

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

17TH NOVEMBER 2011

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY
P. GRAHAM**

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Section A, Part 1, Item 1

1 PERIODIC REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS:

1.1 Purpose of the Report

To consider representations received in respect of the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations and make appropriate recommendations to the Council.

1.2 Background:

The Council is required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006, to conduct periodic reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations every four years. The first of these reviews was completed in 2007, and under legislation the Council is required to undertake a further review by 31st December, 2011.

The decision on the review itself is a matter for Council. The Board is asked to approve and recommend to Council the adoption of the criteria for polling station locations; the approach set out in the report of the Returning Officer; and, the proposals set out in relation to polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

1.3 Proposed Criteria for Polling Stations:

It is recommended that the following criteria for polling stations are adopted:

- Wherever possible, the polling station will be located within the polling district
- The polling station will provide appropriate access and facilities for all electors
- Licensed premises will only be used as a last resort
- Places of worship will be avoided (this does not include church halls or chapel vestries but refers to the actual place of worship)

1.4 Local Issues & Consultation

A wide consultation process has been conducted as part of the review, including in particular County Borough Members, Town and Community Councils, Members of Parliament, Assembly Members, Members of the European Parliament and Disabled Access Groups. An online consultation was also open to all residents to submit their views in relation to their local polling stations. The details of the review were also made available via public notices and through the Council's internet website. A summary of the representations received is at Appendix 1.

Submissions were received from elected Members, Town and Community Councils, a Member of Parliament, an Assembly Member and residents, particularly with regard to the location of certain polling stations. These representations and suggestions have been evaluated and where possible recommended as alternative polling station venues.

Inevitably a small number of polling station alterations suggested during the consultation period have not been taken forward due to a variety of practical, financial and logistical reasons which are outlined below:

- A suggestion was made to investigate the possibility of utilising Bethesda Chapel Vestry in Pontardawe as a polling station in addition to the five already utilised within the electoral division. While the venue itself is potentially viable as a polling station location, concerns exist over justifying the additional hire charges and staff costs that would be required in creating the new polling station. In addition, the current polling station for the polling district (Llangiwg Primary School) is in a highly visible and easily reachable location on New Road, accessible both by foot and by car with ample parking facilities also available for electors.
- Comments were also submitted in relation to the accessibility of the polling station located at the Baptist Chapel Vestry, Herbert Road, Neath and whether a mobile polling station could instead be utilised closer to the Penrhiwtyn housing estate. However, due to current financial pressures and the considerable costs involved in hiring mobile units and electricity generators, along with difficulties in finding a suitable location to site the temporary facilities, the Returning Officer cannot support this suggestion. However, the situation will be kept under review.

- With regard to the polling station previously located at Ynys Lee, Cwmavon, which has not been used since May 2010 with electors using a joint station at the Cwmavon Library, an enquiry was made as to whether the recent alteration has had any impact on elector turnout. A comparative analysis for the polling district over recent elections has shown that the decision to move this polling station to the Library has not had a detrimental impact on voter turnout.
- A suggestion was made to examine the potential of moving the current polling station located at the Port Talbot Gas Club, Newbridge Road, to the Golf Club, Vivian Park Drive. This suggestion is rejected as the Golf Club is not located in the relevant polling district ruling it out of consideration as an alternative polling station location.
- Following the submission of an objection to the use of Baglan Primary School as a Polling Station, enquiries were conducted into potentially making use of Baglan Education and Training Centre as an alternative venue. Regretfully on further investigation and discussion with the school and training centre staff it has become clear that this option would not be viable. This is due to the fact that the training centre's main entrance, where the polling station would have to be located, links directly onto the school hall and would pose a significant security risk with electors able to gain complete access to school premises. In addition, such access doors to the school cannot be sealed off due to fire safety regulations. Nevertheless, the school has confirmed that they will utilise future polling days wherever possible as inset training days to ensure disruption to pupils and parents is kept to an absolute minimum.
- Finally, one representation was received requesting a minor polling district boundary alterations in the Dyffryn electoral division to allow for a small number of properties to be allocated to a polling station considered to be more convenient for voting purposes. While this will not be taken forward in the current periodic review due to insufficient time and resource to fully examine the proposal, the polling district will be kept under review and, following the conclusion of the Local Government Elections, if any alterations are deemed necessary by the Returning Officer, these will be implemented prior to the publication of the 2013 Register of Electors.

1.5 Report of the Returning Officer

Representations received which have resulted in proposed changes to polling stations are set out in the Returning Officer's report attached at Appendix 2. It is recommended that the report is approved.

1.6 Financial Summary

There are no significant financial implications in carrying out this review and implementing the recommendations; any additional costs will be met from within existing election administration budgets.

1.7 Conclusion

Appendix 3 provides details of all the polling districts and polling stations including, where relevant, the proposed changes to polling stations. The relevant local Members have been consulted and no adverse comments have been received.

1.8 Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Council be recommended:

- (a) To adopt the following criteria for polling stations:
 - (i) Wherever possible, the polling station will be located within the polling district
 - (ii) The polling station will provide appropriate access and facilities for all electors
 - (iii) Licensed premises will only be used as a last resort
 - (iv) Places of worship will be avoided (this does not include church halls or chapel vestries but refers to the actual place of worship)
- (b) To make no changes to the boundaries of the polling districts in the county borough area;

(c) To make the following changes to the locations of polling stations:

<u>Current Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Station</u>
Ty Afan Secondary School	Sandfields Primary School
Duffryn Afan Primary School	To be Advised
Blaengwynfi Social Welfare Centre	Pen Afan Primary School
Tabor Chapel Vestry	Pen Afan Primary School
Melin Advice Centre	New Melin Advice Centre
Community Centre (adj. to Gwyn Hall)	Neath Civic Centre
YGG Castell-nedd	Neath Leisure Centre

Reason for proposed decisions:

The decisions provide for the effective management of the electoral process within the County Borough.

Wards Affected:

All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of representations received

Appendix 2 – Returning Officer's Report

Appendix 3 – Polling districts and polling stations – Aberavon and Neath constituencies

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

1 PERIODIC REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS:

(a) Implementation of Decisions:

The decisions are proposed for implementation after consultation with the Scrutiny Committee and then consideration and approval by Council .

