposals, actually links it to the ward that it will be part of once the local government elections are completed in May. The counter to that is Cardiff Central is now too small so we propose bringing the Llanrhymney ward into this. It does break the link to the Pontprennau area, which is a strength of keeping it to the north, because that is also an adjoining ward under the new proposals and this is where the weakness crops in in this proposal and why we're not, we're proposing it alongside our additional submission because the only physical link between this ward and the adjoining wards in Cardiff Central is actually via a public footpath and a footbridge across the Rhymney because the eastern/western borders are the actual river Rhymney and to access the rest of the constituency by car, you actually need to pass through the Rhymney ward. Unlike the original Commission proposals, you don't need to get your feet wet to do it and you don't need to swim across the river because there is a footbridge. But as I say, it is much more the spirit of the rules rather than meeting all the desires that you might have. That said, of course, as we turn our focus to much more sustainable means of transport, the fact that we might be beholden to the car to prove or disprove the continuity of a constituency is something that perhaps we would dispute.

[01:06:05]

Moving on, we're look, we look at the Rhondda and the Pontypridd areas. In this instance, there is a slight balancing act, but there is also a desire supported by a number of submissions and we'll highlight this in our actual paper rather than presentation, which does support the inclusion of some wards to the south of Talbot's Green in with Cardiff West, partic..., but we note the Brynnau and Llanharan, there is no support for that. So our, our plans here are very much reducing our original plans to include three wards in with Cardiff West and reducing it to just the two, which is the same as the Commission's proposal in terms of Pontyclun and then the adjoining ward where fortuitously, the pointer of the hand is at the moment, in Cardiff West, but returning the wards around Brynnau and Llanharan to the Ogmore constituency. Countering that, that would make the Ogmore and Rhondda constituency we propose too large, so we are suggesting moving the Gilfach Goch ward back into the Pontypridd constituency. These are quite substantive changes, but what they do allow are, is a slight consolidation of Cardiff into a smaller footprint and they do facilitate the changes that we highlighted in other parts of this area.

Roger preceding me touched on the issues around Nelson, touched on the issues in the Cynon Valley. We actually go slightly further that the Conservative proposal in that we incorporate the three wards at the top of the Cynon Valley into a Cynon and Merthyr, Upper Cynon and Merthyr seat, which gives it slightly better consolidation than in the Conservative proposals. Like the Conservative proposals, we bring forward the Nelson ward into a Caerphilly areas seat, consolidating that, but we actually disagree with the Conservative party in that area and support a slightly modified version of the proposals advanced by Wayne David in linking the Caerphilly wards together and placing more emphasis on the links between Islwyn and Newport. Both of those areas have links to Newport by road, that's not in dispute, they're both A roads. However, the urban structure of the area below

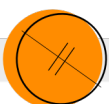


Risca is much more closely integrated with Newport. There is open land between the last of the houses, last housing estates in Caerphilly and the Newport boundary, and the public transport links and travel to work area links are much stronger between Caerphilly and Cardiff than they are between Caerphilly and Newport. So our proposition is unchanged in that area from our original proposals, which, which retains the core of the Caerphilly constituency and expands from there rather than expanding from the core of the Islwyn constituency.

Further east, as has already been mentioned, we are supportive of plans around Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Newport East and Monmouthshire. The linkage between county council boundaries and parliamentary boundaries is something that we support quite strongly wherever we can and the Commission's proposals strengthen changes in those areas. Where we do disagree quite strongly with the proposals from the Conservative party, although we have many things in common it seems now, is in the views around Brecon, Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire. And with the, the historic constituency of Montgomeryshire has more value than the historic constituency of Neath. In our view, because it opens up the possibilities of improving the integrity of the Neath area in its wider context and opening up other opportunities in Swansea, combined with the representations that have come in quite significant numbers from the Neath area, we believe that the move north retaining the constituency of Brecon and Radnor entirely within Powys, is the lesser of two evils. If we move north, the constituency retains itself entirely within one council area, which I think is important, bearing in mind that Montgomeryshire is already being linked in it, in its current proposals from the Commission, with councils further north. But this is mo..., is significant when we look at the south because not only would you be spanning the boundary between two councils for the Brecon and Radnorshire seat, you would also be spanning the boundary between two Senedd electoral regions and two health board areas. So you would immediately be placing a significant extra and avoidable workload on the member of parliament and their staff, which actually would be detrimental to their ability to deliver to their constituents.

[01:12:50]

But there are two issues that we would highlight in particular, which strengthen the case for looking north as opposed to looking south. The first one is education and cultural ties. The quote from the member of parliament for Brecon and Radnor that we extract here in their submission, is there are clear links to the proposed new wards. For example, many children in the Sennybridge area already attend Ystalyfera High School. This is actually accurate, Ystalyfera is the Welsh medium primary school, Welsh medium high School, which does attract pupils from Ystradgynlais and does attract pupils from Sennybridge, but it is also true that, by a small margin, the majority of pupils from Sennybridge attend Brecon High School a few miles down the road. It's also true that the YFC, the rugby and the cricket, cricket, football side of things is focused in with Breconshire and not over the border in that area down to the Swansea valley. So, there is the question there that, just how strong a ties are there outside of the Ystradgynlais area and I would suggest that, as there is a mountain in between the two, that those ties are relatively weak. If you then look to the north from an education perspective, you have a different picture and, I'm afraid I need to explain this map a little bit. The yellow area to the north of the black line are the consti..., communities that are



served by Newtown High School, the area in grey to the left are the areas served by Llanidloes High School. Now it seems a little bit of anomal..., anomalous that.... Is that mine again? [laughter] I thought I'd switched it off. [laughter] It will go off in five minutes, I will switch it off then.

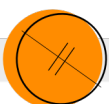
If we look to this, there looks to be an anomaly that there is such a large area covered by Newtown High School. The reality is Newtown High School is the merger, about ten years ago, of Newtown High School and John Beddoes High School in Presteigne. So you can see that by moving Newtown and a number of other areas with it, further south, you actually bring the high school and all of its pupils, with the exception of those from Tre..., the Tregynon, Abermiwl area, into one parliamentary constituency, with one set of representation. Likewise, the Llanidloes High School reaches down into Pantydŵr, St Harmon and splits the town of Rhayader 50/50 between Llanidloes and Ysgol Calon Cymru in Llandrindod Wells.

The junior sports side of things, the football in that area, Rhayader, Llandrindod contest their football in Newtown, Llanidloes. They extend further to Berriew and Welshpool, it has to be said, but also down into Brecon and Hay. So there is no connectivity socially between the areas north of the Brecon Beacons, Mynydd Ddu area with the rest of Ystradgynlais to Ystalyfera.

[0117:00]

There's also the cultural aspects. We heard in the previous presentation that adding these very urban wards in changes the make up of Ystradgynlais, which I hasten to add, is a large urban settlement, but it's Ystradgynlais, Coelbren, Cae Hopcyn, Abercrave, all individual villages with individual identities, so to suggest that it is larger than Brecon, which is a coherent town, is again accurate, but can be interpreted a different way is slightly concerning. If we're now talking about moving an urban Upper Swansea Valley from 10% of the constituency to 30% of the constituency, because those wards are made up very much of upper valleys towns, there are very few albeit quite large farming areas. The uplands there are very much uplands. You're actually significantly changing the make up and the composition both socially and economically of this area. So there is the concern that 30% now becomes a very dominant focus for the constituency, the temptation almost would be, well if 30% of the electorate are within a mile, within five or ten miles, we'll actually base the office in the south rather than the centre and the north.

And here is where the next challenge comes in, because if we look now to the public transport, because car, car provision is one thing, but a main issue for the Covid pandemic is unemployment within Brecon and Radnor has increased quite significantly. It's one reason the council area got one of the largest increases in Revenue Support Grant this year. When it comes to public transport, the two t..., main towns that will be moved across, Llanidloes and Newtown both have direct bus services to Llandrindod Wells. In fact, Newtown, because it is on the Traws Cumbria network, actually has a direct service all the way through Llandrindod, Brecon, Builth and Brecon, all the way straight down to Cardiff. In contrast, Ystalyfera and Pontardawe and Brynaman link into Ystradgynlais but their direct services stop there. You need to change at Ystradgynlais to get onto the bus to



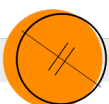
Brecon and then change at Brecon to get onto the bus further north. So by pulling this area away from their natural focus of Neath and Swansea, you are shifting the dynamic quite considerably to the detriment of those individuals. And this is where we differ quite considerably from the comments of the Conservative party, because we don't think this is the least worst option. We already see strong linkages between Newtown and Brecon and Radnor in terms of their service delivery, county hall for the area in which they reside is in Llandrindod in the Brecon and Radnor constituency. Bus links, social links are all there, whereas in this area the linkage is to Neath, it is to Swansea. If you're going out for the night, you don't see many people from Pontardawe up in Brecon, unless Theatr Brycheiniog has put something particularly special on, but you do see them in Neath, you do see them in Swansea. So we would quite strongly suggest that the cultural side is strongly served there, the political administration in that area is in Neath. It's not Brecon, it's not even Ystradgynlais and their health care as well is not served by the same health authority as the rest of the constituency that you are putting them it with. So, on those grounds and the fact that Montgomeryshire is already being merged with other council areas, we would strongly suggest that taking Montgomeryshire north as the Commissioners did when the numbers forced them to in previous reviews that never actually made it to the ballot box, is actually a stronger case than Montgomeryshire. Now I will accept the argument that Montgomeryshire is an historic area. I'm sure you'll hear them again today, but we are looking at hard facts, we are looking at realities and I would say that there is a stronger case that if you are retaining one out of two of the historic constituencies, Neath with its ties, in terms of the practicalities of administration and day to day life of the individual, is a much stronger one to retain than Montgomeryshire.

If I look elsewhere, we raised issues at the first session in respect of Ceredigion Council's proposals for a Teifi Valley type merger. We've looked at these in more detail in the intervening time and we cannot find a case to merit them other than the distance. We think merging across two council boundaries there when there is no Carmarthenshire wards already in the proposal is an additional burden on the members of parliament that would be represented and for the same reasons as I have just alluded to in respect of Powys, we cannot support them.

[01:25:50]

We are agnostic, though on the changes around Llanelli and I thank Roger for the work that he and his party have done in looking in more detail. This is the one area where I will apologise to the Commissioners, because looking at this is the piece of work that fell in the wi..., in the time window where I had qu..., a quite m..., a mild, but inconveniencing bout of Covid, so I've not looked at them and the party have not looked at them in detail, so I thank Roger for Conservatives Party's work in that and I would remain as a park, as a party we would remain agnostic on whether the Commission's proposals are better than the opp..., than the suggestions put forward, but we would encourage you to look at them.

Further north, our proposals are unchanged from what I shared with you in the first presentation. We addressed the Pentir issue in the first proposals we put forward we also addressed an issue that had been raised by a couple of people in the sub, in the area around Llansannan, which brings two, two wards into a much



more consistent Clwyd West constituency.. Further east, the same issues that Roger alluded to in his presentation around the integrity of Wrexham are part of our proposals as are the Rhosllanerchrugog, the Johnstown issue, retaining the integrity of that area there, also in our proposals.

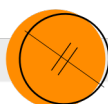
We also include a number of other small towns into our Montgomeryshire and South Clwyd constituency, where local people have indicated that they look more to the rural areas of Corwen and Llangollen than they do the indu..., the more industrial wards that the Boundary Commission's initial proposals put them into. I expand on that a little bit more, drawing the Commission's attention to that in the proposals that we will be submitting later today. But in general, our proposals are largely unchanged. Like the Conservative party, we recognise the challenges that Green and Plaid Cymru have put forward in their proposals, particularly in South Wales and they, they do look very much to me as an attempt to do something different. Offer an alternative for the Commission, but in so doing I think they fail quite considerably on the grounds that have been put forward as the criteria on which the Commission need to work. And again, I thank Roger for his more detailed analysis of their proposals and largely a cursory view, I would agree entirely with them which is why I didn't put more work into that. In respect of the Labour party, I don't have any criticisms either way. We have areas where we agree with them, we have areas where we differ and I leave it to them to bring forward their, their proposals and any changes that they may wish to make in a few minutes. But unless you have any questions, that is all I wish to share with you today.

[01:27:52]

SP: Thank you very much. Any questions or points of clarification from the floor? No. I have one, unless my colleagues have anything more to add first? No.

I think you described your vision of electoral wards in the Cardiff area or within the local authority as a numbers game, which I, I can sympathise with, but did you give any consideration to perhaps more substantive changes within Cardiff to negate the need to, to bolt other communities on to the capital city? We've had a number of representations, for example, from Pontyclun, and your Cardiff West constituency in particular, I, I know you've come up with certain amendments, but it does go quite a way outside the city limits. Did you, did you consider a possible redistribution within Cardiff itself?

PR: I, I looked at it and I think I probably, with, with the app I was using, I think I probably spent about ten hours over the, the varying different times I spent three hours yesterday evening, looking again to see your very question. The problem with Cardiff is that too many of the wards are seven, eight, nine, ten thousand strong and whilst you can get something that works in the main, you end up having to add something from somewhere. The Commission added in Dinas Powys, we've heard in some detail from the Conservative party and local representatives why that has got as much opposition. In fact, I would possibly say more opposition than Pontyclun in terms of wanting to stay with its existing area. In fact, within respect to Pontyclun, there's actually at least one representation saying it's actually really good to see us going in with Cardiff as we have much more vie..., more in line with that north Cardiff area than we do with the Rhondda valley.



SP: Okay.

PR: But the only way to, that I could find, consolidate Cardiff within the Cardiff boundaries would be to actually start to go down to the individual polling district level and actually break electri..., electoral wards up from this level. And as it is a possibility, albeit not necessarily a brilliant one in all counts, to actually make Cardiff and the whole of Wales work without doing that, being mindful of the comments that were made in the last review, where I suggested a split in the Ponciau area between Cardiff, between Wrexham and Clwyd South that, from your equivalents at the time that were, why did you split if you could make it work? I focused not on splitting areas this time, I've spoke, focused on delivering within the whole units.

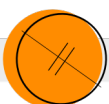
SP: Okay, thank you very much. Thank you, thank you again. Our next speaker is Mr Joe Lock.

JL: Bore da, symae? My name's Joe Lock, I'm the Deputy General Secretary of Welsh Labour and I live in Ynys Môn, I wouldn't worry too much about the slides, there's not an awful lot on them, so.... I'm also joined by my colleague, Tom, Tom Adams, who is more technically minded than me, and if there are any points of clarification, I may defer as I, I did in, in Cardiff to, to Tom.

Our representation this morning should be read in conjunction with the written submission made during the initial consultation, which was representation 10049 and the Party's oral presentations which I did in Cardiff at the public hearing. The Labour Party has considered the submissions made by others during the initial consultation period as well as the representations made to the public hearings of Wa..., in Wales.

