

2018 Review: Policies and Procedures Booklet

For discussion

Background

1. At its meeting on 22 February, the Commission considered the Policies and Procedures Booklet contained in Paper 2016/04 and agreed a number of amendments. The Secretary agreed to produce a further draft for approval. This is now attached at Appendix A.

Issues

2. The Commission may particularly want to consider:

Electoral Wards (Section 3.6)

2.1 The legislation allows the Commission to take into account "if and to such extent as they think fit" "local government boundaries as they exist on the most recent ordinary council-election day before the review date". For Scotland, this means the local government boundaries in place on 3 May 2012.

2.2 The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland will be submitting to Scottish Ministers in May 2016 recommendations arising from the 5th Reviews of Electoral Arrangements: these cover ward boundaries in all 32 council areas with the intention that these be in place for the next local government elections in May 2017.

2.3 During the 6th Review, the Boundary Commission for England set out that:

The local government boundaries that the BCE may have regard to arethose that existed on 6 May 2010. Consequently, the BCE will not generally take into account new boundaries that came into effect at local council elections in May 2011, or in subsequent years.

However, in the limited circumstances (if any) where the BCE has to consider whether it should divide a ward (as it existed on 6 May 2010) between constituencies in order to meet the statutory electorate range, and if so how it should be divided, the BCE is prepared to take into account as appropriate any new ward boundaries introduced after 6 May 2010.

2.4 For the 2018 review the Boundary Commission for Wales has said that “Where a principal council has either new electoral wards or changes to electoral ward boundaries that are due to take effect at the principle council elections in May 2017, or in subsequent years, these changes are.....not to be taken into account by the Commission in the recommendations that it will be submitting to the Secretary of State, in this review.” The Boundary Commission for England has made a similar statement. For both England and Wales, the most recent ordinary council election day is in May 2015.

Publication date

2.5 There is no particular pressure to publish the booklet but it would probably be helpful to do so well in advance of the consultation on Initial Proposals in the Autumn. The Secretariat suggests seeing if there are any issues arising from the meeting with political parties and then looking to publish in June.

Conclusion

3. The Commission is invited to offer further comments on the draft booklet and to agree that it be published in June.

**Secretariat
April 2016**