(b) Sustainability Appraisal:

Community Plan impacts

Economic Prosperity	-	no impact
Education & Lifelong Learning	-	no impact
Better Health & Well Being	-	no impact
Environment & Transport	-	no impact
Crime & Disorder	-	no impact

Other impacts

Welsh Language	-	no impact
Sustainable Development	-	no impact
Equalities	-	no impact
Social Inclusion	-	no impact

(c) Consultation:

Consultation has been conducted as part of the review, involving County Borough Members, Town and Community Councils, Members of Parliament, Assembly Members, Members of the European Parliament and Disabled Access Groups; and an online consultation open to all residents. The details of the review were also made available via public notices and through the Council's internet website.

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations
Representations, Suggestions and Observations

Organisation/Name	Register Code(s)	Points made in Representation
Mr David Rees AM	AI2 AE7 AK1-AK2 AN5 AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek alternative to Duffryn Afan Primary School due to its closure • Has the relocation of the polling station from Ynys Lee to the Library, Depot Road had an impact on the number of people voting? • Both polling stations in Gwynfi are unsuitable for disabled people. Consider single polling station at Pen Afan Primary School • In the long term there is a need for new polling stations to be considered once Glanymor and Tir Morfa primary schools are merged
Dr Hywel Francis MP	AK1-AK2	Concur with points made by Mr David Rees AM. Neither of the polling stations in Gwynfi is satisfactory and proposal of a single polling station located at Pen Afan Primary School is eminently sensible.
Cllr. Alun Thomas	NR3	Cllr. Thomas is content with all stations in his electoral division. However, he did request that if possible an alternative location be found for Maesmarchog Primary School due to some complaints from parents. Currently, the polling station is located away from the main building of the school and there may be a possibility that the school could remain open, while the polling station is in use.
Cllr. Collin Crowley	AN1	Possible alternative location instead of Gas Club – Golf Club, Vivian Park Drive / Moorland Road: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access at Golf Club may be limited • Car Parking also limited on site

Organisation/Name	Register Code(s)	Points made in Representation
Cllr. Linet Purcell	NT1-NT5	I am very happy with the current polling stations in the Pontardawe Ward which are level and accessible. But, I am concerned about the residents in the Bethesda Road Estate, the new Clos Nant Ddu estate and other residents living at the far end of Ynysmeudwy. They have a considerable walk to enable them to arrive at their nearest polling station which is Llangiwig school. At the entrance to the Bethesda Road estate is the large well-used Bethesda Chapel. I would be most grateful if we could investigate the possibility of it being used as a polling station.
Cllr. Sheila Penry	NO4	Location of Baptist Chapel Vestry potentially discourages residents in certain parts of polling district from voting due to entrance access difficulties. Could there be some possibility of moving the station closer to the new Penrhiwtyn Housing Estate?
Cllr. Jane Jones	AK1-AK2	Parking is good at both polling stations in the Gwynfi ward.
Cllr. Alun Llewelyn	NZ1-NZ3	The previous review came to the conclusion that the polling stations in the ward should be retained and I would make the same recommendation again – for convenience, access and elector familiarity.
Cllr. Hugh James	AD1-AD4	I am happy with the arrangements for Briton Ferry West Ward and the locations. Access is fine.
Cllr. Lynda Williams	NM1-NM2	Both venues within the Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen electoral division are suitable for use as polling stations as they have kitchens for polling officers, ample parking and disabled access for elector use.
Dyffryn Clydach Community Council	NJ1-NJ3	Request to conduct minor alterations to the polling district arrangements for the Dyffryn electoral division.

Organisation/Name	Register Code(s)	Points made in Representation
Neath Town Council	NG1-NG2 NO1-NO6 NP1-NP3 NQ1-NQ4	Concerns regarding pupil/parent disruption due to the use of YGG Castell-nedd as a polling station. Alternative polling station locations suggested. Request also made to investigate the possibility of utilising a mobile polling station as a replacement /alternative to the Baptist Chapel Vestry, Herbert Road.
Cwmllynfell Community Council	NI1-NI2	Members are content with current arrangements. No recommendations made.
Pontardawe Town Council	NT1-NT5 NY1	Suggestion of Bethesda Chapel, Ynysmeudwy Road, Pontardawe as alternative polling station
Crynant Community Council	NH1	Current polling station locations provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent parking facilities • Excellent disabled access facilities • No adverse complaints received from local electors
Clyne and Melincourt Community Council	NU1-NU2	Members are content with current arrangements. No recommendations made.
Blaengwrach Community Council	NC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is parking (roadside) directly adjacent to the Welfare Hall • The Welfare Hall is fully accessible with disabled toilet facilities • The Welfare Hall is in a central location and well known and used by the residents • The Welfare Hall has central heating and a kitchen area for tea and coffee making • The Welfare Hall is well lit and there is a smaller meeting room and office if required
Ystalyfera Community Council	NL1-NL2 NZ1-NZ3	All listed polling stations for Ystalyfera, Lower Cwmtwrch and Godre'rgraig are satisfactory
Resolven Community Council	NU3-NU5	Members are content with current arrangements. No recommendations made.

Organisation/Name	Register Code(s)	Points made in Representation
Seven Sisters Community Council	NW1-NW2	Members are content with current arrangements. No recommendations made.
Onllwyn Community Council	NR1-NR3	Members are content with current arrangements. No recommendations made
Glynneath Town Council	NC1 NK1-NK3	As most voters only park for a short period of time there are no problems with parking in the vicinity of the polling stations mentioned overleaf. There are ramps or disabled access at each of the buildings. The only concern is that if the Clinic in Addoldy Road, Glynneath is closed within next five years (public meeting - 20/9/11 re: proposed new Vale of Neath Health Centre) then there are very few possible venues for a polling station in the ward.
YGG Castell-nedd	NP2	Due to complaints from the school governing body a request has been made to the Returning Officer to examine finding an alternative location for the polling station based within YGG Castell-nedd. If no alternative can be found of a suitable standard, the Head Teacher is amenable to the station remaining at the school as long as sufficient notice is given.
Local Resident	AB4	I wish to make the comment regarding Baglan, and the use of Baglan Primary School as a voting station. Whilst I appreciate it is a convenient location, it is one of four stations in Baglan. I object to the closing of the school on polling day when there is enough room around the back to cordon off the hall for voting use. This would not interrupt the running of the school. In fact, there is enough room in the Baglan Education and Training Centre (formerly Baglan IT), to hold a voting station. There is a car park and easy access to local residents. Why do you need to interrupt the running of the school when there are alternatives available?
Local Resident	AO3 AO4	Traethmelyn – The suitability of the location is fine with great access for the disabled. Perfect location.
Local Resident	NO1	Pensioners Hall, Wellfield Road - Good location with no difficulties in terms of disabled access

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT

As Returning Officer for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council I have noted that the Council is to undertake a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

With regard to the existing polling districts I have no comment to make and am content to leave this aspect of the review to the Council.

