

Boundary Commission for Scotland

Corporate Plan 2022 - 2025

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1 Introduction

This Corporate Plan sets out the main activities to be undertaken by the Boundary Commission for Scotland (“the Commission”) during the period 2022-23 to 2024-25 and forecasts the required resources and expenditure. For the second and third years covered, the information in the plan is designed to assist with budgeting and planning. The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for those years will be updated in subsequent corporate plans.

The Commission is in the midst of carrying out its 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies in Scotland. The Commission is due to submit its Final Recommendations to Parliament before 1 July 2023, during the second year of this Corporate Plan.

2 Boundary Commission for Scotland

2.1 Duties and Powers

The Commission was established in its current form by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986. Our duties and powers are detailed in the 1986 Act. We are responsible for reviews of United Kingdom Parliament constituencies in Scotland.

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

2.2 Membership

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

2.2.1 Chair

Our Chair is the Speaker of the House of Commons. In practice, the Chair takes no active part in our business.

2.2.2 Deputy Chair

The Deputy Chair is a judge of the Court of Session, appointed by the Lord President of the Court of Session. The Deputy Chair is currently The Honourable Lord Matthews who was appointed from 1 January 2016 for a 3 year term. He was re-appointed for a further 3 year term from 1 January 2019, and a further 3 year term from 1 January 2022.

2.2.3 Commissioners

In addition to the Chair and Deputy Chair, 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:

- Dr Sue Walker, appointed from 1 January 2021 for a 4 year term;
 - Professor Ailsa Henderson, appointed from 15 February 2016 for a 4 year term, and reappointed for a further 4 year term, ending on 31 January 2024.
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2.2.4 Assessors

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

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 Memorandum of Understanding and other key sponsorship documents.

The Secretariat also supports Boundaries Scotland which is responsible for reviewing electoral ward and local authority areas in Scotland as well as reviews of Scottish Parliament boundaries. 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. For the purposes of this Corporate Plan, staff costs have been shared equally between the Commission and Boundaries Scotland.

3 Planned activities

3.1 Year 2022-23

3.1.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

Having held a statutory 8-week public consultation on our Provisional Proposals for UK Parliament Constituencies from 14 October 2021 to 8 December 2021, we expect to hold a secondary statutory 4-week public consultation on our Provisional Proposals, as well as public hearings on those Provisional Proposals, in spring 2022, in line with Covid-19 regulations at that time.

We will consider the responses received to both consultations in summer 2022, and will decide on any Revised Proposals which we think are required. We anticipate holding a further statutory 4-week public consultation on any Revised Proposals in autumn 2022.

We will consider the responses to that public consultation, and in winter 2022 and spring 2023, decide on our Final Recommendations for UK Parliament Constituencies

in Scotland, and begin work on our Final Report which must be submitted by 1 July 2023.

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

We expect no changes in our membership this year.

3.1.4 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Commission during 2022-23 are expected to be:

- c. £389,673

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Commission and Boundaries Scotland during 2022-23 is expected to be:

- 7.38 Full time equivalent staff

The Commission will meet 50% of staff costs with the remainder met by Boundaries Scotland.

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A.

3.1.5 Performance indicators

We will consider ourselves to have met our performance requirements for the year when we have fulfilled the following criteria:

Review Work:

- have given consideration to the responses received on our Provisional Proposals in the initial and secondary public consultations as well as the statutory public hearings, which are expected to be held in 2021-22, and if we decided that Revised Proposals were required, held a further statutory 4-week public consultation on those Revised Proposals;

Governance and Other Requirements:

- maintained information about the Commission and its work on our website;
- responded to any queries about us and our work during the year;
- delivered within budget;
- given due consideration to equality and diversity in our work;
- used our resources with consideration for the environment;

3.2 Year 2023-24

The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for 2023-24 will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

3.2.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

We expect to agree and submit our Final Recommendations as a report to the Speaker of the House of Commons, before 1 July 2023, also sending a copy of it to the Secretary of State or the Minister for the Cabinet Office.

The Speaker of the House of Commons will lay our report, and the reports of the other UK Boundary Commissions before Parliament. Within four months of all the reports being laid before Parliament, the Secretary of State or the Minister for the Cabinet Office must submit to Her Majesty in Council a draft Order in Council. Her Majesty in Council will then make an Order in Council giving effect to the reports, which will be implemented at the next General Election.

Once the Speaker of the House of Commons has laid our report before Parliament, we will publish it on our website.

3.2.2 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).

3.2.3 Membership

The term of appointment Professor Henderson is due to end during this year. The Secretariat will work with the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland to ensure appropriate continued membership of the Commission.

3.2.4 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Commission during 2023-2024 are expected to be:

- c. £359,186

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Commission and Boundaries Scotland during 2023-24 is expected to be:

- 7.38 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A..

3.2.5 Performance indicators

We will consider ourselves to have met our performance requirements when we have fulfilled the following criteria:

Review Work:

- agreement and submission of our Final Recommendations by the deadline of 1 July 2023

Governance and Other Requirements:

- maintained information about the Commission and its work on our website;
 - responded to any queries about us and our work during the year;
 - delivered within budget;
 - given due consideration to equality and diversity in our work;
 - used our resources with consideration for the environment.
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3.3 Year 2024-25

The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for 2024-2025 will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

3.3.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

There is no review activity planned for this year. The next review of UK Parliament Constituencies in Scotland after the 2023 Review is due to be completed in 2031, and work is not expected to commence on it until early 2029.