[01:32:37]

The formal position of the party remains, as set out in our own statement and we would urge the Commission to consider and accept the arguments made there. Both where, where we are in support of their own proposals and where we make counterproposals. We believe them to represent a proposal which balances the statutory criteria and creates a sustainable pattern of constituencies in Wales which can provide effective representation for its communities. We are aware, however, that others have made alternative proposals, which they consider equally valid in respect of the rules, and that the Commission has a difficult task in assessing their relative merits and then choosing between them. While we have, as far as practical, considered all of them, we do not refer to them all specifically within this representation. Many of them propose completely different patterns of constituencies and while they may, may contain aspects, which have merit, we would not support them because of their wider context. We have, rather identified what we believe to be the key issues, which ha, have emerged in the representations, objections and counterproposals and the Labour Party's overall perspective from which the Commission, we will trust be able to infer Labour's view on different proposals, even where they do not explicitly set them out. Our submission will therefore summarise our own views of the many issues that have



been raised and their strengths and weaknesses. They are presented in context of our own previous arguments, which we have set out and which otherwise, unless otherwise stated, remain the same. We trust that this will be of use to the Commission in assessing the pros and cons of different proposals and what level of support each may have.

I will now go through areas of Wales which we wish to make, we wish to make comments in turn. We will also submit more detail in our written submission which we will submit to the Commission before midnight tonight.

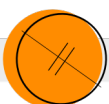
So, first slide. That's, there we go. We have..., we set out in our previous representations that we believe to be the chief factors which determine the pattern of how 31 constituencies are distributed in mainland Wales and specifically the seats which we must combine parts of, parts of the more densely populated local authorities in south Wales and in north-east Wales and sparsely populated areas in mid Wales and west Wales, which tend to currently have very low electorates. We agree with the Commission's proposals in this respect.

[01:35:16]

Perhaps the most difficult of these issues in the, is the enlargement of Brecon and Radnorshire. A huge rural constituency, which shares the borders with all the south Wales valleys. Any constituency which contains part or of both of these is likely to be an awkward arrangement. We believe that the advantage of the Commission's initial proposal, to add the nine wards of Neath Port Talbot County Borough, is that it links these areas with one part of Brecon and Radnorshire which has affinity with those valley communities. The Upper Tawe Valley links seamlessly with Ystradgynlais and Ys..., Ynyscedwyn by the A4067 and the Ystalyfera has close ties with Ystradgynlais. We regret that this proposal breaks the ties within the Neath constituency, but we are unable to identify any counterproposal which would not create greater disruption. We note that the Liberal Democrats, for example, which would create a seat combining part of Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, which we believe would lack any ties.

We also agree with the Commission's proposal to extend the Ceredigion seat by once again adding the north of Pembrokeshire. An arrangement which was in place between 1983 and 1997. We believe that this is obviously logical, in that the whole constituency would be of similar character dominated by coastal and rural communities. We do make a counterproposal for the wards of St Davids and Solva to be within the Mid and South Pembrokeshire constituency and for, excuse my, my Welsh pronunciation, Maenclochog, yeah, to be within the Ceredigion Preseli seat. On balance, we would argue that the ties of St Davids are stronger with the areas to the south and that the local centre of Haverfordwest than they are with Fishguard and the north-west coast of Pembrokeshire. We believe that the arguments in respect of Letterston ward are less clear cut and we would have no objection were, were that ward to be within the Mid and South Pembrokeshire seat, as has been proposed by others at the hearings.

Have I skipped a slide, yeah? There's possibly a slide missing here, but.... My next slide is supposed to be Monmouthshire, Monmouthshire and Torfaen. The two authorities of Monmouthshire and Torfaen each have electorates which



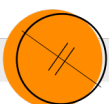
conveniently are within 5% of the electoral quota. The current Torfaen constituency is entirely contained within the borough and some 59,182 electors, 88.2% of the current Monmouth constituency are within the Monmouthshire County. The rest being and remaining in the part of Torfaen. We would argue that the case is therefore almost unanswerable under the rules, the two local authorities and the constituencies sh..., should each be cote..., coterminous. We therefore do not support the suggestion of Plaid Cymru, that the town of Abergavenny should be included in Brecon and Radnorshire, Brecon and Radnor, rather than the Upper Tawe Valley, the consequence of which is that the Torfaen constituency would be broken up with Cwmbran in a seat with Monmouth and Pontypool with Blaenau Gwent.

This is the Newport and Caerphilly slide. With Monmouthshire and Torfaen comrining, comprising whole constituencies, the current whole Newport East constituency must be wholly within the city and county of Newport. We believe that the Commission have chosen the most suitable six wards from the existing Newport West constituency with which to augment it, including Bettws, which has slong, strong ties to Malpas and is separated from the remainder of Newport West by the M4 motorway. We accept that there are, that there is then considerable conce..., controvershy, controversy about which constituency to place the rest of the wards which are currently within Newport West in wi..., in that there are arguments both ways.

[01:40:00]

We believe that the Commission's initial proposals are a viable solution, while acknowledging that there are few ties between Newport and Caerphilly and that the latter looks much more towards Cardiff. The proposed constituency would in that sense comprise of two different, distinct parts, but there would be reasonable internal communications within it. We also accept that there are ties between Rogerston and Risca in the Sirhywi valley, which might make it logical to create a new constituency in that area. However, we believe that the counterproposal which has been made to that effect and that the Liberal Democrats would result, and that of the Liberal Democrats would result in the breaking of ties in the Islwyn constituency and particularly between Blackwood and Newbridge. Whereas the initial proposals for Islwyn create a compact seat in which 53,795, which is 95.2% of the electors in the current constituency would remain within it. We note that there have been few objections to the proposed Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney constituency and believe it is the obvious way of creating a new seat in this area. Indeed, if Torfaen is to be one whole constituency, it is effectively the only one. We do note that the ward of Nelson sh..., could be included with an Islwyn constituency which would be, which would better respect local government boundaries and its ties with Ystradmynach, but the Commission's overall proposal for Cardiff requires that to be within the Merthyr Tydfil, Aberdare constituency and I will touch upon this in detail, in more detail later.

We note that the proposals in this part of Wales arise from the Commission's solution to be need, to the need to amend constituencies in Cardiff, where the area of the city, plus Penarth has the entitlement to just 3.74 constituencies. So while the city can retain four constituencies, additional areas from other local authorities must be added to it. We believe there is considerable logic to the Commission's

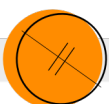


decision to add Dinas Powys ward to the Cardiff South and Penarth constituency and that the Rhondda Cynon Taff wards of Taffs Wells and Pontyclun to the Cardiff North constituency and Cardiff West constituency respectively. All of them, we believe, have strong ties to Cardiff and partly function as commuter areas for the city. We believe, for example, that the argument that Dinas Powys should not be in Cardiff South and Penarth because it lacks ties to Penarth is spurious. It can be in that constituency because its ties to Cardiff are similar to those of Penarth and while we acknowledge it obviously has some ties to Barry, as part of the same local authority, there is no problem, we believe, in it being in Cardiff South and Penarth which already contains much of the Vale of Glamorgan. The benefit of the initial proposal is that they allow three of the four constituencies to remain completely intact whilst just 14, 377 electors, which is just 4.1% in a city, to change seats, which we believe is a remarkable statistic given the degree of change which is necessary within Wales as a whole. Furthermore, the only change to the Vale of Glamorgan constituency would be the transfer of Dinas Powys, with every single elector in the revised seat being part of that constituency already.

[01:43:56]

The Rhondda constituency would also remain intact and wholly within the Rhondda Cynon Taff County borough. We accept that there is legitimate objections within the rules to the proposal for Nelson ward to be and the orphan wards of Taffs Wells and Pontyclun leaving Rhondda Cynon Taff divided between five different constituencies. However, we believe that these are relatively minor anomalies, anomalies which are outweighed by the overall logic of the Commission's proposal for the eight constituencies in this part of Wales. We also accept that the Trowbridge ward would effectively be a detached part within the Cardiff South and Penarth constituency and that the pra..., in practical terms, there would be no road access to it within the constituency. We do not believe that this would be a major problem with relatively small urban area, but we accept that the Commission may feel that this is a weakness in their proposal. We believe again that the disinf..., disadvantage of the proposals are outweighed by the advantages of the initial proposals as described previously. Also, the Conservative counterproposal which seeks to address these issues, we believe has major flaws. Crucially, it would place the Llanrhymney and Rhymney wards in different constituencies which would break the strong ties between them. A proposal which is also a feature of the Liberal Democrat counterproposal. We believe that there are significant consequential changes of transferring Llandaff North and Riverside wards from the constituencies in which they have resided for many years are also strong arguments against the proposal.

Were the Commission to accept the arguments of the Conservatives in respect of Nelson, Taffs Wells, Pontyclun and Trowbridge, we would however argue that rather than adopt their counterproposal, it should be amended to enable Llanrhymney and Rhymney wards to remain in Cardiff South and Penarth, respecting the ties between them, with Trowbridge transferred to Cardiff North. We note that Trowbridge has ties to Pontprennau and Old St Mellons that are continuous, there being a continuous residential development within the part of St Mellons South, east of the A48. This counterproposal would also require Dinas Powys ward to be within the Cardiff South and Penarth constituency, as mentioned earlier, which is a logical proposal.



We note that there are widespread agreement within the three existing constituencies of Aberavon, Bridgend and Ogmore, must effectively be reconfigured into two new, new, two new whole seats. The Labour party agrees with the Commission's proposal for the two seats in Bridgend and Aberavon Porthcawl and we believe it is logical to create the two seats using the major transportation corridors, which obviously reflect the major geography of the area. We would respect the ties of Maesteg, Llynfi Valley and Garw Valley in, within, with the town of Bridgend, with Port Talbot being linked with Porthcawl in a constituency focused on the M4 and coastal communities of the Severn Estuary. We recognise that this would break the ties between Porthcawl and Bridgend, which have been in the same constituency for many years, but we feel that the major counterproposal which would place them in the same seat, creates an unworkable constituency, linking Aberavon and Maesteg, which runs against main transport links, with the two parts linked only by minor road access and sparsely populated uplands. [coughs] Excuse me.

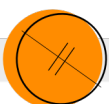
We accept that there are ties between the two wards of Cefn Glas and Llangewydd and Brynhyfryd to the town of Bridgend where the Commission to believe that those ties needed to be restored. We would commend the counterproposal of Chris Elmore and Steven Kinnock, MPs, set out in their submissions to the Cardiff and Swansea hearings respectively, that the Cefn Cribau ward would be included in the Aberavon Porthcawl constituency instead.

[01:48:45]

Neath and Swansea. As noted earlier, we regret the major changes to the Neath constituency, but believe that the transfer of the Upper Tawe Valley to Brecon and Radnor is the best available way of increasing the electorate of that, of the, of that constituency. This necessitates the creation of a seat comprising the rest of Neath plus the three Coed Frank wards of Aberavon, with the east of Swansea, with two other seats wholly within the city of Swansea. The Labour party has made a counterproposal for these three seats, in which we set out our arguments in its favour in our previous oral and written representations, which were supported by other witnesses. Overall, a total of 136,514 electors remain in their main successor constituency, which is 90.8% of those in Gower, 69.6% of those in Neath and 69.9% of those in Swansea West, compared with 119,995 under the initial proposals, under which Swansea West is the, is the seat technically abolished and the proposed Swansea North and Central would contain more electors from Swansea East. We accept that the counterproposal perpetuates the split of the Mumbles Community Council between these two constituencies, but by respecting the existing constituency boundaries, this still, is still consistent within the statutory criteria.

In Carmarthenshire, we note the counterproposal which has been made for the Llangynor ward to be within the Caerfyrddin constituency and we accept that it has strong ties to the town of Carmarthen. We would have no objection were the Commission to propose this revision in their proposals, to their initial proposals.

Moving onto mid and north Wales. The change in which the Commission proposed to the Brecon and Radnor seat allows the boundary within Montgomeryshire to

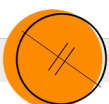


remain unchanged, which the Labour party supports. We would very much welcome the generally incremental way in which the Commission has made changes to seats in north-east Wales, whilst accepting that the existing seats of Clwyd South and Vale of Clwyd must be among those which are technically abolished. We believe that the Commission, Commission's proposal retain the integrity of the main communities in those seats, whilst minimising the number of electors moving seats. So every single elector in the current seats of Aberconwy, Alyn and Deeside, Montgomeryshire and Wrexham remain in the same constituency as do 88.2% of those in Delyn and 70.2% of those in Clwyd West. We believe that these are considerable strengths and are clearly consistent with the statutory criteria. The proposed Montgomeryshire and Glyndwr constituency and Clwyd constituency and comprised of electors of just two existing constituencies.

[01:52:09]

We do not believe that the relatively minor inconveniences of including two wards of Wrexham County Borough in the Alyn and Deeside constituency outweigh these benefits, especially as there is a history of such arrangement in the Llay ward being part of Alyn and Deeside between 1983 and 1997. We also believe that the Argoed, Leesward, Leeswood and New Brighton wards have ties to Buckley as well as to Mold. In contrast, the town of Flint and Bagillt have been part of the Delyn constituency seat since the seat's creation in 1983 and the Flint, and Flint is currently the largest town within it. We therefore do not support the Conservative counterproposal, which while it does reduce the number of constituencies in Wrexham County Borough by one, achieves it through the creation of what would, we would argue, is a disparate and illogical Delyn seat, which does not include Flint, but it stretches as far, as far south as Corwen and Llandrillo. The proposal would reduce the number of electors in, in the Delyn constituency remaining, in that remained, renamed seat, to 42,068 electors, which is 70.6, 70.9, 76, sorry point nine % of the, of the electors, and the number remaining in Clwyd, as the successor to Clwyd West, to 38,715, which is just 67%. The Clwyd South constituency would be divided between three new seats rather than two, breaking the ties between Corwen and Llangollen. We support the proposal in north-west Wales in, with every elector in Dwyfor Meirionydd remaining in that constituency. We do note, however, that, that h..., that there have been objections to the exclusion of the Pentir ward from Aberconwy, and we accept that this has ties to the city of Bangor. We would therefore support a counterproposal which addressed this, given it could move to the proposed Aberconwy with no additional knock-on consequences.

We do not wish to make any objections to the names proposed by the Commission and would generally urge that they should be kept as succinct as possible. While it is right that the Commission should adjust constituency names where there has been significant change, we do not believe that this process should be one of providing a description of the new seat rather than simply a title, which readily identifies the general area, both to residents and to others who need to use it for whatever purpose. We note a number of counterproposals have been made by others and in most cases, we see no benefit to them. We believe that the Montgomeryshire and Glyndwr seat in, is as much more concise name than the Montgomeryshire and Clwyd South. We believe that Clwyd is a perfectly acceptable description which recognises and, which recognises the changes which



have been made to the Clwyd West, whilst the change of the name of Delyn to Clwyd East, we believe is completely unnecessary if the Commission's proposals are to be retained. We would, on balance, argue for the Gower and Swansea West rather than Swansea West and Gower and the Neath and Swansea East rather than Swansea East and Neath, recognising that in each case, this is the major contributing constituency.