A number of polling stations required examination with a view to improving access or seeking alternative locations. I would ask the Council to consider the following recommendations:

Polling District	Current Polling Station	Proposed Polling Station
AA4 - Aberavon	Ty Afan Secondary School	Sandfields Primary School
AI2 - Glyncorrgw (Cymmer Ward)	Duffryn Afan Primary School	To be Advised
AK1 - Glyncorrgw (Gwynfi Ward)	Blaengwynfi Social Welfare Centre	Pen Afan Primary School
AK2 - Glyncorrgw (Gwynfi Ward)	Tabor Chapel Vestry	Pen Afan Primary School
NO3 - Neath (Melincrythan Ward)	Melin Advice Centre	New Melin Advice Centre
NP1 - Neath (Castle Ward)	Community Centre (adj. to Gwyn Hall)	Neath Civic Centre
NP2 - Neath (Llantwit Ward)	YGG Castell-nedd	Neath Leisure Centre

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Aberavon Constituency

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AA1	Aberavon	Aberavon	St. Mary's Centre	773	Access via temporary ramp. Parking close by. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AA2		Aberavon	St. Joseph's Comprehensive School	970	Adequate parking and access. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services but additional heating is required.	Adequate	No Change
AA3		Aberavon	Sandfields Road Community Centre	490	On-street parking and good access. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AA4		Aberavon	Ty Afan Secondary Centre	653	On-street parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	PROPOSED: Sandfields Primary School
AA5		Aberavon	Booth At Westlands	834	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required. Close to another mobile station.	Adequate	No Change
AA6		Aberavon	Booth At Windsor Village	500	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required. Close to another mobile station.	Adequate	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AB1	Baglan	Baglan	Ebenezer Chapel Vestry	586	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AB2		Baglan	Church Hall Church Road	1622	Adequate parking and access via permanent ramp or steps. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AB3		Baglan	Blaen Baglan Primary School	1210	Good parking and access to station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services. Additional heating may be required.	Good	No Change
AB4		Baglan	Baglan Primary School	1240	Good parking and access via permanent ramp or steps. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AB5		Baglan	Baglan Community Centre	947	Good parking and access via permanent ramp or steps. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AC1	Briton Ferry East	Briton Ferry (Craig-Y-Darren Ward)	Ty Llansawel Day Centre	819	On street parking. Good access to station. Located close to community	Adequate facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change
AC2		Briton Ferry (Cwrt Sart Ward)	Salem Chapel Vestry	833	On street parking. Good access to station. Located close to community	Poor facilities and services. Toilets and Kitchen not clean and additional heating required.	Satisfactory	No Change
AC3		Briton Ferry (Cwrt Sart Ward)	Cwrt Sart Comprehensive School	689	Access via temporary steel ramp placed at an acute angle. Parking facilities close by. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AD1	Briton Ferry West	Briton Ferry (Brynhyfryd Ward)	The Community House 89-95 Llansawel Crescent	472	Good parking and access to station, although would be cramped if people attended in numbers. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AD2		Briton Ferry (Brynhyfryd Ward)	Brynhyfryd Primary School *	635	On-street parking. Good access, although internal floor levels are variable causing a possible trip hazard. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change - Further discussions with school
AD3		Briton Ferry (Shelone Wood Ward)	Llansawel Primary School	725	On-street parking close to school. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services. Additional heating may be required.	Good	No Change
AD4		Briton Ferry (Shelone Wood Ward)	Brynhyfryd Primary School *	359	On-street parking. Good access, although internal floor levels are variable causing a possible trip hazard. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AE1	Bryn and Cwmavon	Cwmavon	The Library, Cwmavon	1314	Good parking and access to polling station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AE2		Cwmavon	Bethany Apostolic Church	1151	On-street parking close to station. Poor access - no ramp at front entrance. Rear entrance has disabled access but reached via unlit path in poor condition. Door threshold also causes difficulties for electors. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Satisfactory	No Change
AE3		Cwmavon	Booth At Heol Mabon	472	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
AE4		Cwmavon	Seion Bethania Chapel Vestry	841	Adequate parking. Temporary ramp required for access to station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AE5		Cwmavon	Rock Chapel Vestry	287	On-street parking close to station. Temporary ramp required for access to station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AE6		Bryn	Bryn Village Hall	732	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AE7		Cwmavon	The Library, Cwmavon	274	Good parking and access to polling station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change - monitor current polling station
AE8		Cwmavon	Pontrhydyfen Primary	161	On-road parking close to school. Adequate access - slight step into PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AF1	Coedffranc Central	Coedffranc (East Central Ward)	Salvation Army Community Hall	1337	Good parking facilities next to station. Access poor for wheelchair bound electors - single door on ground level not accessible for wheelchair. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Satisfactory	No Change
AF2		Coedffranc (Central Ward)	Booth Adjacent To Flats 13-18 Cae Lynch	557	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
AF3		Coedffranc (Central Ward)	Caewathan Community Centre	1151	On-street parking but limited due to location on busy street. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AG1	Coedffranc North	Coedffranc (North Ward)	The Community Hall, Church of Latter Day Saints	1295	On-street parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services - not all lighting working and toilet provisions are unhygienic.	Good	No Change
AG2		Coedffranc (North Ward)	Mission Hall, Lonlas	556	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Aberavon Constituency

