

BCS Corporate Plan 2017-2018

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to consider the draft Corporate Plan for the period April 2017 to March 2018 which appears at Appendix A.

Discussion

2. The draft plan is informed by the draft schedule of meetings and the 2018 Review project plan (see Paper 2017/54).
3. There is great uncertainty in the LGBCS' workload in the next few years and changes may have to be made to coordinate both commissions' workstreams over the next year. The transfer of responsibility for Scottish Parliament boundary reviews to the LGBCS, expected sometime this year, places uncertainty on the budget that will be available to the Commission once the resourcing for the Scottish Parliament review is transferred.
4. The Secretariat will present a summary of the costs proposed in the corporate plan draft at the meeting.
5. Once the Plan has been agreed with the Commission and with Scotland Office, it will be placed on the Commission's website.

Conclusion

6. The Commission is invited to provide any comments on the draft Corporate Plan.

Secretariat
February 2017

BCS 2017/55 Appendix A

Boundary Commission for Scotland

Corporate Plan 2017 - 2018

Boundary Commission for Scotland
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

www.bcomm-scotland.independent.gov.uk

Telephone: 0131 244 2001

Email: secretariat@scottishboundaries.gov.uk

Boundary Commission for Scotland Corporate Plan 2017-2018

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Boundary Commission for Scotland	1
2.1	Duties and Powers	1
2.2	Membership.....	1
2.2.1	Chairman	
2.2.2	Deputy Chairman	
2.2.3	Commissioners	
2.2.4	Assessors	
2.3	Secretariat	2
3	Planned activities	2
3.1	Year 2017-18	2
3.1.1	Review activity	
3.1.2	Other activity	
3.1.3	Membership	
3.1.4	Finance and staffing	
3.1.5	Performance indicators	
4	Long term outlook.....	3
	Appendix A – Costs	4

1 Introduction

This Corporate Plan sets out the main activities to be undertaken by the Boundary Commission for Scotland during the period 2017-18 and forecasts the required resources and expenditure.

2 Boundary Commission for Scotland

2.1 Duties and Powers

The Boundary Commission for Scotland was established in its current form by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986. Our duties and powers are detailed in the 1986 Act and in Schedule 1 to the Scotland Act 1998. We are responsible for reviews of:

- United Kingdom Parliament constituencies in Scotland; and
- Scottish Parliament constituencies and regions (At the time of writing, we are anticipating the transfer of responsibilities from us to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, expected to occur in May 2017 and so this plan assumes that the transfer occurs as expected).

We are an advisory Non-departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored and wholly funded by the Scotland Office. We are an independent and non-political body.

2.2 Membership

Our membership comprises a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and two further Commissioners. In addition, we also have two ex-officio Assessors.

2.2.1 Chairman

Our ex-officio Chairman is the Speaker of the House of Commons. In practice, the Chairman takes no active part in our business.

2.2.2 Deputy Chairman

The Deputy Chairman is a judge of the Court of Session, appointed by the Lord President of the Court of Session. The Deputy Chairman is currently The Honourable Lord Matthews who was appointed from 1 January 2016 for a 4 year term.

2.2.3 Commissioners

In addition to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, Commissioners are appointed on a term basis and posts are filled through open competition using the procedures laid down by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Appointments are made by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

These Commissioners are:

- Mrs Paula Sharp, appointed from 1 January 2011 for a 4 year term, and re-appointed for a further 4 years ending on 31 December 2018; and
- Professor Ailsa Henderson, appointed from 15 February 2016 for a 4 year term.

2.2.4 Assessors

Our two ex-officio Assessors are the Registrar General for Scotland and the Director General of Ordnance Survey.

2.3 Secretariat

We are supported by a small Secretariat. The work of the Secretariat includes:

- facilitating boundary reviews;
- dealing with the everyday administrative matters relating to our business such as finance, purchasing and accommodation;
- liaising with other UK Boundary Commissions and government departments with an interest in boundary matters;
- maintaining contact with Ordnance Survey and other relevant bodies on boundary related issues;
- maintaining links with organisations involved with electoral matters;
- improving and extending our published information explaining our work;
- responding to correspondence on our work and constituency boundary issues;
- providing ongoing training as appropriate to meet staff and review requirements; and
- continuing to meet all financial and other requirements of our Financial Memorandum and other key sponsorship documents.

