

Minutes of Meeting held by video conference at 10am on 18 January 2021.**Present**

The Hon Lord Matthews, Deputy Chair
Dr Sue Walker, Commissioner
Professor Ailsa Henderson, Commissioner
Mr Dominic Cuthbert, Ordnance Survey, Assessor

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

Apologies

Mr Paul Lowe, National Records for Scotland, Assessor

Minutes of previous meeting

1. The Commission approved the minutes of the meeting on 23 November 2020 without amendment.

Matters Arising

2. The Deputy Chair welcomed Dr Sue Walker to her first Commission meeting.

Business Update

3. The Commission were informed that the Secretariat had met with Mr Cuthbert who had shared information relating to Ordnance Survey's new public-sector mapping agreement for Scotland and its new Data Hub. Ordnance Survey's Data Hub will provide the Secretariat with access to a number of different mapping products. The Commission were presented an example of the new map styles available via the Data Hub and noted these will be used for the 2023 Review.

2023 Review: preparations (oral update)

4. The Secretary advised that the Parliamentary Constituencies Act received Royal Assent on 14 December 2020.
5. The Secretariat advised that it is continuing to work with the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland on obtaining a contract for legal advice over the period of the 2023 Review, and hopes to be in a position to finalise this shortly. Areas where legal advice might be required included on the Commission's policy and procedure document, its final report and any other relevant publications.
6. The Secretary advised that the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is considering alternative options for holding public hearings in the event the ongoing pandemic prevents safe conduct of physical hearings.
7. The Commission discussed potential staffing pressures during the 2023 Review, which will overlap with the LGBCS's Islands and Scottish Parliament Reviews, and asked that these be addressed in the Risk Register.
8. The Secretary provided a brief update on the annual meeting of the UK Boundary Commissions that took place by videoconference on Friday 27 November 2020.

9. The Secretariat advised that BCE expects to use the Cabinet Office procurement process to procure the consultation portal for the 2023 Review. The consultation site will be shared between BCE, Boundary Commission for Scotland and Boundary Commission for Wales. The Secretariat and its Welsh counterpart will be represented on the procurement selection panel in mid-February 2021.

2023 Review: Allocation of Constituencies and Electoral Quota (Paper 2021/01)

10. The Commission discussed Paper 2021/01 and noted the allocation of constituencies for the 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies and the electorate quota for the Review.

2023 Review: Policy and Procedures Booklet (Paper 2021/02)

11. The Commission discussed Paper 2021/02 and suggested various amendments to the 2023 Review Policy and Procedure Booklet. The Secretariat will re-draft the Policy and Procedures Booklet and present it to a future Commission meeting. A meeting with political parties to discuss the review would be arranged in due course.

2023 Review: Approach to constituency design (Paper 2021/03)

12. The Commission discussed the four options presented in Paper 2021/03, the number of constituencies within each grouping of council areas and the electorate quota for each grouping.
13. The Commission agreed that Options 1 and 4 offered less flexibility in constituency design because some of the council area groupings proposed a number of constituencies that would be either very close to the maximum or minimum of the electorate quota.
14. The Commission asked the Secretariat to further develop Options 2 and 3 and create some draft proposals based on those options, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Finance update (Paper 2021/04)

15. The Commission noted the finance update.

Future meetings (oral update)

16. The Commission agreed to liaise with the Secretariat to confirm provisional meeting dates for March, April, May, June, July and August 2021.

Any other business

17. None

Secretariat

January 2021