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AH1	Coedffranc West	Coedffranc (West Central Ward)	Carnegie Community Centre	499	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AH2		Coedffranc (West Central Ward)	Booth At Serecold Avenue	912	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloo required.	Adequate	No Change
AH3		Coedffranc (West Ward)	Llandarcy Institute	192	Good parking and access via a permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AH4		Coedffranc (West Ward)	Jersey Marine Community Centre	349	On-street parking. Adequate access although lip at the doorway into PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change
AH5		Coedffranc (West Ward)	Crymlyn Burrows Community Centre	144	Parking close to PS. Adequate access although slight lip into building. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AI1	Cymmer	Glyncorrwg (Cymmer Ward)	Afan Christian Fellowship	78	On-street parking. Good access via permanent ramp and steps to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AI2		Glyncorrwg (Cymmer Ward)	Duffryn Afan Primary School	289	On-street parking. Good access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services. School due to close in July 2011.	Good	Alternative polling station needed- TBA
AI3		Glyncorrwg (Cymmer Ward)	Tudor Park Football Pavilion	569	Good parking facilities at PS. Access poor for disabled electors - no level access into station and narrow doorways and steps inside station. Located close to community.	Poor facilities and services - staff bring own basic provisions of toilet roll, soap and hand towels. Additional heating required.	Satisfactory	No Change - monitor current polling station
AI4		Glyncorrwg (Cymmer Ward)	Croeserw Community Centre	537	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AI5		Glyncorrwg (Cymmer Ward)	Cymmer Central Library	721	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AJ1	Glyncorrwg	Glyncorrwg (Glyncorrwg Ward)	Noddfa O.A.P. Centre	871	On-street parking. Good access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services, although additional heating may be required.	Good	No Change
AK1	Gwynfi	Glyncorrwg (Gwynfi Ward)	Blaengwynfi Social Welfare Centre	769	Limited on-street parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services - additional heating required. Presence of a snooker table in station causes problems for disabled electors. Lighting poor in the PS.	Poor	PROPOSED: Pen Afan Primary School
AK2		Glyncorrwg (Gwynfi Ward)	Tabor Chapel Vestry	296	Limited on-street parking. Poor access to PS required to climb ten steps into station. Located close to community.	Poor facilities and services. Additional heating required. No running water in PS.	Poor	PROPOSED: Pen Afan Primary School

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Aberavon Constituency

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AL1	Margam	Margam	Coed Hirwaun Primary School	1005	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AL2		Margam	Booth At Lakeside Golf Driving Range	161	Adequate parking, although ground uneven. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
AL3		Margam	Round Chapel Vestry	776	Good parking and access via temporary ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AL4		Margam	School Hall At Groes Primary School	395	Limited on-street parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services. Additional heating may be required.	Good	No Change
AM1	Port Talbot	Port Talbot	Lifelong Learning Service	605	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AM2		Port Talbot	Central Junior School	1205	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AM3		Port Talbot	Riverside Baptist Church	1198	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AM4		Port Talbot	Velindre Community School	1427	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AN1	Sandfields East	Sandfields East	Port Talbot Gas Club	877	Good parking close to PS. No level access into PS and not well lit. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services. Additional heating may be required.	Satisfactory	No Change
AN2		Sandfields East	The Scout Hall, Darwin Road Playing Fields	921	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AN3		Sandfields East	Tywyn Primary School	1226	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AN4		Sandfields East	Dalton Road Community Centre	986	On-street parking. Access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AN5		Sandfields East	Glanymor Primary School	1255	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services. Additional heating may be required.	Good	No Change - monitor current polling station
AO1	Sandfields West	Sandfields West	Tir Morfa Primary School	1800	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change - monitor current polling station
AO2		Sandfields West	Mozart Drive Community Centre	1543	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AO3		Sandfields West	Traethmelyn Primary School *	1082	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AO4		Sandfields West	Traethmelyn Primary School *	704	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Aberavon Constituency

* Double Station

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
AP1	Taibach	Taibach	Operatic Society Headquarters	738	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AP2		Taibach	Wesley Church Schoolroom	603	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AP3		Taibach	Taibach Community Centre	1066	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AP4		Taibach	St. David's Church Hall	1165	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
AP5		Taibach	Booth Adjacent To St. Peter's Church	328	On-road parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change