That concludes our submission to this hearing. We would like to thank the Commission once again for the opportunity to address this hearing, the hearing this morning and the way they have sought to engage with political parties throughout this process. We look forward to the publication of the revised proposals later this year.

SP: Thank you very much.

JL: Thank you.

SP: Any questions, points of clarification from the floor? No. My colleagues?

I have one. We've had written and oral representation from Labour members of parliament and certain constituency Labour parties, which do not say the same thing.

JL: Yep.

[01:56:45]

SP: I assume that they are entitled to their personal or organisational representations, but is there anything you would like to add by, in terms of clarifying the status of the Labour party's official position if I can call it that, set against that of your elected representatives?

JL: Individual, individual members of the party are, are entitled to make, make representations as, as they see fit. There, there has been an internal process of consultation and members, and members of parliament and councillors and, and, and members from across Wales have been able to contribute to that. This is the settled position of, of the Labour party and this is the official position of the Labour party.

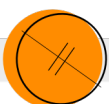
SP: Fair enough, thank you very much. No other questions?

JL: Diolch. Thank you.

SP: Thank you.

Okay, I've just been advised that our next speaker is, is not yet available, so I'm going to bring the recess forward until 11.15. Thank you very much.

Okay, welcome back everyone. For the benefit of colleagues who've just joined us. By way of introduction, we are the four Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners I should say, conducting this part of the review. From my right, your left, Andrew



Clemes, Gwenllian Lansdowne Davies, I'm Steve Phillips, Alan Midhar and the Secretary and Chief Executive of the Boundary Commission in Wales, Shereen Williams. Mr Morgan Hughes, if you could state which part of, which area you are from, who if anyone you are representing and, and stick to the time allocated, we'd be grateful. You will get a warning, five minute warning from my colleague in the back there and the floor is yours, sir.

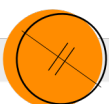
AMH: Brilliant, lovely, thank you. It's very nice to be here today, thank you very much for the invitation to be present. My name is Aled Morgan Hughes, I live in Aberystwyth but I'm originally from Montgomeryshire, and I'm here today representing Plaid Cymru with our response. I'll give the presentation in English, but of course, you're welcome to submit any questions in Welsh or in English.

Good morning everyone, my name is Aled Morgan Hughes, I'm originally from Montgomeryshire, but now living five minutes or so down the road here in Aberystwyth. It's a pleasure to be here on behalf of Plaid Cymru, introducing our recommendations for the proposals made by the Boundary Commission.

[01:59:24]

So, we'll start off just quickly on my political soap box. At the outset, Plaid Cymru would like to reiterate our opposition to the reduction in the number of members of Westminster parliament being returned from Wales. We do believe that the reduction should be accompanied with a corresponding reassessment of the devolution settlement and, unfortunately, we do not, we do not believe that this downscaling in the number of Welsh MP's is to the benefit of Wales. However, the Boundary Commission of course, does not have the power within the political context to set any of that and merely must operate within the guidelines and, and context offered by, by legislation. And in light of this, we would like to commend and congratulate yourselves on the work offered in, in the, in the initial document. We do believe it is, they are very coherent proposals and have been made under challenging conditions. The, the dramatic decrease in the number of members naturally cuts across many economic, social and linguistic ties and we do believe on the whole, that the Commission has done a very good job in, in addressing this and, and coming up with good plans to start off with.

However, we do wish to make some amendments to the Commission's initial proposals. For a number of constituencies these are very minor, however in others, the change is more significant. Throughout the process we've tried to sort of prioritise two main aspects. Most importantly prioritising the importance of local ties. Oh, I think the, is? Oh there, we're back. The importance of local ties within areas linking communities together, so, in particular, economic, linguistic, social, historic connections and another important aspect we've sought to pursue in our response is ensuring that that rural voice and rural communities are, are respected in any future proposals. What we are afraid of in some instances, we do see some constituencies where rural areas have been lumped with more urban areas and we, we do, we do have concerns that the rural distinct voice could be, could be drowned out by the more populated areas and obviously then, cause somewhat of, some degree of disenfranchisement and, and, and a lack of coherent voice for those rural areas then. We also, we've also tried our best to stay within local



authority areas and boundaries of that kind. However, of course, the, the cut does make that a little harder in many instances.

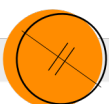
So, we'll start off with looking at our proposals on a whole, for at our proposals for Wales on a whole. I'll go through all of these areas individually, but I'll just leave that up there for now for, just for you to [inaudible 02:02:41] for a moment. Okay, so we'll start first and foremost in the south-east. No, what I'll do is I'll get rid of that slide and we'll stick to the, that map, because that's a bit more interesting to look at.

[02:02:55]

So the first constituency is Monmouth and Cwmbran, so that's one of the more significant changes we offer, so that's the one in the, in the pink there. The current constituency of Monmouth has been in, in existence since 1997 and already includes four wards from the Cwmbran area. Now our proposals would unite that Cwmbran area in this single seat, whilst losing the territories of the Abergavenny area in the north, of course and then downwards, so some, some wards in the Greater Severn side area. In Newport East, our proposed constituency unites the eastern half of Newport and its natural hinterland in the Severn side area. So that's the blue one at the bottom. There's obviously a lot of social and, and, and community links in that area, particularly with transport with the M4 corridor running through that corridor seat as well. We also propose the Newport West seat, now this constituency unites western Newport with the Risca area, which we believe has stronger ties to Newport than the more valley communities, of, of Caerphilly, which have been initially recommended by, by the Commission. And Caerphilly, of course, has traditionally looked more towards Glamorgan rather than this area of, of Gwent. We also offer Blaenau Gwent to Pontypool, so very little change here. These have a shared history of, of close cultural links which unite these sort of valleys areas. And then, finally, will, we've got, we offer this Sirhywi seat which comprises of Blackwood and its hinterland looking north towards Tredegar. So I'll just leave that up there for a second. I'll take any questions or comments at the end if that's okay?

We'll, we'll move swiftly on there, and that's the, the data, just for the..., I'll leave that up there for a second. For the five seats there in the region.

So we'll move on now to central Glamorgan. Now central Glamorgan consists of three distinct but linked geographical areas. We've got, of course, the Cardiff city itself, the south coast and then the former mining valleys a little bit more northwards in the, in the region. Our proposals try to keep these area, these areas distinct. We'll start off with the Rhondda constituency. By joining the Rhondda valleys with the Ely valley, we can reach the quota and this corresponds with the former Rhondda Borough Council area, together with the Ely part of the former Taff Ely Borough Council. This area has good interlinking transport links and social, historic ties that links the area together. We also recommend the constituency of Merthyr and Aberdare. These towns have always had a close relationship, being part of the same constituency in the 19th century. These have, these have strong transport links locally and they're also served by the same hospital as well as sharing other local ties. In Pontypridd, so the green one there in the more middle of the, o..., o..., of the map. In Pontypridd we propose re-joining Pontypridd with



the southern end of the Cynon Valley. These wards have a close connection with Pontypridd and during the last boundary review, there was a strong opposition to moving a number of them to the Cynon Valley from Pontypridd. What we also propose is including the wards of Creigiau and Pentyrch, both of which have strong connections with the Pontyclun and Taff's Well area and were formerly part of the Pontypridd constituency,

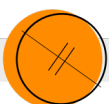
Moving then on to Caerphilly, I, I've mentioned this prior. We'd be joining Caerphilly town area together with the Ystrad Mynach area and the wards around Nelson, because we believe this creates a better, more logistical seat than what's initially proposed in the Boundary Commission's proposals.

[02:07:06]

In Cardiff, we, we try our best to keep Cardiff together. Obviously the, the problem with Cardiff is that the ward sizes are so large, one movement of them causes a lot of difficulties elsewhere, so I know the Commission have, have opposed potentially to look at splitting wards and in principle it's certainly something we wouldn't object to, but obviously it may, something you may wish to consider in, in future. So, yeah, Cardiff, Cardiff West, Cardiff Central and East, so all of these have close economic factors, transport connections and other identities tend to be focused on a citywide level. What we've also done as well as you'll see from the map, is we've gone for a Barry and Cardiff South seat. So there are not enough registered electors in the city of Cardiff to form four constituencies, and because of then the close links between Cardiff and the Barry area running down that sort of coast there, Penarth and all of them, we propose to extend this down there. Again, transport links and the historic sort of dockland links as well, linking those areas.

In Bridgend, this is a seat comprising on the upland area of the county of Bridgend, together with the town and then in Porthcawl and the Vale of Glamorgan, the Vale of Glamorgan holds a lot in common with many of the areas in south Bridgend and also has good transport links with the, with that seat on a whole. I'll just go through the data quickly on these, hold on a second. That's for Rhondda and Pontypridd, Aberdare and Caerphilly and these are the Cardiff, Cardiff area seats.

In West Glamorgan, so one of the things we offer is uniting Neath and Aberavon. This proposed constituency would unite the town of Neath and Port Talbot, which together with the Nedd and Afan Valleys, would form the immediate hinterlands of, of the seat. So, again very close ties both within the local authority and socially, culturally and economically. What we also pre..., propose is the Llyw and Tawe seats. Now I'll get back to this in more detail when we're discussing the Powys proposals. Whereas the Commission's initial proposals divide the western valleys of Glamorgan with some becoming part of Brecon and Radnor and others being joined by parts of urban Swansea, our proposals would create a constituency of culturally and economically similar communities which have good links to each other, the, the M4. The bulk of this proposed constituency consists of the former Llyw Valley District Council with the addition of some, some nearby communities immediately to the east. It's of, it is our contention that these are significantly stronger local ties between the communities such as Gorseinon, Pontardulais and Pontardawe, than there between these towns and either Powys or central Swansea. In this area as well, we've also got Swansea East, now our proposal is for



a more compact, exclusively urban constituency here, covering the city centre and eastern parts of Swansea. In Swansea West and the Gower then, these are quite similar to what's offered by the Commission's initial proposals, our proposals unites the western urban part of Swansea with this Gower Peninsula and everyone here will obviously be aware of the economic and and tourist, tourism ties, which links those area together. And those are the data.

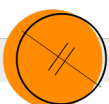
We'll move on to Dyfed, which, seeing as we're in Ceredigion now, which is always interesting. Now we, on the whole, only propose minor amendments to the Commission's initial proposals. And these, yet again are designed to better reflect local ties in the area. Now with the Ceredigion Preseli seat and Mid and South Pembrokeshire seat, in our view, some of the southernmost wards in the proposed Ceredigion constituency....

[02:11:42]

So we're looking down at St Davids Head there, have closer local ties with the Haverfordwest and Central and Southern Pembrokeshire areas than they do with the more northern Preseli area of Pembrokeshire. In contrast, we believe that the Maenclochog area, which is included in the Mid and south Pembrokeshire wards, in the, the proposal..., the Commission's proposals, tends to look largely towards more northwards towards Preseli. After all, it's located in the Preseli hills and tends to look more towards the civic centres of, of Cardigan and Fishguard as its principal towns. What we therefore propose is moving the wards of Letterston, Solva and St Davids into the Mid and South Pembrokeshire seat, whilst and then moving the Maenclochog to the Ceredigion Preseli proposed seat. This change also has the effect of creating a more geographically compact constituency and also is good in cutting travelling times. So, currently the Ynyslas area in northern Ceredigion down to Solva would be in excess of two hours in the, in the Boundary Commission's recommendations, whereas our travelling times from Ynyslas down to Clynderwen or Llantysilio in the most southern area of Maenclochog, would be around an hour, hour and a half, hour and forty minutes, so we're shaving off around half an hour there in travel times, which is always important.

Looking swiftly then at Carmarthen and Llanelli, we propose again, small changes here to better reflect local ties in the Carmarthen area. Crucially, we look to ensure that the Llangynwr area is included in the, the northern or in the Carmarthen seat, because of obviously the strong local ties between the Llangynwr area and Carmarthen town. We would also then be looking to almost create a Carmarthen North, Carmarthen South seat if you like, looking then to add the areas of Laugharne and Llansteffan into the southern Llanelli seat. We would also propose moving Saron into the Carmarthen seat. So, I'll just give you the data there. So that's the Ceredigion there including then the Maenclochog area and mid and south Pembrokeshire. It's also worth noting, of course, with Maenclochog, then also the linguistic factor as well, being, being in Maenclochog is still quite Welsh predominantly spoken area compared to some of the more southern points, more Pembrokeshire offered in the Boundaries initial commission. And that's Carmarthen, Dinefwr and Llanelli totals.

Moving on now to mid Wales. So with the Maldwyn and Glyndwr, this is quite similar in essence to what the Commission's initial proposals offer. We do,

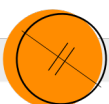


however, look at removing the Dyfi Valley, the most geographically somewhat separate area of Montgomeryshire, from, from that seat. And Corwen as well, removing that from the seat, and rather looking to bring in the greater Rhosllanerchrugog area up in Wrexham, bringing this into one constituency, rather than dividing it into two seats, which is done at the moment with the Boundary Commission's recommendations. So in regards to the Montgomeryshire northern seat, that, that's the main change, except for the, the loss of Dyffryn Dyfi that the Montgomeryshire area would remain as a, as a unit.

[02:15:34]

Now, looking at south Powys, we feel certain that the Commission will receive a lot of representations regarding its initial proposals to include the Tawe Valley with Brecon and Radnor constituencies. We do acknowledge that there are, of course, similar areas towards the south Powys, looking at Ystradgynlais and, and so on and we, of course, appreciate the challenging geographical difficulties and the knock on impact changing somewhere like Powys does have on the wider proposed map. However, what we rather propose, is the uniting of southern Powys of Brecon and Radnor with the Abergavenny area. Now this is a significant improvement in our belief in terms of local ties, now the main area for the Abergavenny area, the main hospital, sorry, for the Abergavenny area and Brecon and Radnor is Neville Hall in, in Abergavenny, and the whole constituency has a rural agricultural character and a similar economic feel as well. And certainly, we feel this offering is, is better than what is offered, than the current proposals, which see the areas of, of Pontardawe and so on included in Powys. And again, here's the numbers of Maldwyn and Glyndwr. So Maldwyn and Glyndwr losing Dyffryn Dyfi and taking in a little bit more from the Wrexham Rhosllanerchrugog area and Abergavenny and Brecon, of course, taking in the, the Monmouth area.

