

**DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION CYMRU MEETING
HELD AT 10:00 AM ON 27 NOVEMBER 2024 AT CP2**

Present: Bev Smith (Chair), Michael Imperato (Deputy Chair), Dianne Bevan, Frank Cuthbert, Ginger Wiegand and Bethan Williams Price

DBCC Officers attending: Chief Executive; Head of Policy and Programmes; Finance Manager; Team Support Officer.

Apologies: Karen Jones (Commissioner)

Time Started: 10:10

Time Finished: 11:21

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1. No Declarations of Interest were made.

2. Chair's Briefing

2.1. The Chair briefed on her meeting with Karen Jones.

2.2. The Chair briefed on the change in sponsored body departments.

2.3. The Chair thanked the Commission for their comments on the new training programme for commissioners and **noted** that February's meeting has been earmarked for some of this training.

3. Minutes of the Commission meeting held on 30 October

3.1. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2024 as a correct record of the matters considered.

3.2. Discussion was held regarding point 4.6. from the Commission's last meeting.

4. Issues Arising

4.1. It was **Resolved** to accept the Report noting any issues for later discussion in the meeting, and updated progress was noted on the following issues:

4.2. **(Issue 1)** It was **noted** that the Commission did not receive any FOI requests between 23 October and 19 November 2024.

- 4.3. **(Issue 2)** It was **noted** that the Commission has completed all the Community Reviews it has undertaken with Pembrokeshire due to be published in January.
- 4.4. **(Issue 3)** It was **noted** that the office move took place over a period of 2 weeks w/c 11 November and the lease will end at the old premises at the end of November. All Commission meetings will now be held in CP2 / teams.
- 4.5. **(Issue 4)** It was **noted** that following the October meeting a response was provided to Cymdeithas and that the Commission has not received another response.
- 4.6. A discussion was held in relation to the access of the 4th floor to Welsh Government employees.

5. Transition Programme (for discussion)

- 5.1. It was **noted** that the next implementation board meeting will be held in January.
- 5.2. It was **noted** that no acknowledgment has been received from WG to the letter sent by the Chair in relation to the Information Platform.
- 5.3. It was **noted** that Commissioner recruitment has finished for now and that the job description for the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) will be drafted shortly.
- 5.4. Discussion was held regarding the Information Platform, its possible limitations and possible issues including accessibility and the responsibilities of Returning Officers. It was **noted** that the Information Platform would need to be in place by the 2026 elections.
- 5.5. Discussion was held regarding the 2025 timetable of meetings including the GAC.
- 5.6. **Action:** Chair, Deputy Chair and CE to draft the job description for the Chair of GAC.
- 5.7. **Action:** CE to populate meeting dates for 2025 including the GAC.

6. Future Work Programme

- 6.1. Item 5. Transition Programme and item 6. Future Work Programme were discussed together.

7. Budget Report 2024-25

- 7.1. Consideration was given to the Budget Monitoring Report dated 27 November 2024 by the FM which showed the budget position to the end of October 2024.
- 7.2. It was **noted** that there were no budget overspends at the end of October 2024.
- 7.3. It was **noted** that the largest underspends were in the staffing and superannuation budgets but that these underspends would be significantly reduced in December due to the recent staff pay award increase being implemented for November staff salaries.
- 7.4. It was **noted** that a significant underspend has been recorded so far in the Members' fees costs budget and was likely to continue unless Commission Members' workloads increased in the final quarter.
- 7.5. It was **noted** that due to the office move happening later than expected, there was likely to be a moderate amount of surplus funds in the accommodation budget moving forward.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1. Consideration was given to the DBCC Risk Register dated 27 November 2024.
- 8.2. It was **noted** that risk CR3 has been amended due to the office move having been successfully completed. It was **agreed** to discharge Risk CR3.
- 8.3. Discussion was held regarding security risk aspect of risk CR3 which still remained. It was **agreed** that this risk will be added to the Operational Risk Register.
- 8.4. The Risk Register was **agreed** subject to amendments.
- 8.5. **Action:** Risk CR3 to be removed from the Risk Register and the remaining element of risk transferred to the Operational Risk Register.

9. DBCC Risk Management Policy

- 9.1. Consideration was given to the DBCC Risk Management Policy. It was **agreed** to defer this item to the next meeting to allow for comments from ARAC.
- 9.2. **Action: DBCC Risk Management Policy to be added to next month's meeting agenda.**

10. DBCC Future Work Programme Risk Register

10.1. Consideration was given to the DBCC Future Work Programme Risk Register.

10.2. The DBCC Future Work Programme was **agreed** and that it would be merged with the corporate risk register.

11. Gifts, Rewards and Hospitality Policy.

11.1. Consideration was given to the Gifts, Rewards and Hospitality Policy.

11.2. The Gifts, Rewards and Hospitality Policy was **agreed**.

12. Reviews Progress Report

12.1. Consideration was given to the Reviews Progress Report.

12.2. It was **noted** that the Swansea Community Review Final Recommendations Report has been published.

12.3. It was **noted** that the Commission is still agreeing a publishing date for the Pembrokeshire Community Review Final Recommendations Report and that the Report will be published early next year.

12.4. It was **noted** that the Commission is still awaiting the final recommendations report for the Community Review of Carmarthenshire, who are conducting their own Community Review. The recommendations will be brought to the Commission in due course.

12.5. It was **noted** that Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf are currently conducting their own Community Reviews.

12.6. It was **noted** that the Commission is still awaiting information from Welsh Government regarding the Council Size policy which will form part of the Electoral Review Programme policy and practice.

12.7. It was **noted** that Senedd Revised Proposals Report will publish on 17th December and consultation will run until January.

12.8. **Action:** CE to contact Lisa James to chase the outstanding data for the Electoral Review Programme Council Size Policy.

13. Final Determinations Report skeleton

13.1. Consideration was given to the Final Determinations Report skeleton.

13.2. Discussion was held on point 3.2 of the Report skeleton. It was **agreed** that Welsh names should come before English names in the Report.

- 13.3. Discussion was held regarding some stylistic suggestions in the Report. Commissioner to forward amendments to HoPP to include within the report.
- 13.4. The text on the Report skeleton was **agreed** subject to minor changes.
- 13.5. **Action:** HoPP to circulate copies of the Final Determinations Report to Commissioners. CEM to provide update on the planned communications for the next Senedd consultation period.

14. Calendar of Events

- 14.1. Consideration was given to the Calendar of Events.
- 14.2. It was **noted** that the December Commission meeting has been cancelled.
- 14.3. Consideration was given to the format of future Commission meetings with the February meeting being held in person to enable for Commissioner training. It was **noted** that the March meeting will be chaired by the Deputy Chair.

15. Any Other Relevant Business

- 18.1 No other relevant business was noted.

Date of Next Meeting: 29 January 2025