

**Boundary Commission for Scotland
Minutes of Meeting held at Thistle House, Edinburgh
Monday 18 April 2016**

Present

The Hon Lord Matthews, Deputy Chairman
Mrs Paula Sharp, Commissioner
Professor Ailsa Henderson, Commissioner

Ms Michaela Gordon, Ordnance Survey, Assessor to the Commission

Ms Isabel Drummond-Murray, Secretary
Mr Colin Wilson, Secretariat

Introduction and apologies

1. Apologies had been received from Tim Ellis, Registrar General, National Records of Scotland.

Item 1: Minutes of the previous meeting

2. The minutes of the 15 February 2016 meeting were agreed.

Item 2: Matters arising

3. The Commission noted:
 - The Scotland Bill had completed its legislative passage and received Royal Assent; the date for commencement of the section transferring responsibility for Scottish Parliament boundaries to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland had yet to be agreed.
 - The Secretariat would continue to liaise with the Scotland Office over the outcomes of the Triennial Review.
 - The formal launch of the 2018 Review had gone smoothly and had been picked up by a range of media outlets. There had been some issues around the Secretariat's final verification of electorate data by council area but these had now been resolved and the Secretariat expected to be able to publish the data shortly.

Item 3: Policies and Procedures booklet (Paper 2016/07)

4. The Commission agreed the draft Policies and Procedures booklet subject to amendments discussed. An amended version would be circulated. It was agreed to aim for publication in June.

Item 4: Consultation Portal (oral update)

5. The Commission noted the update and that following the last meeting, and on receipt of the necessary assurances around autonomy, control and costings, it had confirmed its agreement to pursuing a shared UK portal. It was noted that the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland would not be participating. The contract for provision of the portal had been let following a tender exercise run by the Boundary Commission for England. Final costs and timescales were awaited and the Secretary would liaise with the Boundary Commission for England over next steps.

Item 5: Constituency design options (Paper 2016/08)

6. The Commission considered the approach set out in paper 2016/09 and asked the Secretariat to:
- develop the groupings in Appendix C, subject to early checking that the proposed grouping of 12.36 seats in Central Scotland was workable;
 - prepare a map showing the overlay of the groupings across existing constituencies;
 - circulate data by council and ward level once available.
7. The Secretariat gave a short demonstration of its use of GIS to develop constituency options.

Item 6: 2018 Review Project Plan (Paper 2016/09)

8. The Commission noted the Project Plan and requested a small change to the format. The Secretariat was asked to look again at the date of the proposed August meeting of the Commission.

Item 7: Meeting with political parties (oral update)

9. The Commission discussed the proposed meeting with political parties on the afternoon of 16 May. The Secretary was asked to circulate to the Commission the presentation, agenda and note of the 2011 meeting.
10. It was agreed that the next version of the Policies and Procedures booklet should be sent to the parties in advance of the meeting and that they be invited to submit any comments or questions beforehand if possible.
11. It was also agreed that, given the recent training provided by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland in use of QGIS, ad hoc support around GIS issues would be offered rather than further formal training.

Item 8: Risk Register (Paper 2016/10)

12. The Commission considered the Risk Register; agreed that its format was appropriate; and asked for amendment of the risk relating to loss of staff with appropriate skills and the addition of a risk relating to impact of events in the political landscape.

Item 9: Finance update (Paper 2016/11)

13. The Commission noted the end year outturn for 2015-16; the allocated budget for 2016-17 and progress with the corporate plan.

Item 10: Any other business

14. No further matters were raised.

Secretariat

April 2016