Now we'll go to the north-west. Now in this area, we do propose a significantly different arrangement to the initial proposals. What we argue here is that the many of the market towns of the northern Wales area, such as Denbigh, Rhuthun, Llanrwst, Corwen and Bala form a coherent network of communities, with strong local ties to each other. If we look in terms of the economy, society, language, culture, and, and everything. And, despite obviously being geographically large, we do believe that this offering does offer a more, yeah, a more coherent network than what is, is currently offered, particularly by separating the more northern area of, of, of Conwy, so the coastal area of Conwy, separating that from the more urban areas. We, we do believe, for example, that areas such as Llanrwst have more in common with Bala and Corwen than they do with some of the coastal towns. So, and another thing here is, despite looking large on paper, it is quite compact when it comes to travel times. So, for example, if you were to travel at the moment from Aberdar..., Aberdyfi to Aberdaron in the current Dwyfor Meirionnydd seat, that would take you over two hours, whilst our proposals from the furthest point south to the most northern point would take around one hour forty, which is substantially less, of course. Now these areas are also quite well intertwined with local transport links, so we obviously got the four, A470, A5, A494 running through there and again, agricultural ties remain important in, in all of these areas. Now historically, there has been some precedent of, of, of joining these so Meirionnydd for example, included Edeyrnion area around Corwen and these were part of the same constituency until 1983, whilst the Conwy valley and Meirionnydd were in the



same constituency from 1983 to 1997, the Nant Conwy seat, of course. So, to these areas, we'd also like to propose the inclusion of the Clwyd valley and, and Dyfi valley as well, so Dyfi Valley and Machynlleth linking in with that sort of network of small market towns in, in, in north Wales.

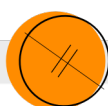
In Menai then, so the one on the left. This is a constituency based on the old county of Sir Gaernarfon, Caernarfonshire, this constituency would be geographically and culturally coherent, consisting of the towns of Caernarfon and Bangor and their natural hinterlands. The area also includes the Dwyfor, Arfon and, and coastal east of Bangor, which has the natural boundaries then of the river Conwy and the Carneddau mountains along the eastern side. So that is quite a, quite a change to that area to what was offered by the Commission initially. And just with regards to the data, so that's the data for the Menai seat, but which we obviously offer the, the joining of Bangor and Caernarfon together and then the larger, quite, quite a lot of water, the Meirionydd, North Conwy and Denbigh seat, which obviously despite the, the sparsity of the population, we do believe is, would provide a strong rural voice for that communities and ensure that distinct voice continues to be heard.

[02:21:18]

We'll move swiftly on now to the north coast. In the north coast, so for the Delyn seat, we propo..., propose removing the rural portion of the proposed constituency as well as the town of Flint and rather adding in the town of Rhyl. This thereby unites the nearby tourism-based centres of Rhyl and Prestatyn into one single seat. What we'd also be doing is looking to create a Llandudno and Colwyn seat. Now this is a coastal constituency, quite compact with very strong local ties, both in regards to the economy and also then with strong transport links with the north Wales rail running throughout the way and also the A55 transport link, of course. With this Llandudno and Colwyn seat also unites the Rhos on Sea and, and Colwyn Bay areas, which is not done in the initial proposals and, for us that makes sense because of the very close ties between the two areas. So swiftly, there that's the totals for the two seats.

And we'll move on now finally to the northeast. So again, Wrexham, this is again quite similar to the Commission's initial proposals for the area. However, as I, as I previously mentioned, this sees the removing of some of the Rhosllanerchrugog area from the seat and adding that in rather with the North Powys Glyndwr seat and this area then also sees, to make that up, the adding of some small number of wards from the Wrexham, Flintshire border, which we do believe have enough clo..., close ties and social links.

We move finally then on to the Alyn and Deeside seat. This is again quite similar to the Commission's proposals, but a somewhat more compact and urban constituency, removing some of the more westernmost wards and adding in the town of Flint to this area. I, I'll just show you the data and that's everything from our perspective, so I do hope that's been of interest to you. Can I thank you, the Commission again for their stellar work in addressing this and I'm very happy to take some questions as well. I think we might go back to the map of Wales if that makes things easier.



SP: Diolch yn fawr iawn. Any questions or points of clarification from the floor? Yes sir.

RP: Thank you very much. Roger Pratt from the Conservative party. I've got two points of clarification. Firstly, I think you said that you'd move Saron...

AMH: Yeah.

RP: From the, into Carmarthen.

AMH: Yeah.

RP: It, the, I thought the Boundary Commission had proposed it in Carmarthen?

AMH: Okay, that would, let me just double check that. I can check that now, I might have been a slip of the tongue there. Give me two seconds, is this....

SP: These two here.

[02:24:47]

AMH: There we are, so that would put Saron, so Saron there is in the Carmarthen, so we propose yes for it to be included in the Carmarthen and Dinefwr seat.

RP: But that's not a change is it?

AMH: Okay, I'm, sorry, I'm it, no, but it may not be actually I'm [inaudible 02:25:07] to you, it may not.

SP: You're not proposing to move it into the Llanelli seat?

AMH: No, I'm not because proposing to change it, no.

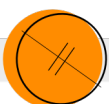
SP: Okay, fine.

RP: I think it's Gorslas you change.

AMH: Yes, yes, Gorslas yeah.

RP: Not Saron. Okay. My, my second question of clarification is, in the summary of the proposals in the booklet from the Commission, the Commission says, under the proposal 6 principle councils would be wholly contained within new constituencies and they go on to list them. I wonder if you can tell me under your proposals, if you could clarify how many would be wholly contained within new constituencies?

AMH: I'll hel..., I don't know that information off the top of my head. I, I, I must have bro..., apologise, but I can make some enquiries and get back to you regarding that, if that's okay. But as we, we have tried our best to keep that in, in, into consideration, certainly.



RP: Just, just for the record, the six are Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, the Isle of Anglesey, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, and Torfaen. I think I'm right in saying that the, the only two you keep are the Isle of Anglesey and Ceredigion.

AMH: Yes I think, I think from looking at the map, that would, certainly look correct, yes.

RP: Thank you very much.

SP: Okay. Yes sir.

TA: Hi, Tom Adams from the Labour party, as you may be aware, we have very similar proposal around Pembrokeshire to your one. I think we're more ambivalent on the inclusion of Letterston in that. I wonder if you can elaborate a bit on whe..., whether the, the reasoning for you including Letterston in your proposal whereas we keep it where it has currently been proposed to be?

[02:26:44]

AMH: Yeah, it's, it was, I'll be honest, it was touch and go. A lot of the areas in that south, south area, we, we do recognise that there are quite strong links together and, and they could quite easily be matched together and, and switched and, and swapped there, so I, it was just that's how we, it was a 50/50 decision at the end of the day and we just came down to that. As I say, we do believe that Maenclochog certainly fits in better with, with the Ceredigion feel and, you know, in, in, in future plans, in principle, we could look to, to review that again, but it was, yeah, it was an interesting debate we had over that topic.

SP: Okay. Any more questions from the floor? No. My colleagues? Gwenllian.

SW: This gentleman has a question.

SP: Oh sorry, gentleman there.

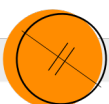
SW: One sec, can I pass you the mic.

Speaker 1: Apologies, as I came in part of the way through your presentation, but how, how do you square the inclusion of Laugharne, St Clears and Llansteffan, which are obviously across the estuary in the Llanelli division, because I think that's an extremely controversial topic locally in those areas.

AMH: No I do, I do appreciate that there are questions about those and, as you, as you said obviously with the estuary between them, what we have gone for, in essence, is as I have previously mentioned, a, a north Carmarthenshire, south Carmarthenshire seat, which we do appreciate the, the issue of, of the estuary, but that, that is in essence what we have gone for there. But, but in taking into consideration that of course.

SP: Okay, any further questions from the floor? No, Gwenllian.

GL-D: Thank you very much. I intend to ask the question in Welsh. In a number of previous meetings, and indeed today, we have heard quite a bit about the historical



nature of the Montgomeryshire constituency and the need to respect the current boundaries of that constituency. How would you respond to that, given that you have added the Dyfi Valley to an alternative constituency?

[02:28:53]

AMH: Yes, well, first of all, I'd like to declare an interest as someone from Montgomeryshire. [laughter] I agree that the plans are once again controversial in that regard. But we are firm in our belief that placing the Dyfi Valley in that more northern area of Meirionnydd and Dwyfor. Machynlleth ties in with those towns, you know, when you travel from Machynll..., from Machynlleth to the rest of Montgomeryshire, it often feels like it's a little further, and the connections are not the same as if you were travelling from Y Foel to Welshpool. You know, it's not quite so natural to travel from Y Foel to Machynlleth, for example, it feels a little... those natural connections aren't there, so we recognise, of course, the historical factor of Montgomeryshire as a unit, but we believe there are a lot of connections that continue to link Machynlleth with the north. We were also thinking about transport links going up along the Cambrian Coast, and along the towns on the coast, and those are linked with Machynlleth. There is also the linguistic connection, Machynlleth remains a Welsh speaking area. We are also aware of the importance of dealing with those three, Machynlleth, the Dyfi Valley and Barmouth, together as one unit. Certainly, we would never dream of separating Machynlleth from those two, but when we put the three together, we continue to do our best to keep together that unit of Montgomeryshire.

GL-D: Thank you.

SP: Okay.

AM: Just to....

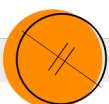
SP: Alan?

AM: Sorry, this is a, a minor point I suspect, but you, you used as an argument in terms of southern Powys and the Neville Hall Hospital being a sort of an opportunity for constituents, etcetera. There's a, there's the Grange in Llanfrechfa as well, which has been sort of newly created. Do, do you think that adds, adds weight to your argument, given that, that there's another big hospital?

AMH: Yeah, I, I think so, yeah and as, as we've seen here, with links like that, so that such as hospitals and everything are becoming more and more important, the main thing for us was the fact that, in our opinion, the, the South Powys and the Tawe Valley seat could not continue, so we had to change that somehow and for us then, looking then to, eastwards towards Aberg..., Abergavenny area and those existing ties there.

AM: Yeah.

AMH: It was important then and we continue to believe that, but we know it's not popular with many in the, in the area, possibly. But we, we do it, believe that the



inclusion of Abergavenny makes more sense than the inclusion of the Tawe Valley, for example.

SP: Okay, diolch.

AMH: Diolch.

SP: Andrew?

AC: Can I ask you just to take us through the Lliwen Tawe constituency again, you propose, 'cause that's, well I think....

AMH: Do you want it in detail or, or?

AC: To your proposals really. Just, so the rationale behind them then, put it that way. It's a different take to all the other parties on the vision of Swansea.

[02:32:08]

AMH: Yeah, let me just find it, ah that's it, I'll keep it on the bigger one and I'll find it in my notes. Yeah, yeah, so we're, so as the Commission's initial proposals divided this western valley of Glamorgan, with some becoming part of Brecon and Radnor and others being joined with parts of Swansea, our proposals would create a constituency of culturally, economically similar communities with all these other strong links along the M4. So that's been important. And also we're looking back historically then at the Llyw Valley District Council, as, using that as a precedent as well, with the addition of some nearby communities then immediately to the east. Yeah, so that, that's the, the main historic precedent we've used, is the connection within that old sort of Llyw Valley District Council seat...

AC: What's its, what's its northernmost point? I can't read the print on your....

AMH: Give me two seconds, I'll find it now. Where, in which? It would come under West Glamorgan, wouldn't it? I'll find that now.

AC: Mmm hmm. West Glamorgan I think you called it, yeah.

AMH: Yeah, here we are. So, Llyw and Tawe, there we are. So,

SP: Islwyn constituency.

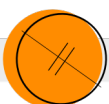
AMH: So that goes up to the... and Ystalyfera there, of course.

SP: Yeah, top of the Dulais Valley, top of the Swansea Valley.

AC: Okay. Ystradgynlais is in part..... In Powys.

MG: Yst, Ystradgynlais would continue then in Powys at the moment because of the, well it's in that seat at the moment, but it maybe could be considered to....

AC: Thank you very much.



AMH: Yeah.

SP: Okay?

AC: Yeah, thank you.

SP: Just, just one question from me. Right at the start of your presentation, you, you mentioned concerns about the loss of rural voice, could I ask you to elaborate on that in the bit in the sense that whichever way this cake is ultimately cut, there is, we are faced with the reality of elector density in urban areas and sparsity in rural areas, so to an extent, it's inescapable and I'd like to sort of drill down into the, the rural concerns a bit.

[02:34:18]

AMH: Sure, and I think that's most prominent for example, when we look at the, the large Meirionnydd seat, with, with the extension of that. So, one of the main priorities there was the inclusion of the more rural towns together and the exclusion then of the more sort of urban towns on the coast. On the, on the north Wales coast. We, we, we do not believe that there's, we, we believe that the, d'you know, places like Dinbych and Corwen and Bala and all of those have more in common, by, by uniting them together than putting it in with, d'you know, than putting it in, d'you know, Llandudno and all of those up in the North. So that, in that seat in particular, that was important. Yeah, in that seat more than, than any other really.

SP: And is there a similar rationale, for example, what you described as North and South Carmarthenshire, is, is, would it be fair to characterise the, the issue as the same there, or similar?

AMH: On, on, on the whole I think, yeah. The, the, as I mentioned, the main changes we made in, in Carmarthenshire, was, was regarding the Llangynor area as well and the importance of that.

SP: Okay.

AMH: Sort of natural looking towards, towards Carmarthen. But on the whole, no, I, I think it's, it's a fair point, I'll and I think our presentation does, does keep that unique voice quite, quite solid.

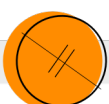
SP: Diolch. Any other questions? No. Thank you very much, diolch yn fawr iawn.

AMH: Diolch yn fawr.

SP: Now, I think our next two speakers, Messrs Loxdale and Hughes are here. You're not due to speak until after lunch, but I'm happy to press on if you would like to, it's your choice entirely.

PL: Very happy, Mr Chairman.

HH: Might as well.



SP: Yes, okay. Well in that case, we will press on and we'll adjourn later for lunch. So then our next speaker is Mr Patrick Loxdale. If you could just explain who you are when you come to the lectern, the area you're from and who, if anyone, you're representing or speaking in a personal capacity. That would be a help to us.

[02:36:25]

PL: Diolch yn fawr, Mr Chairman, thank you for letting me talk. I'm Patrick Loxdale, I'm Chairman of the Ceredigion Conservative Association. My presentation is very brief, but it's really to support, on behalf of my association, the boundary proposals as you've put forward. I fundamentally believe in democracy and I think these boundary changes are long overdue, to balance the books in Wales, so I think it's a really important process that we go through and it seems to me that the proposals the Boundary Commission has come up with make entire sense and, in fact, I believe, although it's prior to me moving back home to the constituency, it follows previous constituency boundaries, the inclusion of the Pembrokeshire wards. So, from the point of view of, of the Ceredigion Conservative Association, we strongly back the proposals that the Boundary Commission has made.

SP: Okay. Thank you very much. Any questions or comments? Yes sir?

AMH: Do you not fear that the extension of the Ceredigion, North Pembrokeshire seat down all the way to St Davids Head as it were and, and Solva, all those would make it too sort of geographically long? Is, is that a concern you, you've taken on board and, for example, if you were to add areas of, of Pembrokeshire such as Maenclochog, that could easily, sort of, which could easily fit in with the, the demography of, of that seat. Wou..., would that be an alternative you'd support?