3.3.2 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).

3.3.3 Membership

The term of appointment Dr Walker is due to end during this year. The Secretariat will work with the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland to ensure appropriate continued membership of the Commission.

3.3.4 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Commission during 2024-25 are expected to be:

- c. £317,670

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Commission and Boundaries Scotland during 2024-25 is expected to be:

- 6.38 Full Time Equivalent staff

The Commission will meet 50% of staff costs with the remainder met by Boundaries Scotland.

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A.

3.3.5 Performance indicators

We will consider ourselves to have met our performance requirements when we have fulfilled the following criteria:

Governance and Other Requirements:

- maintained information about the Commission and its work on our website;
- responded to any queries about us and our work during the year;
- delivered within budget;
- given due consideration to equality and diversity in our work;
- used our resources with consideration for the environment.

4 Long term outlook

UK Parliament constituency reviews after the 2023 Review are scheduled to take place every 8 years. This means that the next Review would be the 2031 Review, which would be completed by 1 July 2031, and expected to begin in early 2029.

Appendix A – Costs

Overall Costs

The overall costs of the Commission are forecast to be as follows:

| | 2022- 23 | 2023- 24 | 2024- 25 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| secretariat staff costs | £243,772 | £257,252 | £241,001 |
| commissioner costs | £14,649 | £6,466 | £3,739 |
| accommodation | £25,259 | £27,785 | £30,563 |
| administration | £39,191 | £35,171 | £40,367 |
| travel and subsistence | £2,000 | £2,000 | £2,000 |
| review costs | £64,802 | £30,513 | £0 |
| TOTAL | £389,673 | £359,186 | £317,670 |

Staff costs

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

| Grade | FTE 2022- 23 | FTE 2023- 24 | FTE 2024- 25 | Salary range (£) (April 2021) |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| C1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 49,240 to 61,167 |
| B3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 39,312 to 47,065 |
| B2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 31,266 to 35,813 |
| B1 | 3.38 | 3.38 | 2.38 | 26,995 to 29,776 |
| A3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 20,864 to 23,032 |
| Total | 7.48 | 7.48 | 6.48 | |

Overall staffing costs include National Insurance and pension contributions, in addition to the salary in the listed range. The staffing costs are divided 50/50 between the Commission and Boundaries Scotland. Staffing costs for BCS include an additional 20% VAT due to the arrangement by which the Scottish Government provides staff to the Commission.

The secretariat staffing costs are higher in the first two years of the Corporate Plan to allow for the recruitment of the equivalent of an additional B1, as both Commissions will be undertaking significant review work in 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Commissioners' fees and expenses

Estimates for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 are based on the estimated number of meetings which will be held each year: 10, 4 and 2 respectively, which reflect the timetable of review work. Fees for representing the Commission at the annual UK Boundaries Commission meeting are also included. Commissioners are paid £505.50 per day. The Deputy Chair's position is not remunerated.

Accommodation

Accommodation costs cover rent and utility bills, and are divided equally with Boundaries Scotland.

Administration

Covers training, IT costs, Geographic Information Software licences, postage, telephony and other office costs. Administration costs are equally shared between the Commission and the Boundaries Scotland, unless they are clearly attributable to one commission or the other.

Travel and subsistence

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

Mapping

We are licensed to use Ordnance Survey data through the Public Sector Geospatial Agreement, a collective agreement negotiated by Scottish Government on behalf of public bodies in Scotland. The licence fee is met centrally by the Scottish Government, and is not shown as a separate cost.

Review costs

The Commission is currently engaged in the 2023 Review, which will be completed during the second year of the Corporate Plan. The substantial elements of those costs during the planning period are summarised below:

| | 2022- 23 | 2023- 24 | 2024- 25 | Total |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| Publicity | £26,180 | £0 | £0 | £26,180 |
| Professional fees | £28,622 | £27,513 | £0 | £56,135 |
| Public Hearings | £0 | £0 | £0 | £0 |
| Subtotal | £54,802 | £27,513 | £0 | £82,315 |
| | | | | |
| Miscellaneous / Other | £10,000 | £3,000 | £0 | £13,000 |
| Total | £64,802 | £30,513 | £0 | £95,315 |

Publicity – We publicise our proposals as part of our public consultation at certain stages of a review. In 2022-23 we have made provision for publicising any Revised Proposals which we may agree are required.

Professional fees - We may require external professional assistance to conduct our work. For the 2023 Review, we have made provision an online consultation facility, and for printing and proofreading. Funds for securing legal advice, if necessary, are also included under this heading.

Public Hearings – There is a statutory requirement for the Commission to hold Public Hearings as part of Reviews of UK Parliament constituencies. These are expected to be completed in the 2021-22 financial year, and are therefore not included in the years covered by the Corporate Plan.

Miscellaneous– Provision for miscellaneous additional costs which may be incurred in carrying out the 2023 Review.