The Secretariat also supports the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland which is responsible for reviewing electoral ward and local authority areas in Scotland. The Secretariat is funded separately by the Scottish Government for that work.

Secretariat staff are assigned from the Scottish Government. Staff numbers are dependent on the volume of review activity and the need to develop, maintain and update information systems and respond to enquiries etc.

3 Planned activities

3.1 Year 2017-18

3.1.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

We expect to progress our 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies through: development of, and consultation on, our revised proposals for constituencies; publication of comments we received during our consultation for public scrutiny and preparation of our final report. The 2018 Review is being conducted simultaneously by the 4 parliamentary Boundary Commissions covering the United Kingdom.

3.1.2 Other activity

We will carry out our governance functions throughout the year to ensure that we manage the Commission's operations efficiently and cost effectively, and meet the Government's requirements of an advisory Non-departmental Public Body (NDPB).

3.1.3 Membership

No changes to our membership are expected during the year.

3.1.4 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2017-18 are expected to be:

- £276,000 excluding VAT.

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2017-18 is expected to be:

- 4.85 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A. These costs are expected to be met by a resource allocation which is subject to the approval of Parliament.

3.1.5 Performance indicators

Success in the year will be judged by the following indicators:

- development of our revised proposals for UK Parliament constituencies;
- consultation on our revised proposals;
- preparation of our final report on UK Parliament constituencies;
- maintenance of information about the Commission and its work on our website;
- responding to any queries about us and our work during the year;
- delivery within budget.

4 Long term outlook

UK Parliament constituency reviews are required to take place every 5 years. This Corporate Plan sets out our intention to complete the 2018 Review of UK Parliament constituencies before 1 October 2018. We expect that the next Review of UK Parliament Constituencies after that will be due to be carried out between 2021 and 2023.

Appendix A – Costs

Overall Costs

The overall costs of the Boundary Commission for Scotland are expected to be as follows.

	2017-18
Staffing costs	197,000
Commissioners' fees and expenses	23,000
Accommodation, rent and rates	19,000
Administration	19,000
Mapping	0
Travel and Subsistence	2,000
Review costs	16,000
Total	276,000

Staffing costs

The allocation of staff by grade, and the average salary for each of those grades is as follows:

Grade	FTE 2017-18	Salary (£) (2015/16 mean)
C1	0.50	67,754
B2	1.80	38,365
B1	2.05	31,628
A3	0.50	23,375
Total	4.85	

Overall staffing costs include National Insurance and Pension contributions.

Commissioners' fees and expenses

These are approximately £2,040 per meeting, and the figures are based on 11 meetings per year during a full review and meetings as required otherwise.

Accommodation

Accommodation costs cover rent and utility bills, and are divided equally with the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland.

Administration

Covers training, IT costs, postage, telephones etc.

Mapping

We are licenced to use Ordnance Survey data through the One Scotland Mapping Agreement (OSMA), a collective agreement negotiated by Scottish Government on behalf of public bodies in Scotland. The licence fee for OSMA is met centrally by Scottish Government.

Travel and subsistence

Covers travel and subsistence costs for Commissioners and staff excluding travel costs specifically related to a Review.

Review costs

The major variable elements are the costs associated with a Review. The substantial elements of those costs during the planning period are:

	2017-18
Advertising	0
Professional fees	11,000
Local Inquiry and Public Hearing costs	0
Travel	500
Report publication	4,500
Total	16,000

Advertising – We publicise our proposals as part of our public consultation at certain stages of a review. In the 3 years covered by this corporate plan, we do not expect to place advertisements as part of our 2018 Review of UK Parliament constituencies.

Professional fees - From time to time, we may require external professional assistance, for example in order to make available an online consultation facility. The provision for professional fees is to allow for the use of external resources to assist in this.

Public Hearing and Local Inquiry costs - Reviews of UK Parliament constituencies involve the holding of Public Hearings.

Report publication costs – At the conclusion of a Review, we submit a report to the Secretary of State for Scotland. Although the predominant means of disseminating the report is electronic, there is still a requirement to produce a limited number of hard copies.