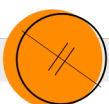
PL: I think if you look at the tra..., the travelling, it's very much six and two threes, so I, I'm, I mean, I think whichever way you come about it, to, to get the constituency with the right number of people, it becomes a big rural constituency with travel issues. But, but I'm not sure that, that your proposals really change that one way or another. I mean, I think, I think it's a big issue whichever way we come at it, but, but that's just the way the numbers work out.

SP: Okay. Any other comments from the floor.

PR: Pete Rowlands, Lib Dems. You mention the old Ceredigion and Pembroke North constituency, which actually didn't go as far as St Davids, the county council have suggested that they move much more to that boundary but adding a few of the market towns on the other side of the river around Lampeter. Could you explain why you disagree with that proposal and, giving an additional voice from the local community as to why it might or might not be acceptable?

PL: I, I think you're then interfering with the, one of the established Carmarthen constituencies and I'm not certain there's anything to be gained by doing that.

SP: Okay, Thank you for that. Any questions or comments from colleagues? No.



Can I just be absolutely clear on one point. I think I'm right in saying that the Conservative Party nationally supports the, the proposed transfer of the Maenclochog ward to Ceredigion and the compensatory adjustment the other way, is that the position of your association as well?

PL: Yes.

SP: Okay.

PL: S, sorry, hang on a sec. Maenclochog, no that isn't in it, is it?

RP: Maenclochog, we support the Commission's proposals that it should be in the, i, i, it should be in the mid and south Pembrokeshire seat.

[02:39:53]

SP: Oh, I thought I'd seen something that suggested you supported the transfer to Ceredigion. No? Maybe I've got that wrong then. No, sorry.

RP: No, that's what Labour Party and Plaid Cymru do, but we don't and the Liberal Democrats.

SP: Okay, fine.

PL: Yeah, so, our, our, our support would be for the, the map as is on page 50.

SP: Right, leaving Maenclochog in mid and south Pembs?

PL: Yes, I think if we included Maenclochog, we then have too big a constituency wouldn't we?

SP: Yes.

PL: Because we're overshooting on the numbers just slightly, but within, within the permissible....

SP: Yeah, that's why I mentioned the compensatory adjustments the other way. Maybe I've misunderstood, I had thought that, well, clearly I've misunderstood. Fine.

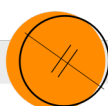
PL: No, both locally and nationally, our position is the same.

SP: Okay, fine.

PL: I understand, just to clarify.

SP: Right, okay, that's, that's helpful. Any other comments or questions? Okay, thank you very much.

PL: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.



SP: Mr Hughes.

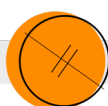
HH: Well, diolch yn fawr and thank you Mr Chairman for inviting me to, to speak today. I'd like to confine my remarks mainly to Carmarthenshire, because that is the, is the county of my birth and it, it's what is most prescient in my mind and in, in to my thinking that these proposals really split into the good, which are the proposals that the Commission had come up with, I think they are excellent for Carmarthen and for rural representation and the local communities, the bad, which are the exceedingly strange to my mind, proposals coming from Ceredigion and, unfortunately, the ugly, which are Plaid Cymru's proposals, which they might have some superficial sensibility, but if you were to look at what they do on the ground in Carmarthen, they are disastrous for the representation of, of people as I'll come onto in, in a bit.

[02:41:48]

So let's start with the good. I think the Commission has done an excellent job with its proposals, producing a set of credible and logical boundaries. I've spoken to a lot of local people and they feel that this new arrangement is actually better than the existing arrangement of Carmarthen West, Carmarthen East and Dinefwr and I think the Commission is to be commended for that. In terms of, just in terms of the way it functions, in terms of the way the road networks work, in terms of the community facilities like the general hospital at Glangwilly. In terms of the effect on the neighbouring seats, as far as I can see, there's also, it produces a, a lot of enthusiasm from the local people I've spoke to in those areas. And you can see this in the public responses, because I've gone through the responses in the, in the various volumes and, there's great support for what the, the Commission have done, so I, I think it is the key in the tour de force and is better than the work that was, was previously done in these constituencies. Now, there are a couple of things that have been found, which I'd like to raise. Carmarthenshire County Council for example have raised the issue of Llangynor, because it's certainly anomalous, it's in the Llanelli constituency particularly as it doesn't really affect the numbers overall, because Llangynor is really the southern end of Carmarthen town. And as I'm sure you've heard, it contains the Post Office, the railway station and, obviously, the vital Welsh Comprehensive school at, at Bro Myrddin. And so, you know, you know these are integral features of Carmarthen town, so it would be very strange if Llangynor as, as a ward would be in the neighbouring constituency. Now the other interesting thing that I read in the proposals was the Llanelli Town Council proposal, for a swap of the wards, because they felt that there was a closer nexus between Llanelli and wards like Saron and Penygroes, which are urban in character, they've got continuous urban development, a lot of new build, they also have an, an industrial past, as opposed to Llangordaeon, which is currently in the Llanelli constituency. Now they proposed a swap in their submission, which again doesn't overly affect the numbers, and so I think that could potentially be a sensible improvement. But, but quite frankly, I, I think the Commission has done an excellent job.

[02:43:58]

Now, if I come to the bad and, the, the dog's breakfast that has come back from Ceredigion is, is astonishing to the minds of someone who has been born and



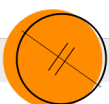
raised in Carmarthenshire. Because, the, the, the Tawe Valley, the Teifi Valley, these are the natural cut offs, the natural partitions of our area and there's nothing more hated in, in Carmarthenshire than the old Dyfed. And this does nothing more than raise the spectra of Dyfed being foisted upon people. Now, when I was in school, there was always this strong cultural dissonance between Ceredigion where, you know, Ceredigion was regarded more like Scotland, you know, beyond the Hadrian's Wall of, of the Teifi Valley, and you, you have the reference to Cardis and the, the, the 50 pence piece was, was invented so you could get it out of the Cardi's hand with a spanner. You know [laughter], it's that type of, that type of difference of culture between the two counties. Now, that might not be obvious to somebody with an Excel spreadsheet, but it's certainly obvious to the people locally. You speak to people in [inaudible 02:45:01], they're absolutely mortified at the idea they might be transferred across the Teifi Valley into, into Ceredigion, because their connections are into Carmarthen town, they're into the other neighbouring towns of Carmarthenshire. Yes, sure, people go to Ceredigion, people from Ceredigion come to [inaudible 02:45:13], but there's no natural connection there. The health services, the roads, the transportation, it's all focused in on Carmarthen because you've got the giant geographical barriers, and, and, and the Commission understands this. The geographical barriers are the foundation for the work and you, you've got a river. And, and, and this, so you know, to cut a long story short o, o, on the bad, I think I've said my piece of mind, I'll come onto the ugly. Because, if you look at the Plaid Cymru proposal, you have an enormous river delta, you have Carmarthen Bay itself, and their proposal proposes crossing Carmarthen Bay. And you talk to people in that part of the world and, and what they think about being put into a southern Carmarthenshire seat with the industrial south of Llanelli, its tin plate works, it's in, it's I mean it's a major engineering facilities are still existent and, and they sort of think this is a total anathema, because they have a rural economy. You know, they have, they have rural market towns, they're connected with Carmarthen, they're absolutely not one iota of a connection with Llanelli, apart from their being in the same county. So they think this is absolute madness and, and I think it's absolute madness and, and, but again, it's come out of the numbers because the Excel spreadsheet's been run. How do you then partition Carmarthen, how do you get the numbers? Well, I'll give you the answer to how you partition Carmarthen, it's exactly how you did it in the first place. The initial result, I think is, is a very good proposal for this seat. It preserves that rural voice, it preserves its community connections to the Glangwilly Hospital, it reflects existing road network and those transportation connect works, networks, that make, you know, these seats representable by someone. And so, that is all I have to say to you today. I, I think that you've done a very good job on the initial proposal, I think there are a couple of tweaks that could be done to it, but I think you have done great justice to the representation of the people of Carmarthenshire. Thank you.

SP: Thank you very much. Any questions from the floor? No. Colleagues?

AM: Just a...

SP: Alan?

AM: Just a couple of points, just to sort of, it's not calling you out, but that the attempt at a joke about the Cardi and the 50p piece, it is in poor taste, you know? It's a bit



old fashioned, okay? My one question is, you talked a lot about you'd spoken to a lot of people.

HH: Yes.

AM: It's often used from a politician's perspective, I've talked to a lot of people. Can you just, can I just drill down, you know, sort of how many people did you speak to, what localities, etcetera. Was it one or two, twenty, fifty, a hundred, were they across the political spectrum, etcetera?

HH: What if across the spectrum is a good question, because I talk to a lot of people, I knock on a lot of doors...

[02:47:48]

AH: Yeah, well, when people say knock on lots of doors, you know, how many? Ten, twenty, fifty, 'cause, you know, give substance.

HH: Oh, I, I, it's probably in the hundreds.

AH: Okay and are they all saying the same thing?

HH: Because I also, I mean I'm involved with politics, I mean I'm a former parliamentary candidate, as you probably may have gathered...

AH: Well, it says here you are, yeah, yeah.

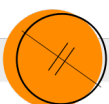
HH: I'm also chairman of the local Carmarthenshire Conservative Association, so you know, I run regular street stalls, I spend a lot of time in Carmarthen town centre talking to people, members of the public and the local people. And, the general view is that amongst the people of Carmarthenshire, they like their county and they love their county and they, and they feel sort of integral one. And when you sort of look at the, the natural barriers in the, in the county, the river network etcetera, you know these are not insignificant things. I mean road transport in West Wales isn't really perhaps, you know, what it should be and you, you feel a real sense of community therefore within these existing structures. And if you look at, say, what Carmarthenshire County Council has done in terms of say the new Cil y Cwm ward, they've merged [inaudible 02:48:48] into Cil y Cwm. So under the Ceredigion proposal, you'd be sort of severing off....

AH: Yeah, I understand all that, 'cause you've explained it...

HH: You understand, well going back to answer your question, yeah, I mean I've spoken to, to several hundred people about this and...

AH: Okay.

HH: And the general view is they're very supportive. I think, I don't think there's much awareness of our counterproposals, because I think that the proposals are so uncontroversial, in terms of Carmarthen and I understand that that might be seen



differently in other parts of West Wales, but in terms of Carmarthen, the proposals are not very controversial.

AH: Yeah, okay, that's fine. Thank you.

SP: Okay. Thank you very much. Any oth..., any other questions? No. So, thank you very much.

[02:49:26]

Can I just go back for the absolute avoidance of doubt here, and I'm addressing Mr Pratt, I think, on page 33 of the original proposal that you circulated at the Cardiff hearing, it says this, all four qualifying parties support creating two constituencies in Carmarthenshire and two from Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, although they may move some northern Pembrokeshire wards between the two constituencies. That does not mean that you support Maenclochog, okay?

RP: No, to, to be absolutely clear, obviously the Labour party and Plaid Cymru, which is what we were referring to there, do move Maenclochog.

SP: And you say all four, which includes you.

RP: Yeah, all four support the concept.

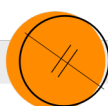
SP: Right, okay.

RP: The concept of Carmarthenshire in two and Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire being joined, but some of them suggested an alternative. We do not, we support both, as far as Ceredigion and north Pembrokeshire is concerned, we support the Boundary Commission proposals.

SP: Fine. That's helpful, I just wanted to be absolutely crystal clear. Okay, thank you very much for that.

We're now ahead of schedule, so our next speaker is due at half past one, so I'm proposing now to adjourn until 25 past. Thank you very much.

[End of Transcription 02:50:55]



Aberystwyth PM

Key

SP:	Stephen Phillips, Assistant Commissioner
EG:	Elen ap Gwyn, Councillor
CW:	Craig Williams, MP
CE:	Charlie Evans
DR:	Dennis Roberts
AC:	Andrew Clemes, Assistant Commissioner
HH:	Harry Hayfield, Welsh Green Party
NG:	Nia Griffith, MP

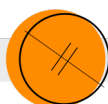
[Transcript starts at 00:00:00]

SP: Good afternoon, a, a warm welcome to those who've joined us since lunch. My name's Steve Phillips, I'm one of four Assistant Commissioners conducting this part of the review. My colleagues to my right, the far right, Andrew Clemes, Gwenllian Lansdowne-Davies and Alan Midhar to my left and Shereen Williams, the Secretary and Chief Executive of the Boundary Commission in Wales. We have a list of speakers for this afternoon. I'm going to chair as flexibly as I can, so everyone gets maximum opportunity to make their representations, all of which will be treated equally, in Welsh or English. The, this is the fifth and final hearing, public hearing across Wales. The secondary consultation period has been running concurrently with those hearings and closes today, so you have until I think it is 11:59 this evening to use the Commission's portal to put in representations. After that time they will not be considered.

I will invite the speakers to use the lectern to my left, to state their name, the area they're from, not a home address, but just please to note where literally they're coming from. And to say in which capacity they're speaking, either be a personal capacity or on behalf of an organisation. Our first speaker this afternoon is Councillor Elen ap Gwyn, so I'll invite her to take the floor. I'm not going to allow cross-examination as such, but there will be the opportunity for points of clarification from the floor or from my colleagues here. So, over to you Councillor.

[00:01:56]

EG: Thank you very much, good evening. Nice to see you again. Excuse me for a moment, I need some water. Good afternoon to you all, I'm giving Delyth some work to do today, I understand that she hasn't had much work this morning. Since we are in the middle of Ceredigion, a county where the Welsh language is important, and one of the reasons too, I believe, because the County Council, and I'm here today as leader of the Council County. This is the opinion of the County Council, we have discussed it extensively and across parties, it has been agreed that this would be the best way for people in the middle..., well, Ceredigion and the Teifi Valley, this is what we feel is best for the constituency. Communities on the other side of the Teifi are very close to communities on the Ceredigion side of the Teifi. And likewise in Pembrokeshire. For example, St. Dogmaels was once part of Ceredigion. It is now part of Pembrokeshire because there was a feeling at the



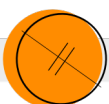
time, locally, that because they pay less tax in Pembrokeshire, they wanted to be part of Pembrokeshire. They had an opportunity to pick their side, and that was the decision. But I've also heard that some of the wards or the communities on the other side of the Teifi would perhaps like to join Ceredigion. That hasn't happened yet, but it shows how close these communities are along the river.

I represent the northernmost ward in Ceredigion, on the border with Powys, and it takes two and a half hours to get to St Davids. Regarding what you're currently proposing, the area is so extensive, it doesn't make any sense to me. It takes the service of a Member of Parliament away from local people, it prevents them from having access to his services. I'm saying 'his' now, because that's the current situation. What we have agreed and proposed to you as an alternative way of creating a more inclusive and geographically compact constituency, is to use the county of Ceredigion as the core, but rather than going all the way down to the bottom of Pembrokeshire, we use wards on the border, as I have said, either in Pembrokeshire or in Carmarthenshire. There are four wards in Pembrokeshire, there are five in Carmarthenshire, and this would create a constituency unit of 72,823 electors, so it would be within the range specified in the legislation.