Total	51777
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Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NA1	Aberdulais	Blaenhonddan (Aberdulais Ward)	Cilfrew Community Centre	822	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NA2		Blaenhonddan (Cilfrew Ward)	National Trust Hall, Aberdulais Falls	952	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NB1	Alltwen	Cilybebyll (Alltwen Ward)	Capel Yr Alltwen	1864	On-street parking. Access via temporary ramp. PS located on a steep hill but close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change
NC1	Blaengwrach	Glynneath (West Central Ward)	Pensioners Hall, Glynneath	675	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NC2		Blaengwrach	Cwmgwrach Welfare Memorial Hall	908	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
ND1	Bryncoch North	Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch North Ward)	Blaenhonddan Primary School	863	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
ND2		Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch North Ward)	Bryncoch Community Centre	1022	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NE1	Bryncoch South	Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch South Ward)	Caewern Community Centre	916	On-road parking. Access via steps. Alternative entrance for disabled electors. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NE2		Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch South Ward)	Booth At Brookfield	594	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
NE3		Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch South Ward)	Blaenhonddan Primary School	210	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NE4		Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch South Ward)	Wauinceirch Community Centre	977	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NE5		Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch South Ward)	Wauinceirch Community Hall	810	On-road parking. Access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NE6		Blaenhonddan (Bryncoch South Ward)	Booth At Lidl's Car Park	1094	Good parking provisions due to location in supermarket car park. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
NF1	Cadoxton	Blaenhonddan (Cadoxton Ward)	Cadoxton Community Centre	1146	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NF2		Blaenhonddan (Cadoxton Ward)	Llangatwg Comprehensive School	242	On-road parking limited due to school area. Access via permanent ramp, although ground uneven on approach to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NG1	Cimla	Neath (Cefn Saeson Ward)	Cimla Community Centre	2256	Limited car parking leading to queueing on main road. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NG2		Neath (Crynallt Ward)	Cimla Community Centre	1076	Limited car parking leading to queueing on main road. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NH1	Crynant	Crynant	Crynant Community Centre	1592	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NI1	Cwmllynfell	Cwmllynfell (Cwmllynfell Ward)	Cwmllynfell Hall	723	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NI2		Cwmllynfell (Penrhiwfawr Ward)	Community Hall, Rhiwfawr	230	Good parking and access via permanent ramp/steps. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NJ1	Dyffryn	Dyffryn Clydach	Traherne Court	905	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NJ2		Dyffryn Clydach	Booth At The Playground, Highlands	549	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
NJ3		Dyffryn Clydach	Dyffryn Clydach Memorial Hall	1106	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NK1	Glynneath	Glynneath (East Ward)	Wesleyan Chapel Vestry	782	On-road parking and access via temporary ramp. Located close to community,	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NK2		Glynneath (Central Ward)	Glynneath Town Hall	1143	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community,	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NK3		Glynneath (West Ward)	M & C.W. Clinic	817	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change - monitor current polling station
NL1	Godre'rgraig	Ystalyfera (Godre'rgraig Ward)	Godre'rgraig Primary School	755	Good parking within school grounds. Access via temporary ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NL2		Ystalyfera (Godre'rgraig Ward)	Booth Near To No.6 & No.8 Graig Newydd	523	Adequate on-road parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
NM1	Gwaun Cae Gurwen	Gwaun Cae Gurwen (Gwaun Cae Gurwen Ward)	Community Hall, New Road	1398	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NM2		Gawun Cae Gurwen (Cwmgors Ward)	The Community Hall, Cwmgors	904	Ample parking close to station. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NN1	Lower Brynamman	Gwaun Cae Gurwen (Tai'r Gwaith Ward)	The Community Hall, Tairgwaith	339	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community,	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NN2		Gwaun Cae Gurwen (Lower Brynamman Ward)	Ebenezer Chapel, Lower Brynamman	730	On-road parking close to PS. Good access to station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NO1	Neath East	Neath (Melincrythan Ward)	Pensioners Hall, Wellfield	678	Car parking available on site or car park next door. Access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NO2		Neath (Melincrythan Ward)	Maria Street Church Vestry	849	Limited on-street parking. Good access into PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NO3		Neath (Melincrythan Ward)	Melin Advice Centre	771	Parking difficult due to nearby construction. Access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	PROPOSED New Melin Advice Centre
NO4		Neath (Penrhiwtyn Ward)	Baptist Chapel Vestry	1234	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change - monitor current polling station
NO5		Neath (Penrhiwtyn Ward)	St.Catherine's Church Hall	526	On-road parking. Two small steps into station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NO6		Neath (Penrhiwtyn Ward)	Booth Adjacent To 8 Gardner's Lane, Neath	926	Adequate on-road parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Satisfactory facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required. Portaloos not positioned on level ground.	Adequate	No Change
NP1	Neath North	Neath (Castle Ward)	The Community Centre (Next To The Gwyn Hall)	570	No close parking to station, even for polling station staff. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	PROPOSED: Neath Civic Centre
NP2		Neath (Llantwit Ward)	Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-Nedd	1082	Parking available on school grounds. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	PROPOSED: Neath Leisure Centre
NP3		Neath (Llantwit Ward)	Y.M.C.A., Neath	1481	Limited on-road parking. Access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NQ1	Neath South	Neath (Gnoll Ward)	Scout Hall, Cimla Crescent	813	Parking available close to PS. Access via permanent ramp. Floor in PS slopes downwards. Located close to community,	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NQ2		Neath (Mount Pleasant Ward)	St. Peter & Paul Church Hall	1476	Parking available at mini supermarket next door to PS. Good access into PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NQ3		Neath (Mount Pleasant Ward)	St. Joseph's R.C. Church Hall	669	On-road parking. Good access into PS. Located close to community,	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NQ4		Neath (Mount Pleasant Ward)	Siloh Church Hall	726	Limited on-road parking. Step into polling station. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Adequate	No Change
NR1	Onllwyn	Onllwyn	Pantyyffordd Community Centre	292	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NR2		Onllwyn	Onllwyn Miners Welfare Hall Lounge	70	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NR3		Onllwyn	Maesmarchog Primary School	611	Parking available on school grounds. Access to PS via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change - Further discussions with school
NS1	Pelenna	Pelenna (Tonmawr Ward)	Pelenna Community Centre	434	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NS2		Pelenna (Pontrhydyfren Ward)	Pontrhydyfren Community Centre	510	On road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community,	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NT1	Pontardawe	Pontardawe (Pontardawe Ward)	Llangiwg Primary School	763	Parking available on school grounds. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NT2		Pontardawe (Pontardawe Ward)	Tabernacl Chapel, Thomas Street	1171	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NT3		Pontardawe (Pontardawe Ward)	Alltycham & Rhydyfro Community Hall	1091	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NT4		Pontardawe (Pontardawe Ward)	Neath Port Talbot First Stop Shop	628	On-road parking. Access via lift for disabled electors at back of building. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NT5		Pontardawe (Rhyd-y-fro Ward)	Rhydyfro Primary School	562	Parking available on school grounds. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NU1	Resolven	Clyne & Melincourt	Pensioners Hall, Melincourt	317	Car parking available across the road from PS. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NU2		Clyne & Melincourt	Clyne Community Centre	331	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NU3		Resolven (South Ward)	Resolven Church Hall	605	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NU4		Resolven (Abergarwed Ward)	Booth At Abergarwed, Neath Road	210	Limited car parking on rough wasteland. Uneven approach to PS. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
NU5		Resolven (North Ward)	Sardis Chapel Vestry	1042	On-road parking. Access via temporary ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NV1	Rhos	Cilybebyll (Rhos Ward)	The Community Centre, Rhos	1658	Good parking and access to PS. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services. Roof prone to leaking.	Good	No Change
NV2		Cilybebyll (Gellinudd Ward)	Booth At Gellinudd Hospital	381	Adequate parking. Access poor for disabled elector - unable to attach ramp to mobile station. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services: mobile polling station, portaloos required.	Adequate	No Change
NW1	Seven Sisters	Seven Sisters	Dulais Valley Primary Care Centre	340	Car park available at centre. Good access via automated doors in PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NW2		Seven Sisters	Seven Sisters Community Hall	1311	Good parking and access via permanent ramp. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NX1	Tonna	Tonna	Cysgodfa Day Centre, Tonna	906	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NX2		Tonna	Tonnau Primary School	1029	Parking available on school grounds. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations



