

Boundary Commission for Scotland

Minutes of Meeting held at Thistle House, Edinburgh

Monday 3 October 2016

Present

The Hon Lord Matthews, Deputy Chairman
Professor Ailsa Henderson, Commissioner
Mrs Paula Sharp, Commissioner
Ms Michaela Gordon, Ordnance Survey

Isabel Drummond-Murray, Secretary
Colin Wilson, Secretariat
Laura Cregan, Secretariat
Douglas Campbell, Secretariat

Apologies

Mr Tim Ellis, Registrar General, National Records of Scotland submitted apologies.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the 5 September 2016 meeting were agreed, subject to minor amendments.

Matters arising

1. The Secretary gave an update to the Commission following the Scottish Ministers' recent decisions regarding the Local Government Boundary Commission's Recommendations for the Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements. The Commission noted that the Minister had accepted the recommendations in 27 council areas.
2. At the meeting of 5 September 2016 the Commission agreed the constituency name of Airdrie South and Wishaw. Following advice from the Secretariat, the Commission agreed that the name did not accurately identify the area within the constituency and as such the Commission agreed to adopt the constituency name of Airdrie South and Shotts instead.

Constituency grouping – Fife and Perth and Kinross (Paper 2016/39)

3. After agreeing in principle, to Option 4, as presented in Paper 2016/37, at its meeting of 5 September 2016, the Commission considered a further design, Option 5.
5. Option 5 amended the boundary between the proposed Dunfermline and

Kinross–shire and Cowdenbeath constituencies with the aim of further aligning the boundary with existing UK Parliamentary boundaries and also offered an alternative boundary near Aberdour in place of part of ward 6 in the proposed Kinross–shire and Cowdenbeath constituency.

4. The Commission agreed that it was unwilling to split further wards in the area to create constituencies when its aim at the outset had been to align constituency boundaries with existing wards rather than existing UK Parliament constituencies.

5. As such the Commission agreed to adopt Option 4 as its Initial Proposals for constituencies in Fife and Perth and Kinross, subject to identification of satisfactory proposals elsewhere in Scotland.

Constituency groupings – East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, and Glasgow City (Paper 2016/40)

6. At its previous meeting the Commission agreed to adopt Option 2 for constituencies in East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and Glasgow City council areas subject to further consideration of the boundary between the proposed West Dunbartonshire and Bearsden North constituency and the proposed Milngavie and Kirkintilloch constituency. At that meeting, the Commission also asked that the Secretariat investigate the possibility of aligning the proposed boundary between Glasgow North constituency and Glasgow West constituency more closely with the existing constituency boundary near Summerston. These amendments were presented in Options 4 and 5.

7. The Commission agreed that the configuration of ward boundaries near Bearsden can result in oddly-shaped constituencies when used as constituency boundaries and noted that both options 4 and 5 attempt to increase the compactness of constituencies in the area: option 4 transfers a large rural area near Milngavie; option 5 transfers a larger rural area near Milngavie and an urban area in Bearsden.

8. Consideration was given to the inclusion of the area near Summerston in the Milngavie and Kirkintilloch constituency. The Commission agreed this would result in a constituency that includes parts of 2 council areas and require Glasgow City Council area to be grouped with another council area and that the additional administrative complexity brought about would not be justified in this instance.

9. The Commission noted that while option 5 requires the division of East Dunbartonshire ward 2 as well as ward 1, it enables a more easily-identifiable boundary to be adopted west of Milngavie and avoids the division of a community council area in Bearsden.

10. Considering all these factors the Commission agreed that the amendments to Option 2 of Paper 2016/30 outlined in Option 5 should be adopted.

11. While undertaking quality assurance checks, the Secretariat identified a numerical error in the constituency electorate counts in the south of Glasgow, the correction of which resulted in the proposed Glasgow South East constituency having below the minimum number of electors required by the legislation.

12. The Commission agreed to adopt the following amendments to Option 2 to provide parity in this constituency: amending the boundary in Cathcart to follow the railway line instead of the White Cart Water, and amending the boundary in Pollokshaws to follow the White Cart Water rather than the railway line.

13. The Commission agreed to adopt Option 5 with the amendments outlined above between the proposed Glasgow South West constituency and Glasgow South East constituency as its Initial Proposals for constituencies in East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and Glasgow City council areas.

Initial Proposals

14. The Commission agreed that they had concluded their deliberations regarding Initial Proposals for constituencies and that all decisions previously minuted were confirmed as the Initial Proposals for public consultation.

Public Consultation – Media Arrangements (Paper 2016/41)

15. The Commission discussed preparations for media engagement for the publication of its Initial Proposals for constituencies on 20 October 2016 and offered comments on the approach and the draft materials. The Secretariat agreed to take forward a number of action points.

Public Consultation – Preparation for Public Hearings (2016/42)

16. The Commission considered all aspects of the arrangements for Public Hearings for the 2018 Review and the Secretariat agreed to take forward a number of action points.

Public Consultation – Other Issues (Oral Update)

17. The Commission heard a further update from the Secretariat regarding the progress being made in preparation for Public Consultation stage of the 2018 Review. This included arrangements for the Consultation Portal, the booklet to accompany the Consultation and also updated display point materials.

BCS Governance Issues (Paper 2016 /43)

18. The Commission considered the Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Scottish Office and the Boundary Commission for Scotland and also discussed on-going work regarding corporate governance. The Secretary welcomed the Commission's suggestions and agreed to keep the Commission updated with progress.

Finance Update (Paper 2016 / 44)

19. The Commission noted the latest finance update.

Any other business

20. The Secretary informed the Commission that suggested Agenda items were being sought for the upcoming meeting of UK Boundary Commissions in Belfast in December 2016.

21. The next meeting will be held on Monday 7 November at 10.30am.

Secretariat

October 2016