As I have said, there are very similar characteristics. Linguistic features, which you lose when you go south of Preseli, or the northern wards of Pembrokeshire, where many people speak Welsh, similar to the wards in northern Carmarthenshire. So it gives you that linguistic unity, that cultural unity too, in terms of the Welsh language. This is demonstrated because so many of our schools along the Teifi, for example, Ysgol Bro Pedr, Ysgol Bro Teifi, and Ysgol Aberteifi itself, are schools, well, two of them are Welsh-medium schools to all purposes, and the third is going that way, those secondary schools. And there are lots of children and young people who cross the border. There are 581 pupils from Carmarthenshire, and there are some schools in Ceredigion with 219 pupils from Pembrokeshire, so there is movement across the border, it's happening already. People feel they belong. It's one unit, one community along the Teifi, even though the counties are different. And some of our pupils cross the border to Ysgol y Preseli because Welsh-medium provision is not available in Cardigan. Some children from Cardigan went to Preseli, but some children who wanted English language provision can cross over to Ysgol Gyfun Emlyn in Newcastle Emlyn. So it's already in operation, we have provision for leisure, for example, in Lampeter, in Llandysul and in Cardigan, available for people on both sides of the border, and the community functions as a single area. The same is true for libraries, for medical services, the new integrated health centre in Cardigan also caters for north Pembrokeshire communities along the Teifi and into Ceredigion.

[00:07:55]

Accepting Ceredigion Dyffryn Teifi as the name of the new unit would make a lot more sense in terms of travel, we focus on cutting down on carbon nowadays. Asking people to travel 85 miles from central Wales right down to the southern end is asking too much, I feel, and it would be much better to have a more compact unit. The elected individual could provide a much cheaper, much simpler service, involving much less travel, and ensure easier access for the population to contact their local member.



That's the case we'd like to put to you. We have to remember, we don't want people having to travel far. Bus services are not available to the people most in need who really require the help of a Member of Parliament. And we have to make sure that they are available within easy distance, within reach.

So that's the opinion, I'm giving that opinion on behalf of the County Council, as I said. In economic terms too, I think back to when Edwina Hart was Minister for the Economy, she accepted the Teifi Valley as a unit for economic development. We can no longer work that way because of the regionalisation that has taken place. But it would make more sense if it were possible to combine the two elements, both sides of the river Teifi. So I'll leave that for you to decide, but I urge you to consider the points I've made to you this morning, or rather this afternoon. Thank you very much.

SP: Thank you very much. Questions from the floor? Yes sir.

Participant 1: Thank you. How long would it take for someone from a place like Cynwyl Gaeo in Carmarthenshire to travel to a Member of Parliament's office in Aberystwyth? Because at the moment, people from places like Cynwyl Gaeo travel to Glangwili hospital because Glangwili is closer than Bronglais.

EG: Cynwyl Gaeo is, I believe, across the river from Lampeter and Llanybydder, and the current member has an office in Lampeter, so he would be across the river, it wouldn't take much travel time.

Participant 1: But you were making the argument that there's just one office and therefore it's a necessity to get a sort of [unclear] from the seat. But if a Member of Parliament can have more than one office, then what's the problem with the proposal made by the Commission?

EG: Well, I have experience of being in the Ceredigion and Pembroke North constituency, when Cynog Dafis was elected in 1992, I was a member of the campaign team and had to work all the way down from where I live in Talybont in the north down to Fishguard. It wasn't easy to work on that footprint. Once this was understood, it was changed back to Ceredigion and Pembroke, well, both sides of Pembroke. That's what works best, and I don't know why that needs to change, but if it must be changed, I believe we should ensure that the new constituency is more manageable and easier for any individual elected to serve it.

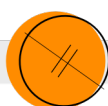
SP: Okay, thank you. Water at the front.

RP: Roger Pratt from the Conserva..., Welsh Conservative Party. I'm sorry, my question will have to be in English. [Laughter]

EG: That's fine. You tell me anything.

[00:12:12]

RP: Answer it in English or Welsh as, as you please. Under the Commission's proposals, if you take the four, the four constituencies. Three are in one authority and one is two authorities, which is the Ceredigion North Pembrokeshire one. I wonder if you



could clarify under your counterproposals, what the position would be with regard to local authorities?

EG: Local authorities, it would split between three, you'd have a Pembroke local authority for, for four of the wards as I mentioned earlier, and the others would be in the Carmarthen local authority and the most of them, of course as they are now, within Ceredigion.

RP: And, and what about the other, the other constituencies, because obviously there's the knock-on effect on the other constituencies?

EG: Yeah, I think the, the knock-on is that the Carmarthen, well they'd split between Carmarthen and Pembroke basically, they'd just be between the three, the, the three authorities as they are now, but the, the split of, of the wards that they represent would be different.

RP: So, am I right in saying there would be one constituency with three authorities, one constituency with two authorities and two with one?

EG: Most probably, yes, yes.

RP: Thank you very much.

SP: Okay. Any further questions from the floor? No? From colleagues?

AC: No.

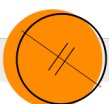
SP: No? If not, diolch yn fawr.

EG: Diolch.

SP: Okay, our next speaker is Craig Williams, MP. The floor is yours, sir.

[00:13:48]

CW: Thank you Mr Phillips, thank you Assistant Commissioners. I don't think I'm going, I hope not to be overly controversial today because my purpose to come here is mainly to thank you for a difficult job done and to back your initial proposals, which I will of course, have done in written form, but I thought it'd be worth coming here and addressing a few points now I've seen the counter-points. And I, I think from the outset, you know, clearly you had an incredibly difficult job to do given the differentials between the populations and any tweak here, they say, it's, it necessitates a tweak there, so can I commend you. And also, it's worth reflecting on the context of the last Boundary Commission, which would have been very much easier for the MP of Montgomeryshire to mobilise people from Montgomeryshire 'cause you proposed in the, in the, in the last one back in 2010 to, to split the seat, which clearly was suboptimal in our view. And I no, I notice through other question and answer sessions, the historical nature of Montgomeryshire has been quizzed and I, I went to the House of Commons library and I thought it would be beneficial to point out that Montgomeryshire of course was created during the Law in Wales Act of Parliament by King Henry VIII in 1542



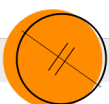
and not a polling district has changed since. So I, I would put it to the Boundary Commission that if you opened your thesaurus and looked up the word historical, you would see a wonderful picture of Montgomeryshire staring back at you. And I'm, I'm going to go into some further points, but I do think it is worth this Boundary Commission, as you have done, to reflect on the historical nature of that constituency and to protect it in its entirety. Of course, with some additions to meet, meet the criteria you're, you're seeking to. And this is politically significant for the constituency I represent and the people that have elected me to come here today and argue on their side.

So the hi..., historical side I'll, I'll put to aside but I, I want to reflect on the transport network of Montgomeryshire and then of course the wider, wider point you're adding. But the Cambrian line is an obvious one. The Cambrian line I, I would have loved to have used today, but sadly, due to flooding, and I'll touch on the Severn Corridor in a se..., in, in a minute. The Cambrian line clearly runs from, well it's the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth line, so you can see straight through the middle of Montgomeryshire. It links Machynlleth, it links Caersws and, importantly in my opinion, it links Newtown and Welshpool. The two large towns of Montgomeryshire, two that are interconnected in terms of labour market, in terms of the, the community links, and are, I reside, Mr Chairman in, in the middle of Montgomeryshire in Llanfair Caereinion, which may be known to some others Assistant Commissioners and my dentist is in Newtown. The new integrated health hub provides consultant services that you go from Welshpool, you go from Llanfair Caereinion, you go from far wider a front and it is very much a central hub of the community and and healthcare.

But that, as well as the Cambrian line in terms of that link, linking the t..., all the main hubs currently in Montgomeryshire, you have the Severn corridor. Now the Severn River Corridor Partnership is becoming ever more important to local authorities, to flood management, to regeneration, to planning and it is, it is more and more being used by the UK Government and I hope soon the Welsh Government to organise itself in terms of where funding is done. The River Severn and I'm sure, you know I'm, I'm sure I'm telling you everything you already know, but it's my, my ten minutes to reinforce your right. The river Severn starts in lake Clywedog, it is managed there, it is Great Britain's longest river, but it goes from essentially Llanidloes, straight through the middle of Montgomeryshire to England, linking again Newtown and Welshpool. That river corridor in terms of all the things I've set out, but in terms of a, a, a governance, is critical going forward and I would suggest to the Boundary Commission that it again links all these communities that you've kept together incredibly well.

[00:18:11]

I also note from a, a previous evidence this panel that it was put that Newtown High School and Presteigne John Beddoes was linked, can I inform that, the Commission that is not a catchment link; that virtually no pupils go between. That link was made to help the leadership of John Beddoes and Presteigne School. The reason they dink, didn't link it with Llanidloes is there was a leadership issue at that school too, so this is a sharing of head teacher and senior management, this is not, I would suggest, a community link, which again goes to reinforce some of the



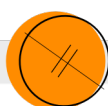
secondary points I'll make about other parties' submissions to, to delink what you've done.

I'll touch on the areas you bring together into Montgomeryshire from Clwyd South and I think it's worth reflecting that they mainly coalesce around the market town of Oswestry. Now I can see that Oswestry is in England and you're not suggesting it comes into this constituency, but what it does do is, I think, acknowledge that Llangollen, Llangollen, Llanymynech and all the existing areas around the old market town are linked culturally and they're linked health wise. Because you are dealing here with a constituency of course is cross border in its very nature. Walford Ag..., Agricultural College is in Oswestry and that serves a large chunk of the Clwyd South and Montgomeryshire area, drawing us together in, in terms of that agricultural link. And it, you know, I think it is worth reflecting on the road network as well, the A483, that is Machynlleth to Newtown, the A489 as well. All of these roads link these two major labour markets together, from Newtown and Welshpool and I hope by now you are, you are getting a, getting a view that I'm linking Newtown and Welshpool together quite strongly.

I would also push back on the, the loss of Machynlleth and surrounding wards over to any, any new seat in, in Ceredigion. The, the Cambrian mountains is a very, very acknowledged natural boundary and that is what, in my opinion, would hold the west of Montgomeryshire together, if you were to, for some unknown reason, not accept the historical nature of that, that, that community since 1524. I think the Cambrian mountains reinforces the fact that you have done the right thing by keeping those communities together.

[00:00:20:38]

I also want to, again, clarify the, the, the seats of, well the communities of Abermiwl and Tregynon in their, the Lib Dems proposition that was splitting Montgomeryshire in half again. Tregynon and Abermiwl look to Newtown, no doubt about it, they look together in terms of their educational links, their health links; again, the labour market links and they are clearly drawn as entities to the Newtown const..., the, the main town. So that would be a huge loss of community loss in terms of delinking those going north into what would be quite a large..., and I notice with the, the, the previous guest, that we talked about how large these constituencies are. Well, we are already dealing with incredibly large constituencies, Montgomeryshire is bigger than Greater London, but clearly there are different populations. But, I, I would put it to you that you, you are going to have that argument made of any proposition you make in Wales, just because of the rurality that we live in. We access services differently to an urban environment and we are, we are used to and I think at the moment and again, just to reinforce, I am supporting the Commission's proposition for Montgomeryshire and Glyndwr although I think it would be worth reflecting on the name, and I think that to lose Clwyd South, so perhaps Montgomeryshire and Clwyd South, will, is, is certainly our formal proposition. I can see a two minutes sign coming up, so I think I've laboured the main points I wanted to make to the panel, but just to reinforce, in conclusion, that the labour market here very much goes east to west, the transport network with the Cambrian line connects all these major communities together, the river corridor, which is incredibly important to this constituency links Llanidloes all the way up and I think there are natural transport geographical barriers that



support the Commission's initial proposals and I thank you and I have come here to speak to them.

SP: Thank you very much indeed. Are there any questions from the floor? Yes.

RP: Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. You mentioned two particular places that you said had very strong links to, to Newtown. I'm not, I wonder if you could actually say what those places are in respect of the existing ward names?

MW: Thank you Roger. They're Dolforwyn and Rhiwcyon on this, on this. The, these are new wards 'cause we've just gone through a local boundary review, but locally, they would be called the communities of Tregynon and Abermiwl and the wider area, but those are clearly defined, the, the wards of 1,724 and 1,652 and it's also enabled me, because I'd forgotten Montgomery, Montgomery would, of course, look educationally to Newtown as well, as well as the labour market links and other community links.

RP: Thank you.

SP: Thank you. Any other questions from the floor? Colleagues? No?

Just, just one, I, I absolute point of clarification. I think you said you supported the initial proposals in their entirety, including the additions to the existing Montgomery constituency, from places like Ruabon, Chirk, Penycae etcetera. The reason I'm as..., I'm seeking this clarification is we have had contrary views expressed from those communities who feel more affiliated with Wrexham and, and other places.

MW: Mr Chairman, it's an excellent point and it enabled me to clarify, support the Welsh Conservative proposals that slightly tweak the communities that might seem more naturally to flow to Wrexham. I believe we proposed a, a strong set of proposals that keeps the links together, but I think the communities you're describing such as Chirk, such as Llangollen and such as those neighbouring towns, especially to the market town of Oswestry sit very comfortably with Llanrhaeadr, they sit very comfortably with Llansanffraid and the natural flow to Montgomeryshire and what I think is the part of Clwyd South you're describing.

SP: Helpful, thank you very much. In the absence of any further points can I thank you again and, is Mr Charlie Evans here? Yes, excellent.

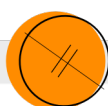
CE: Thank you. Ahead of schedule as well, very, very impressed. [laughter]

SP: I can't take the credit for that.

CE: [laughter] So, I'll take it away.

[00:25:16]

SP: Indeed. The floor is yours.



CE:

So, my name is Charlie Evans, I'm a Community Councillor on the Llangynor Community Council in the south of Carmarthen and I am also chairman of Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire Conservatives, to name a few things. So, I've, I've got a few different hats, so I'm going to try and separate as much as, as much as possible. So first of all, just to speak on the matter of Llangynor and I deliberately say the south of Carmarthen because it well it does shape my view and the Community Council's view as well as to, as to where it should sit. Now obviously under the current proposal, Llangynor will sit within the Llanelli constituency. Now I must admit, currently on existing boundaries with Carmarthen West, South Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire East and Dinewr, it always felt very odd as it currently stands anyway, that Llangynor is split by our Carmarthen neighbours i, in Carmarthen town centre itself and this, I believe is an opportunity to rectify that issue and as it currently stands, you know, I, I think it exacerbates the problem as opposed to resolves it.

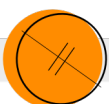
And for me it comes down to a question of identity and I do think that is, that is important when considering these matters. Ask anyone who lives in Llangynor, Nantycaws or Llangynor itself, Pibwrlwyd or Pensarn, ask them where they are from and they will tell you they are from Carmarthen, they won't particularly say at the very beginning that they are from Llangynor. If you ask them for a, a more specific location, then they may delve into the fact that they are indeed, they, they live in Llangynor. But nonetheless, people in Llangynor identify as Carmarthen and my, myself, I have lived there now for ten or so years now and I consider myself a Carmarthen boy as opposed to a Llangynor boy.