Electoral Divisions, Communities and Polling Stations
Neath Constituency

Register Code	Electoral Division	Community	Polling Station	Electorate	Access	Suitability	Venue	Recommendations
NY1	Trebanos	Pontardawe (Trebanos Ward)	Community Hall Trebanos	1123	Limited on-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NZ1	Ystalyfera	Ystalyfera (Ystalyfera Ward)	Beulah Chapel Vestry	55	On-road parking. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Adequate facilities and services. Toilet located across the road from PS.	Adequate	No Change
NZ2		Ystalyfera (Ystalyfera Ward)	Y Wern Primary School	1024	Parking available on school grounds and on main road. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
NZ3		Ystalyfera (Ystalyfera Ward)	The Community Hall, Ystalyfera	1288	Parking available on site. Good access to PS. Located close to community.	Good facilities and services.	Good	No Change
Total				58476				

Section A, Part 1, Item 2

2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES ELECTORAL REVIEWS: POLICY AND PRACTICE

2.1 Purpose of the Report

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales has recently published a policy and practice paper on Electoral Reviews. The Commission is seeking comments on the paper to be returned by 30th November 2011.

This report considers the key issues in the paper – a copy is attached at Appendix 1 – and recommends that specific comments be submitted to the Commission augmented by any views expressed by Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Board Members, subject to approval by the Board.

2.2 Background

The Board will recall the recent review of the electoral arrangements for the county borough. The process commenced in April 2009 when Boundary Commission representatives attended a meeting with elected Members to explain the review process, following which the Council submitted that the current scheme for the electoral arrangements for the county borough should remain unaltered. This view was based on an interpretation of the relevant statutory requirements placed on the Commission when undertaking reviews and on guidance issued by the then Minister for Social Justice and Local Government.

Subsequently, in October 2009, the Commission published its draft proposals for the county borough, which proposed a council of 58 members with significant changes to electoral division boundaries and an increase in the number of multi-member electoral divisions. The Council considered the draft proposals and submitted detailed objections to the Commission in December 2009 again making the case for the current arrangements to remain in place. Many local organisations and residents also submitted objections.

The Commission then published its final report on 31st August 2010 and submitted it to the Minister for his consideration.

Whilst amended to some extent, the final proposals recommended a council of 59 members and proposed changes to 31 of the 42 electoral divisions in the county borough. Following detailed consideration of the proposals the Council submitted objections to the Minister in October 2010, again stressing its view that the current electoral arrangements remain unaltered.

In December 2010, the Minister issued a written statement indicating that he had concerns about the consistency of the Commission's electoral review reports and that he had decided not to make any orders in respect of the boundary reviews for any local authorities to take effect in time for the May 2012 local elections. He also instructed his officials to establish an independent review of the Commission's work to date on electoral reviews for local authorities and the actions needed to make sure that the review programme can be delivered efficiently and to a high standard in time for the 2016 elections.

2.3 The Consultation Paper

The policy and practice paper (Appendix 1) sets out the Commission's policies and procedures on how it intends to meet its obligations when conducting electoral reviews. It sets out the statutory rules and guidance and the Minister's directions to the Commission and goes on to explain how the Commission will consider these, in conducting reviews.

The paper then explains the procedures to be followed in conducting a review and the considerations made by the Commission which require judgements to be made on balance taking into account matters including:

- Effective and convenient local government
- Electoral equality
- Community tie arguments that justify atypical levels of electoral equality
- Topographical and geographical features including both natural and man-made boundaries
- Rural/urban divide
- Community area and community ward boundaries being used as building blocks
- Single versus multi-member electoral divisions

The paper examines each of these factors in some detail.

The paper does not set out the Commission's views on how it proposes to address the issue of council size; the Commission intends to conduct a separate consultation on this.

The Commission is seeking views on the following specific questions:

Procedure (paragraphs 19-22)

- Are there any other meetings that you think would be beneficial? Who with?
- How far in advance of a review starting should these meetings be conducted?
- Are there any specific issues that you think should be included in the agenda for those meetings?

Previously, the Commission has attended an elected Member briefing session to explain its approach to conducting the review. We have found this helpful and suggest that this practice should continue. It would also be helpful if the Commission organised a briefing session for town and community councils as a means of publicising the review and bringing it to the attention of the wider public.

The elected Member briefing and the other meetings referred to in the paper should take place at least two months in advance of the review commencing. The agenda for these meetings should include all aspects of the review and a discussion on the factors that the Commission will take into account in conducting the review; offering an early opportunity for participants to bring any specific issues to the Commission's attention.

Considerations to be made in an electoral review (paragraphs 23-49)

- How can effective and convenient local government be tested within an electoral review?
- How important is attaining a fair and equal level of representation across a unitary authority area? What percentage variance from the authority average is acceptable?
- What justification is there for departing from the optimum councillor/elector ratio?
- In what circumstances are multi-member divisions most acceptable?
- How important is it that communities are not divided into separate divisions?

Effective and convenient local government is tested by undertaking a review of the electoral arrangements in accordance with the statutory rules set out in the Local Government Act 1972 and with any directions issued by the Minister. If the review is conducted taking into account all of the issues in the rules and directions, balancing them and then making a reasonable judgement then the outcome will lead to effective and convenient local government. It is also tested by public reaction to any proposals emanating from the review in the form of draft proposals. Effective and convenient local government must also be considered from the citizen's perspective. It is important therefore that draft proposals are widely publicised and that the Commission takes due note of the responses received to these from the public and their elected representatives.

The previous abortive review was characterised by an almost obsessive focus on the issue of electoral equality, i.e. the need to ensure that in each electoral division the councillor/elector ratio was 1:1750 or as near as possible to it. Whilst the Commission did alter its final report, the issue of electoral equality remained paramount. Electoral equality is no more important than any of the other factors that the Commission is required to take into account. There is no requirement in the rules or directions to identify an "acceptable" percentage variance from the local authority average. There is nothing wrong in having an electoral division that is 50% more or less than the average, as long as all factors have been considered and a reasonable conclusion reached.

