

## **Minutes of Meeting held at Thistle House, Edinburgh**

**Monday 11 November 2019**

### **Present**

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

Isabel Drummond-Murray, Secretary  
Colin Wilson  
Douglas Campbell  
David Logue  
Yvonne Croll

### **Apologies**

Mr Dominic Cuthbert, Ordnance Survey, Assessor  
Paul Lowe, National Records of Scotland, Assessor

1. The Commission agreed to observe a minute's silence at 11am to commemorate Armistice Day.

### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

2. The minutes of the 22 July 2019 meeting were agreed with no amendments.

### **Matters arising**

3. The Commission's Annual Report had now been published on the website.
4. The Secretariat gave an update on the Commission's new website which was launched successfully following its refresh. The new BCS site went live in late August 2019 and to date the Secretariat and public users appear happy with the style, content and ease of use.

### **Business update**

5. The Commission noted that Sir Lindsay Hoyle had been elected as the new Speaker in the House of Commons and so will assume the office of Chair of the Boundary Commission for Scotland. The Commission agreed to write to welcome him to the post and to extend an open invitation to visit the Commission.
6. The Secretary informed the Commission of staffing changes in the Commission's sponsor team in the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland.
7. The Commission heard a summary of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland's work programme which included the current reviews of Electoral Arrangements in the Islands councils, the review of Interim Scottish Parliament boundaries at Cardowan by Stepps and also consideration of the Scottish Elections (Reform) Bill and its potential impact on "rolling" reviews and use of 2 and 5 member council wards.
8. The Commission noted that members of the Secretariat - along with counterparts in England and Wales - had enjoyed a short visit to the Ordnance Survey headquarters

in Southampton. The visit was facilitated by Mr Dominic Cuthbert and gave the Secretariat a chance to observe all aspects of OS's cartography process from surveying to map publishing.

#### **2018 Review – (Oral Update)**

9. The Commission noted that there had been no further progress regarding the UK Parliament's considerations of the Commission's recommendations made in the 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies.

#### **2018 Review – Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland (BCNI) Judicial Review (Discussion)**

10. The Secretary gave an update on the judicial review proceedings and confirmed that an appeal was to be heard in November. The Commission noted the position.

#### **Appointments (Oral Update)**

11. The Commission congratulated Professor Henderson on her re-appointment for a further 4 years until January 2024.
12. The Commission noted that Mrs Sharp's final term with the Commission ends in December 2020 and the Commission agreed to consider further how to capture and record Mrs Sharp's invaluable experience and expertise as a Commissioner at future meetings.
13. The Secretary also noted that the Deputy Chair's term is scheduled to end during the next review unless a further term of appointment is agreed. The Commission agreed to consider further once the timetable for the next review was clearer.

#### **Corporate Plan 2019-22 (Paper 2019/08)**

14. The Commission discussed the draft corporate plan, and agreed it subject to some amendments. The Commission agreed to amend the plan to incorporate stronger reference to the uncertainty over future review dates
15. The Commission considered the issue of the split of staff costs between itself and the LGBCS, and provisionally agreed to continue to divide staff costs 50/50 between the Commissions, taking into account the current uncertainty over future review work.
16. The Commission agreed the plan should budget for possible legal advice before the next review to clarify some matters within the existing legislative framework.
17. The Commission asked the Secretariat to incorporate its suggested amendments and to discuss with the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland submission of a draft version of the corporate plan to it by the second week in December. This would be with a view to the Commission agreeing a final version of the corporate plan at its next meeting in 2020 if timing of its future work programme became clearer.

#### **UK Commissions meeting (Discussion)**

18. The Commission noted that the Agenda for the upcoming meeting of the UK Boundary Commissions had yet to be shared. The Secretary informed the Commission that likely discussion topics may include Electoral Registration and BCNI's Judicial Review appeal. The Commission noted that Professor Henderson

had agreed to attend via video conferencing.

19. The Deputy Chair offered his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting or dinner.

**Finance Update (Paper 2019/09)**

20. The Commission noted the Finance Update.

**Future meetings (oral)**

21. The Commission agreed to meet again in early 2020 and the Commission were content for the Secretariat to canvass for suitable meeting times in January 2020.

**Any Other Business**

22. There was no AOB.

**Secretariat**

**November 2019**