And we also did some wider engagement via social media through the Community Council and it did raise a few eyebrows based on the current proposals. Just to add a few other points into this, Carmarthen police station is in the ward of Llangynor, Carmarthen train station is in the ward of Llangynor. On the point of the train station, it does, it is the connection between Pembrokeshire and wider south Wales, including Llanelli, so on that point, it would, it does feel rather odd that Carmarthen train station would be included in the constituency of Llanelli.

Also, just to add, Bro Myrddin, Carmarthen's only Welsh speaking secondary school, is also in Llangynor and under these proposals, it would end up in the new constituency of Llanelli. Moreover, Llangynor Community Council in its written proposal, has supported the inclusion of Llangynor into Carmarthen and mathematically, the inclusion of Llangynor would mean 72,683 electors, which is well within the range of 69,726 and 77,062. That, that range within the scope of the Commission's work. So, o, o, on that basis really, you know, a, a, as a community councillor myself, but this is also the view of the Community Council corporately too, we would challenge the initial proposal that would see Llangynor put into the constituency of Caerfyrddin, which would be perfectly within the parameters of the Commission's proposal as well.

[00:20:47]

I just finally on this point around my community council hat, I must think about neighbouring St Ishmael as well. Because St Ishmael comprises of area such as Cwmffrwd and Ferryside. Cwmffrwd again, what I've just said in terms of identity, you know, it would apply to Cwmffrwd as well in term of being, identifying with,



with Carmarthen and in terms of how the, the mathematics could work with that one, which, which may, may satisfy people overall is, if you were to include Llangynor and c..., St Ishmael within the, the w..., the constituency of Caerfyrddin, and then you were to move Penygroes and Saron into Llanelli, that would satisfy the scope and the parameters within the Commission's proposals as well.

So that's the bit around Llangynor, so, yeah, we would just, would hope that on the, and, on the, I think all that as well actually. I think there's been a lot of cross-party agreement actually in terms of this issue around Llangynor as well, even though there's various different, you, you know formulas, but Llangynor has been a, a unifying factor, I believe across most of the political parties as well.

And just to say, just now with my perspective of Association Chairman of Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire, I have written in too. It's just to say we are very, very supportive by the way and, and, Craig Williams, MP rightly at the beginning actually congratulated you all on a, on a difficult job and actually, the Mid and South Pembrokeshire constituency that has been created, I think actually rectifies many of the, the Carmarthen and, and Pembrokeshire issues that we've, we've had in the past in terms of where people sit. So it is just to say, you know, to recognise the difficulty that you have in doing what you do and the proposal that you've made for Mid and South Pembrokeshire is a proposal that we as an association, we have 240 members, wholeheartedly agrees and supports and we would encourage that to remain as is.

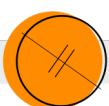
Just an in, finally then, just in terms of some of the counterproposals that have been submitted by others is this issue of where wards such as Llansteffan, Laugharne, Township and St Clears sits and we are aware of, of the proposal that would see those particular wards, you know, end up with, with Llanelli in terms of the biggest geographical centre of that constituency. We as an association are completely opposed to that, you know, it, it's right that those wards just, again going on the basis of identity, just, just spoke about and exclude Carmarthen town from those wards, again, the, you know, they would identify as being from, from Carmarthen, you know, would, in my view be a regret and certainly, before the deadline tonight, I know of a few members who are going to be writing in as well to express their concern that those particular wards could end up in the new ward of Llanelli. Albeit I think there's a different name that's been ascribed to it.

So, yeah, so that's all I've got to say really. Relatively brief, just a massive thank you for all that you've done in terms, in terms of the work and I guess I'm open to any questions.

SP: Thank you very much. Any questions from the floor? No. Colleagues?

[00:32:20]

J, just one point of clarification. I think I'm right in saying, but correct me if I'm wrong. You mentioned Carmarthen railway station, but the electoral ward of Llangynor, of course, goes all the way from the village around the Dyfed Powys Police Headquarters through the roundabout Pensarn and up to the river opposite County Hall, is that correct?



MW: Yep, so, so, absolutely so it's the river that's the, that's the...

SP: Demarcation line.

MW: Yeah, that's the demarcation line, and the ward of Llangynor includes then villages of Nantycaws, etcetera as well, so...

SP: Yes.

MW: So that's where the, the line is.

SP: Helpful. And I should just clarify that we can take none of the credit for the initial proposals. The four of us had nothing to do with them.

MW: Okay.

SP: Our role is limited to taking the brick bats for any changes.

MW: You should keep that one quiet, [laughter] you should enjoy, enjoy the praise while it lasts.

SP: Yes, but we can't take the credit for it alas. Thank you very much.

MW: Thank you, cheers. Thanks.

SP: Okay. Mr Dennis Roberts? Yes, the floor is yours, sir.

DR: Chair, I did make a request for a slight extension of time.

SP: Granted.

DR: For twelve and a half minutes.

SP: Granted.

DR: So I'd..., thank you very much. Mind if I have a, just a, a drink of water? I've travelled down here from Bangor today, I was supposed to come and talk to you then, but I had Covid, so I thought I'd better not.

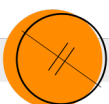
SP: Oh I'm glad to see you've recovered.

DR: I also have a selection of slides and I've attempted on those slides to make them bilingual, so I don't know if you want to see the slides or not, but...?

SP: Yes, happy to see the slides.

[00:34:24]

DR: So to give you the time to....



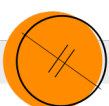
Right, my name is Dennis Roberts, and I live in Felinheli, about five miles from Bangor. I am here as an individual with an interest in issues such as boundaries. My comprehensive submission was sent to the Commission last week. I'm a former chief local government officer and had the privilege and pleasure of serving on the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales for two terms. I would like to present to you information about five new constituencies and changes to two others.

I am strongly of the opinion that there are three different areas in North Wales. Firstly, the Coast, with a high percentage of retired people, in the area from Caernarfon to Prestatyn, and there are important health, education and administrative centres. Tourism is the area's main industry, but there is a cross-section of other industries. The second area is an industrial area. Deeside and Wrexham form the traditional industrial area in North Wales. Although the heavy industries that supported the area for generations have diminished, modern industries have come to take their place. And the third area is the countryside. The rest of North Wales is a collection of market towns with industrial estates in most of them, with the surrounding countryside dependent on agriculture and tourism. When starting on this work, it came to my mind that something along this pattern appeared in the Commission's final proposals in 2018. This is the map outlining those proposals. This inspired me to go ahead with my research since I believe I have a precedent for what I hoped to achieve.

I'll begin by looking at the Clwyd, Delyn and Alyn and Deeside constituencies. So, my first task was to see whether it was practical to create these three constituencies within the Commission's guidelines. Having sorted the wards into three categories, these were my findings. Those figures in the table on the left align with the needs of the Commission, that the number of constituents is within the necessary range. So, here is my first recommendation to the Commission. To accept a coastal constituency from Colwyn Bay to beyond Prestatyn, with 76,863 constituents. Similarly, I recommend that the Commission accepts the industrial constituency on Deeside from Mostyn to Broughton, with 75,692 constituents. This leaves the countryside. In the Commission's proposals, I was unhappy that Ruthin and the nearby wards in the Vale of Clwyd were in the Delyn constituency. But, but the countryside overcomes this problem. There are other problems, such as, such as the wards of Brymbo and Minera, which should be part of the Wrexham constituency. I'm also unhappy to see the constituencies of Llandrillo, Corwen and Llangollen, where I was born and raised, in the Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr constituency. This does not make sense geographically, as the Berwyn mountains lie between Montgomeryshire and the Dee Valley. These constituencies are also in Denbighshire. Finally, would it be beneficial to transfer Llansannan and Betws-yn-Rhos, wards in the county of Conwy, to the Aberconwy constituency?

[00:39:28]

So onwards to Wrexham and transferring the constituencies of Brymbo and Minera from the countryside to the constituency and, as you can see, this is not currently within the guidelines. The Commission has already accepted that part of the county of Wrexham need to be included in the Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr constituency. The Llangollen area on the constituency map shows this. Therefore, could other wards be transferred from this area that that the number of



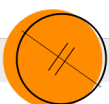
constituents in Wrexham is within the guidelines? Here is the Ordnance Survey constituency map of the area. Within Wrexham Council, there are two constituencies on the border, namely Pant and Johnstown, in a location that could be included in the Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr constituency. This was my proposal to the Commission in November and I also suggest that it would be possible to include the Ponciau ward in Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr. With a detailed view here of the map before me, I can see that my original proposal only includes half of the village of Rhosllannerchrugog. It is therefore necessary to transfer the Ponciau ward from Wrexham to Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr and the three wards can be seen outlined in the re... in red on the map. I therefore propose that, for Wrexham, that Minera and Brymbo should be transferred from the countryside and Pant, Ponciau and Johnstown should be transferred to the Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr constituency. And so, this is my recommendation for Wrexham with 72,977 constituents. As I recall, this was also the proposal of the local Member of Parliament at the hearing in Wrexham.

So onwards to the countryside. I have added Pant, Ponciau and Johnstown to the constituency and transferred Llandrillo, Corwen and Llangollen to the countryside. This creates a constituency with an electorate of 73,841. Therefore, this is my recommendation for the northern part of Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr.

Onwards to the countryside and transferring Minera and Brymbo to Wrexham, then adding Llandrillo, Corwen and Llangollen from Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr creates an electorate of 75,184. One other issue arises, which is the situation in Llansannan and Betws-yn-Rhos. Both wards are in the county of Conwy and I currently recommend that they should be transferred to the Aberconwy constituency. So, here, for the western, sorry north-eastern Countryside constituency, here is my recommendation with 72,066 constituents.

So onwards to north-west Wales. We'll begin with Aberconwy in the left-hand column. You can see that transferring Llansannan and Betws-yn-Rhos creates an electorate on 73,027. This brings to total electorate closer to the electoral quota of 73,393. But, but before making that proposal, we will look to see whether it's possible to create electorates with the pillar and countryside in this area. Oh sorry, the right-hand column shows the number of constituents we have for, for that. Having sorted the wards... oh sorry. Yes, having sorted the wards into two categories, my first recommendation is the, the coastal constituency, stretching from Caernarfon to Llandudno, with 74,256 constituents. Similarly, I recommend a western countryside constituency with 70,733 constituents, and that is my final recommendation.

The political parties, in the previous hearing and this morning, have emphasised the importance that a Member of Parliament represents the smallest possible number of counties. My [inaudible 00:44:24] improves the situation from the Commission's proposals and only two have three counties and four have two counties. Here is a table showing that the number of constituents in my proposals align with the figure in the Commission's proposals. I believe that the proposals I have presented to you today are a pattern that the Commission can consider in detail before making their final decision. And you can see in the final slide that the pattern of constituencies in my proposals follow the pattern of the Commission's final report in 2018.



[00:46:22]

Thank you for the opportunity to present my ideas to you and also for the opportunity to come here today as I had been unable to attend the hearing in Bangor due to having Covid. And also thank you to the Chair for allowing me additional time.

SP: Diolch yn fawr. Questions from the floor? No. Anything from colleagues? If not, thank you very much again. Diolch yn fawr iawn.

SW: Diolch yn fawr. She has asked Roger to read out a statement on behalf of...

SP: Sorry?

SW: Faye Jones, can't be here. She's asked Roger to read out a statement on her behalf.

SP: Okay, fine. I understand that Faye Jones, MP is not able to come later, but she's she has a statement.

RP: Yeah, I don't think I've got it yet, but I will...

SP: Okay, well. Our next scheduled speaker is not until 5.30, so we will adjourn until quarter past five, but if the statement from Faye Jones arrives, let us know and we'll find a way of reconvening slightly earlier or something.

RP: Yeah.

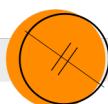
SP: Okay, thank you very much. Meeting stands adjourned.

AC: If we could resume the, the hearings today. We've got a few in at half past seven, but unable to attend. Faye Jones, MP for Brecon and Radnorshire, but she has sent Mr Pratt, who's the Conservative spokesman here today, a written submission? If Mr Pratt would like to have, to read that, out on MP's behalf, so Mr Pratt if you'd perhaps return to the lectern and do that for us, thank you.

RP: Thank, thank you very much. My name is Roger Pratt, I represent the Conservative Party. Faye, Faye Jones very much wanted to address one of the hearings and she's been thwarted at every stage. Unfortunately, just before the Swansea hearing to which she was booked in, her mother died and therefore she couldn't attend this. She was booked in for later on today and unfortunately parliamentary business has prevented her from being with her, so she's asked me to read a statement on her behalf. So this is a statement by Faye Jones, the Member of Parliament for Brecon and Radnorshire.

[00:48:19]

I'm writing to voice my support for the changes proposed to the constituency of Brecon and Radnorshire. I support the addition of nine extra wards from the Upper Neath Valley. In extending the constituency past Ystradgynlais, the Boundary Commission has fulfilled the legislation's objective of increasing the electorate without connecting disparate communities. There are clear links to the proposed



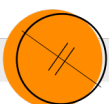
new wards. I firmly believe that the addition of the nine extra wards to be a sensible addition that would aid the wards in question and the constituency as a whole. These areas share a strong heritage and a critical mass of people. Individuals commute between these areas naturally. It is beneficial therefore that they are combined. This would streamline their political representation as they naturally hold similar beliefs and political issues. I have divided the benefits into three obvious categories, education, the economy and culture.

How does B and R, Ystradgynlais connect to the new wards? Firstly education. Presently there are community links developing across the constituency border due to education demands. For example, a significant number of children in the Sennybridge area, within Brecon and Radnorshire, are already attending Ystalyfera High School, a Welsh medium school across the constituency border. It is the closest immersive Welsh medium secondary school for students who live in south Brecon and Radnorshire. Representatives of this constituency at a local and national level are proud to speak up for further Welsh language provision, to have a Welsh medium secondary school in the constituency would do well to serve parents of these students. An elected member of this constituency could represent children and parents of those attending this school and it take pride in it being the first completely Welsh medium school in Brecon and Radnorshire. This would provide a shared source of pride and importance across the constituency.

Secondly, the economy. Bordering this constituency in nearby Upper Neath Valley is the Global Centre of Rail Excellence, a cross governmental initiative that serves to economically benefit Ystradgynlais and the wider area. Both the Welsh government, the UK government via the Department of Business Engin..., Energy and Industrial Strategy, Neath Port Talbot and Powys County Council have been instrumental in ensuring this pros..., project was successfully realised. The Centre of Rail Excellence will be responsible for attracting and delivering ambit..., ambitious plans to build a unique rail test and innovation environment in South Wales industrial heartland. It has the potential to transform the railway industry in the UK, contribute to the UK, Un..., UK government's rebalancing agenda by stimulating the UK's research, development and innovation capability. Critically it will have a hugely significant socio-economic impact, the wi..., local and wider community and to Wales more broadly. There are obvious economic benefits to having a world class rail testing site bordering this constituency. It attracts talented individuals, engages the local community and overall supports and enhances local economic growth. A source of concern for those living in the constituency is the lack of rail infrastructure in the area. I believe that having the centre in the constituency would strengthen any advocacy an elected member may want to do for improvements for local transport serving their constituents economic needs.