Justifications for departing from the optimum ratio include topographical or geographical features in a particular area; ensuring boundaries are easily identifiable; ensuring local ties are not broken; taking account of rural sparsity; and, levels of deprivation which can have a significant impact on councillor workloads.

Multi-member divisions tend to be more acceptable in urban areas where easily identifiable boundaries are often non-existent. They are least acceptable in rural and valley areas where physical size can make the division unworkable and where, potentially, councillors could be concentrated in one part of the division, leading to communities feeling unrepresented.

It is important that communities are not divided into separate divisions but, again, this is just one of the factors to be taken into account in reaching judgements on the review.

Technical Note (Appendix 4)

- Is it clear what information is required at the start of each review?
- Would a pro-forma spreadsheet provided by the Commission assist in providing the information requested?
- Is providing forecast figures for year 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 a reasonable request? How accurate do you think the figures could be?

The information required is clear and the Council can provide it in whatever format is required. A standard spreadsheet would be helpful. We can provide a forecast for electorate figures 5 years hence but question the necessity for annual figures. The 5 year forecast is quite accurate but it is based on what is known at the time and no account can be taken of issues such as a reduction in house building because of the economic climate.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that, subject to any further comments agreed by the Board, that the above response be forwarded to the Commission.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To comply with the Commission's request by the due deadline

List of Background Papers:

None

Wards Affected:

All

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Electoral Reviews: Policy and Practice

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES ELECTORAL REVIEWS: POLICY AND PRACTICE

(a) Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call-in period.

(b) Sustainability Appraisal:

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity	- no impact
Education & Lifelong Learning	- no impact
Better Health & Well Being	- no impact
Environment & Transport	- no impact
Crime & Disorder	- no impact

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	- no impact
Sustainable Development	- no impact
Equalities	- no impact
Social Inclusion	- no impact

(c) Consultation

There has been no requirement under the constitution for external consultation on this item.



Electoral Reviews: Policy and Practice

Background

1. The Commission are required to carry out periodic reviews of the electoral arrangements of principal areas in Wales. The way the Commission conducts a review is defined by legislation and by directions issued by the Welsh Government.
2. This paper sets out the Commission's policies and procedures that will be applied in order to meet the obligations as set out in legislation and the Welsh Government Minister's direction.

Statutory Rules and Guidance and the Minister's Directions

The Local Government Act 1972 (the Act)

3. Section 54(1) of the Act provides that the Commission may in consequence of a review conducted by them make proposals to the Government for effecting changes appearing to the Commission **desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government**. This is the paramount and primary function of the Commission. One of the categories of change authorised by this section is a change of electoral arrangements.
4. Section 57 of the Act lays upon the Commission the duty, at intervals of not less than ten and not more than fifteen years, to review the electoral arrangements for every principal area in Wales for the purpose of considering whether or not to make proposals to the Welsh Government for a change in those electoral arrangements.
5. The "electoral arrangements" of a principal area are defined in section 78 of the Act as:
 - i) the total number of councillors to be elected to the council;
 - ii) the number and boundaries of electoral divisions;
 - iii) the number of councillors to be elected for each electoral division; and
 - iv) the name of any electoral division.

Rules to Be Observed Considering Electoral Arrangements

6. The Commission are required by section 78 to comply, so far as is reasonably practicable, with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the Act (Appendix 1). These require the Commission to provide for there to be a single member for each electoral division. However, the Welsh Government may direct the Commission to consider the desirability of providing for multi-member electoral divisions for the whole or part of a principal area.

7. The rules also require that:

Having regard to any change in the number or distribution of local government electors of the principal area likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following consideration of the electoral arrangements:

- i) subject to paragraph (ii), the number of local government electors shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every electoral division in the principal area;
- ii) where there are one or more multi-member divisions, the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every electoral division in the principal area (including any that are not multi-member divisions);
- iii) every ward of a community having a community council (whether separate or common) shall lie wholly within a single electoral division; and
- iv) every community which is not divided into community wards shall lie wholly within a single electoral division.

In considering the electoral arrangements the Commission shall have regard to (a) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and (b) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundary.

Minister's Directions

8. The Minister has directed that the Commission shall consider the desirability of multi-member electoral divisions in each county and county borough council in Wales.

9. The Minister has also given the following directions to the Commission for our guidance in conducting the review:

- (a) it is considered that a minimum number of 30 councillors is required for the proper management of the affairs of a county or county borough council;

- (b) it is considered that, in order to minimise the risk of a county council or a county borough council becoming unwieldy and difficult to manage, a maximum number of 75 councillors is ordinarily required for the proper management of the affairs of a county or a county borough council;
- (c) it is considered that the aim should be to achieve electoral divisions with a councillor to electorate ratio no lower than 1:1,750;
- (d) it is considered that decisions to alter the existing pattern of multi and single member electoral divisions should only be taken where such proposals for alteration are broadly supported by the electorate in so far as their views can be obtained in fulfilment of the consultation requirement contained in Section 60 of the Act; and
- (e) It is considered that the Commission shall, when conducting reviews under Part 4 of the Act, comply with paragraph 1A of Schedule 11 to the Act that is, the Rules (Appendix 1).

The full text of the Directions is at Appendix 2. The Directions were further confirmed in a letter from the Minister on 12 May 2009. A copy of this letter follows the Directions at Appendix 3.

- 10. There is a distinction made between the **requirements** in the rules as set at 8 (i) to (iv) above and the considerations that the Commission **shall have regard to**. There is also a distinction between these rules and the Minister's directions that are for the Commission's **guidance**.
- 11. This distinction means that the legislation and the Minister are asking the Commission to exercise a judgement about the considerations. This underpins the existence of the Commission: if the legislation prescribed the result of the treatment of considerations, then there would be no need for a body independent of government to apply that prescription. The legislation therefore gives the Commission a degree of discretion in the way that it resolves considerations; but that discretion is not boundless. No matter how the Commission resolves the considerations, it cannot break those rules about the relative boundary matters set out in paragraph 8 above.
- 12. The factors arising under the legislation that the Commission will consider and balance are:
 - The requirement to secure, as nearly as may be, that the number of electors shall be the same in every electoral division in the Unitary Authority – this is the principle of “electoral equality” or the principle that the vote of each elector shall carry, as nearly as may be, the same weight as the vote of every other elector, across the Unitary Authority. In seeking to apply this principle, the Commission must have regard to any change in the number or distribution of electors which is likely to take place within the next five years;
 - The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and in particular to have regard to:
 - i. The desirability of fixing boundaries which are easily identifiable; and