[00:52:04]

Thirdly, culture and community. The proposals would also add a number of Welsh speaking areas to the constituency, which builds on the Welsh speaking community in Ystradgynlais. As a, as already mentioned, the inclusion of Welsh education would aid us in this matter. I as the representative of Ystradgynlais, frequently hold surgeries in the library there. I'm aware that the significant proportion of my casework that comes from this corner of my constituency, that is next to the proposed new area, revolves around council issues. I believe it would be more



straightforward if these adjoining wards were joined to Brecon and Radnorshire. It is beneficial that it is clear who their local representative is and would embolden the local representative to speak for the community as a whole, rather than part of it. I therefore think it is logical for these wards to be added to the constituency of Brecon and Radnorshire. Taking Ystradgynlais, together with the proposed wards in Neath, would consist of a third of the electorate of the new constituency. Due to its significance in terms of size and already existing casework, an elected member would be sensible and right to com..., conduct multiple surgeries in this area in addition to establishing a constituency office. This would acknowledge the importance of the area and serve as a nod to its value as a recent addition to the constituency. It is in this constituency's broader interest to connect with these wards. It will strengthen and enhance an already existing symmetry. There's been significant demographic change and it now aligns with the wards already in my constituency, so enclosing the proposals also meet the criteria laid down in the Bill to limit the number of local authorities covered by each com..., parliamentary constituency, adding wards from Neath Port Talbot makes clear sense, particularly in view of the existing co-operation between Powys County Council and Neath Port Talbot local authority in projects such as the global centre for rail excellence.

I also support a name change of the constituency to honour the inclusion of the additional wards. For example, Brecon Radnor and Cwmtawe, or Brecon Radnor and the Upper Swansea Valley.

That is her statement.

AC: Thank you Mr Pratt, I'm hesitant to ask for comment from the floor because it isn't, it isn't your statement you're reading out in fairness, so.... But are there any points of clarification requested? Mr Pratt, thank you for reading out the MP's statement for us.

RP: Thank you very much indeed.

AC: Slightly before time, I think Mr Hayfield's present. Are you prepared to go?

HH I am indeed.

AC: I think Mr Hayfield, you've got a 20 minute slot.

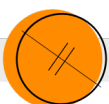
HH: Oh, goodness me! [laughter]

AC: Because you have attempted to attend other ones and have been unable to do so, I think.

HH: If you give me twenty minutes, I'll try and..., I'll try and do most of it anyway.

AC: All I say is that at the end of it there'll be, you'll be allowed to have a clar..., you'll be..., questions and clarification allowed.

HH: Oh marvellous!



AC: Of you. And my colleague sitting behind Mr Pratt there will hold up a sign showing you've got two minutes left if you get to that stage.

[00:55:18]

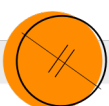
HH: Well thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Good afternoon, my name is Harry Hayfield and I've been asked by the Welsh Green Party to submit our proposals and comment on the initial proposals as outlined by the Commission.

I have noticed in a large number of these meetings, not only here in Wales, but also in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, several people are coming to this lectern and declaring this is a fake boundary review, slamming the door as laid down by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2022, and I, as I am surmising here a cheap power grab by the Conservative Government. Whilst it is true that we in the Green Party oppose the passing of the law, the fact that the law has been passed and that you are here acting on that law is neither here nor there. That said, I do wish to put it on formal record that we agree with those people that this law was never required in the first place. Under the law as passed, Wales's 2.3 million electors have to be placed in 32 constituencies as opposed to the current 40. The only Welsh constituency unaffected by these changes is, of course, Ynys Môn. I believe that the honourable member for Montgomeryshire who was here earlier today can probably suggest the reason why this was the case. Therefore, the remaining 2.2 or so million electors have to be placed in 31 new constituencies, whilst still keeping to the law, stating that no constituency can have an electorate of greater than 1/645th of the UK electorate, plus or minus 5%. And in my formal submission, Mr Chairman, I am pleased to state that all of the proposed constituencies fall within that range. The smallest being Pem..., Pembrokeshire Coast, 95.17% of the UK EQ and the largest being Monmouthshire, 104.48% of the UK EQ.

As we are in Aberystwyth today, I shall f..., focus solely on those constituencies in the ceremonial counties of Powys and Dyfed, which between them have an electorate of 396,334 and under the rules as laid out can have an around five constituencies, one fewer than at the moment. Therefore I shall summarise my proposals from North to South.

Starting off with Montgomeryshire, which currently has 49,100 electors. Whereas the Commission has decided to put Montgomeryshire into a single constituency, Montgomeryshire and Glyndwr, it is my belief it should be split between two constituencies. Snowdonia and Montgomeryshire North, reflecting the links that Northern Montgomeryshire has with the foothills of Snowdonia, and the Brecon Beacons and Montgomeryshire South, reflecting the links that towns like Newtown have with the Brecon Beacons. Snowdonia and Montgomeryshire North has an electorate of 73,240, 99.79% of the UK EQ and the Brecon Beacons and Montgomeryshire South has an electorate of 75,830, 103.32% of the UK EQ. And yes, I am aware I have called the name by its English name, but have no objections at all if, if the Commission wished to adopt the Welsh language name Eryri and personally believe that would be the better name.

[00:58:26]



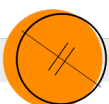
Brecon and Radnorshire, 54,854 electors. Due to the rules that the Commission is working under, I have tried my darndest not to cross ceremonial counties. Sadly, this has not always been the case and this has been demonstrated by the Commissioner's proposal to ta..., which has seen the constituency's name remain unchanged, but taken part of Neath. Similarly, I have tried to do the same with some wards of Monmouthshire Council coming in. This has been countered by some wards going out of the constituency to create a new Amman, Neath and the Swansea Valley constituency.

Ceredigion, 56,151 electors. For Ceredigion, the rules as laid down by the government have meant that for the first time, for the second time since this constituency was formally created in 1885, Ceredigion is going to have to be Ceredigion and something. Between 1983 and 1997 it was and Pembroke North and from the next election onwards, it shall have to be and the Preseli's. This is not Ceredigion's fault. The rules as laid down say that Ceredigion is one quarter too small to survive on its own as a constituency and sadly, even if there was a baby boom this year, it would not have an impact until 2040 at the earliest. Therefore, the only reasonable suggestion is taking vast chunks of Preseli Pembrokeshire in a manner similar to the Commission. In fact, Mr Chairman, although we think alike, the only difference between myself and your is that Newport, which you believe should be in Mid and South Pembrokeshire, I would put into Ceredigion and the Preseli's. On the subject of Preseli Pembrokeshire, which has 50,030 electors, having taken a vast chunk out of the constituency, the remainder bar the Clydau and Crymych wards which would go into the proposed Carmarthenshire constituency becomes the base for a new Pembrokeshire Coast constituency. This also takes in Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire, 59,633 electors, which in turn is sub-divided into Carmarthenshire con..., into a Carmarthenshire constituency, the vast majority of which is the current Carmarthen East and Dinefwr constituency, 57,700 electors, with only a few wards, Llangynor, Penderyn, Penygroes, Saron and St Ishmael being combined with the existing Llanelli constituency, which currently has 60,766 electors. In order to create if you will excuse the reference to an internet video, Llanelli makes a brand new Llanelli, which as the next person to speak after me is the honourable member for that constituency who I've just noticed has just come in, means, it will be interesting to see if we share my opinion on her that Llanelli will always be Llanelli. However I would like to apologise in advance to the honourable member that I would not be able to sing Sosban Fach, because my Welsh is quite frankly appalling, having lived here for 40 years, but that's on account of me not being a linguist.

With that, I'd like to thank the Commission for allowing me to listen to prior comments this afternoon and if there are any, no objections at all, I would like to stay and hear the thoughts of the honourable member for Llanelli and assuming that there are aren't any objections, were to be have to answer any questions that I, may wish were to be asked. Thank you, diolch yn fawr iawn.

AC: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarification? Mr Pratt?

RP: Thank you, thank you very much. Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. I appreciate that you concentrated on the areas round here because this is the l..., the hearing, but you did at one point mention Monmouthshire, because I think you'd linked part of Monmouthshire with part of Brecon and, and Radnor. I wonder



if you could explain exactly what happens to Monmouthshire under the Green proposal?

[01:02:18]

HH: Under the proposal, I should point out I didn't actually bring my resources with because I was just talking specifically about this area, but for, but I have submitted it to the Commission and when you publish your, the submissions and all the other things you've had, it will be amongst those. But I think why I came to the conclusion was that Monmouthshire on its own was just the right size for constituency and so therefore all I've done is, I've taken the most northern wards of Monmouthshire council to put them into the new Brecon and Radnor, the new, the Brecon and Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire South so that it is possible for Monmouthshire to remain as a constituency without having to input any parts of Newport into it. But, as I said, when the matter of formal submissions are published at the end of this procedure, you'll be able to see what I've put, formally put down.

RP: So, you, you, you take, I, I think I'm right in saying, you take out parts, where, like where I live in Llanelly Hill, and other parts, but not Abergavenny itself, but all the surrounding areas to Abergavenny. But that means that you have to add something else in to Monmouthshire, it doesn't work.

HH: I can assure you all the, as I say, all the constituencies I've proposed fit within the rules as laid down by the Parliamentary Constituency Act 2000 and I'd be happy to send you a copy if you'd like.

RP: O, o, okay. That, that's fine, but I just wonder what you add? I'm trying to clarify what you add to Monmouthshire to make up for the areas of Monmouthshire that you've included with Brecon and Radnor?

HH: As I, I can't remember them offhand, but I shall certainly send you a copy.

RP: Okay, thank you very much.

AC: Any other points from the floor? I take it there are no further points of clarification for you. Thank you very much.

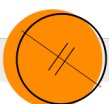
HH: Thank you very much Mr Chairman.

AC: You're more than welcome to stay to hear Nia Griffith MP who is arrived well ahead of time. Do you want to speak now?

NG: Well if there's nobody else here in front of me in the queue.

SP: You are the queue I'm afraid. You are the queue. [laughter]

AC: I'll make no comment on that, but you've got ten minutes to address us from the podium. As you've just seen, the floor can ask you questions, for clarification, not cross-examination and so can the panel. If you'll just identify yourself and your organisation that you belong to and the general area you come from. The



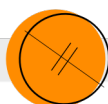
gentleman behind in the back row will tell you when you've got two minutes left. Thank you.

[01:04:50]

NG: Okay. Well thank you very much indeed Chair. So I'm Nia Griffith, Member of Parliament for Llanelli, speaking to a proposal to move the Llangynor ward from the new Llanelli into the new Caerfyrddin constituency; reflecting the submission by Llangynor Community Council and by Rob James, the leader of the Labour group on Carmarthenshire County Council.

To begin with, I'd like to set on record my thanks to the Boundary Commission for their work in tackling this extremely challenging task of drawing boundaries to meet the size of electorate criteria across rural Wales. And in particular reference to my own constituency of Llanelli, I would like to say I am very glad to see that the two halves of Pont Yets village have been put together, this seems a very sensible proposal, that Caraway and Ffoslas are now included alongside Brynsaron in the Llanelli constituency because again, it's always seemed a little anomalous that Caraway and Ffoslas were not part of the constituency. And that St Ishmael and Ferryside have come in with Kydwelly. And these all seem to be very sensible changes.

Now, before the boundary changes in the 1990s, the whole of the urban area of Carmarthen was part of the Carmarthen constituency, that is both the Carmarthen Town Council area and the Llangynor Community Council Area. Then in the 1990, 1990s boundary changes which then came into force in the 1997 election, the town of Carmarthen was included in the Carmarthen West constituency, whilst the Llangynor ward was included in the Carmarthen East constituency. And at the time, this felt as if the community was being ripped apart. On paper, the river Tywi can look like an obvious boundary, but in terms of community, the community is grown up on both sides of the river, with the railway station and an expanding retail and commercial area on the Llangynor side of the river. And this review would be an opportunity to reunite the community. But most importantly of course, the people of Llangynor themselves, as expressed in the submission by Llangynor Community Council, also see their community as more naturally a part of Carmarthen than of Llanelli. Carmarthen is their natural go to town for services, leisure, clubs, societies, as well as shopping and work. Town is well served with bridges and residents of Llangynor are in and out of Carmarthen all of the time. Part of Llangynor is of a very urban nature, and whilst in a large capital city you would naturally have boundaries through an urban area because you need more than one constituency, it would seem very strange for a, an urban area the size of Carmarthen to be split into more than one constituency. People of Llangynor therefore, as I say, look very much to Carmarthen for their life. Conversely, they have much less affinity with the rural hinterland and would find it very strange to be part of the Llanelli constituency. With this change, both the new Llanelli and the Caerfyrddin constituencies would still be within the permitted limits of no less than 69,724 parliamentary electors and no more than 77,062. The size of the new Llangynor ward is 2,077, so with that addition, the electorate of the new Caerfyrddin ward would increase from 70,606 to 72,683. The electorate of the new Llanelli would decrease from 71,972 to 69,895. Now personally, if I were to have the privilege of representing the people of Llangynor, I would be very pleased to do so, having taught many of them and



known many of them for many, many years. But I respect their views and I support the idea of Llangynor being included in the new Caerfyrddin constituency. Diolch yn fawr iawn ichi gyd.

[01:08:58]

AC: Are there any points of clarification from the floor? No, no? Got a point, Mr Hayfield, yeah?

HH: Thank you very much, Harry Hayfield, Wales Green Party. If what you are looking for happens, and as you've measured out the two constituencies would still be, were in the frame, are you not concerned that with the new, with the changes, the, your smaller constituency would be just on the cusp of being legal and that therefore in any changes with the, with the number of people in that ward, could suddenly make your constituency as you propose it, illegal?

NG: Mmm. Well if I may say, Chair, I understand that since the, the cut-off point in 2020, of course there have been an increase in the number of houses in many, many constituencies, but I have to say the rate of growth in Llanelli seems to be very much above the average for Wales as we have had huge amounts of housing along the coast and I think we're probably already well above that, that particular mark and will continue to grow from the planning permissions that I see coming through.

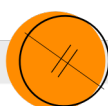
AC: Of course there is a line drawn for the, these purposes, there's a snapshot taken if you like with the population as it was. We, whilst we understand your point, it would be forever, we'd continue to review forever if we moved the population changes, but we..., thank you for your contribution and thank you.

Do you have any questions?

SW: No, there's no one else now, so we can go for a break and, like a recess.

AC: Thank you, Mrs Griffiths. There's, there's no other speaker currently listed. We, we will adjourn and stay available if I can put it that way, in case any other parties turn up. But at this point, the, the hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

[End of Transcription 01:10:48]





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**Boundary Commission
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