- ii. Any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundary.
13. Matters arising under the Minister's Directions are:
 - The size of the Council of a Unitary Authority should not normally fall below 30 nor rise above 75 councillors;
 - The aim should be to secure a councillor to electorate ratio no lower than 1:1,750, that is to say that there should normally be not less than 1,750 electors per councillor;
 - To consider the desirability of multi-member electoral divisions in each Unitary Authority, but taking into account the wishes of the electorate in this regard.
14. All these factors are of course subject to the paramount requirement to propose changes which are desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government.
15. These matters are not prioritised or sequential. In an ideal situation, it would be possible to devise a pattern of electoral division boundaries in which all councillors (and electoral divisions) in an authority had an equal electoral ratio; brought together people in clearly identifiable communities; demonstrated clearly how local government would be both effective and convenient; had the appropriate number of councillors *and* met the requirements relating to communities and community wards lying within single electoral divisions.
16. Unfortunately, the geographical, social, economic and administrative make-up of Wales is not so straightforward as to facilitate the drawing up of such ideal electoral patterns. It means that the Commission must consider all of the factors together, and exercise a judgement in which, taken all together, the pattern of electoral divisions which they devise demonstrates a closest possible to that ideal described above. This often means recognising and addressing conflicts between the different criteria to which the Commission must have regard.
17. This document details the Commission's approach to resolving this challenge: it sets out below the issues to be considered and gives some understanding of the broad approach which we take towards each of the statutory considerations to be made when addressing a review's particular circumstances. However, because those circumstances are unlikely to provide for the ideal electoral pattern described earlier, in most reviews, compromises are made in applying the policies in order to strike the right balance between each of the matters we must consider.

Procedure and Considerations to be made in Electoral Review

Procedure

18. Prior to the official outset of a review Secretariat officials will meet with Unitary Authority officials. This meeting will set out the general practises and

procedures of the review, organising future meetings and presentations and requesting the required data. In order to aid the collection of this data the Commission has devised a Technical Note as guidance for the Authorities on the data the Commission require from each Authority at the commencement of any future review. The Technical Note can be found at Appendix 4.

19. Following the Officials' meeting the Commission would meet with the Unitary Authority CEO and Group Leaders informally to set out the practises and procedures and agree a timeframe on the consultation for the council size and the length of the 'initial consultation period'. At this meeting we also encourage all parties to submit a suggested scheme for new electoral arrangements.
20. With regard to Council size, the Commission is currently developing its policy on how it will come to a decision on the on the number of elected members appropriate for each Council. We are considering several options and will consult on the results in due course.
21. Section 60 of the Act lays down procedural guidelines which are to be followed in carrying out a review. In compliance with Section 60 of the Act at the official commencement of the review we write to the county or county borough councils, all the community councils in the area, the Members of Parliament and Assembly Members for the local constituencies and other interested parties to inform them of our intention to conduct the review and the council size that has been decided upon, to request their preliminary views and to provide a copy of the Welsh Government's directions to the Commission. We also publicise our intention to conduct the review in local newspapers circulating in the counties and ask the councils and community councils to display a number of public notices in their area. At the formal commencement of the Review a presentation would also be made to Councillors and representatives of Town and Community Councils. We invite the councils to submit a suggested scheme or schemes for new electoral arrangements.

The considerations to be made in electoral review

22. Typically, reviews present a range of issues and challenges which require a judgement on balance taking into account matters including
 - effective and convenient local government;
 - electoral equality;
 - community tie arguments that justify atypical levels of electoral equality;
 - topography of the land, hills and rivers creating natural boundaries and motorways/railways forming man-made boundaries;
 - rural/urban divide;
 - community area and ward (where community areas are warded) boundaries being used as building blocks; and,
 - single versus multi-member electoral divisions.

Effective and convenient local government

23. Effective and convenient local government is difficult to define; it may be a consideration when the Commission reaches a decision about council size but must not be overlooked as a consideration in designing electoral arrangements.
24. A practical example of effective and convenient local government for the Commission when considering proposed electoral arrangements is to ensure that divisions are internally coherent. That is to say, that there are reasonable road links across the division so that it can be easily traversed, and that all electors in the division can engage in the affairs and activities of all parts of it without having to travel through an adjoining division. This situation may arise, for example, when a potential division boundary amalgamates two communities where a feature such as a mountain or river divides them.
25. We would also consider the practical choices which people make. Concluding that a division contributes to effective and convenient local government because two villages are connected by a narrow, tortuous rural lane which is little used when they each may have much easier connections to different villages or towns may not be a sound basis for devising an electoral pattern.

Electoral equality and Council Size

26. Electoral ratios are a matter of fact; they can be determined by mathematical calculation. However, one of the factors in that calculation is council size which itself is a matter to be determined by a review. The council size issue is one that will be considered by the Commission in a separate consultation paper.
27. The Commission has not yet agreed its policy on how to establish council size. As noted previously, this will be subject to a separate consultation with the local government community. There are however some factors that the Commission will have to take into account when taking its decisions. Parliament did not set out in legislation how many members each authority should have. However, in the Minister's direction he indicated that a minimum number of 30 councillors is required for the proper management of the affairs of a authority and in order to minimise the risk of an authority becoming unwieldy and difficult to manage, a maximum number of 75 councillors is ordinarily required for the proper management of the affairs of an authority. This directed limit may conflict with other directions, in particular the aim to achieve electoral divisions having not less than 1,750 electors per councillor.
28. Setting the council size then enables the Commission to calculate the average electoral ratio for the authority. However although it will seek to achieve ratios close to the authority average, the Commission acknowledges that there will be variances.

29. The Commission very rarely resolves the establishment of an electoral division that demonstrates both now and in the future, a perfect electoral ratio. At present, 31% of electoral divisions are within 10% of average electoral ratio and 68% are within 25%. The recent proposals sent to the Minister although making significant improvements in electoral parity in comparison with the existing arrangements still had electoral divisions that varied by more than 25% of the county average. This reflects the difficulties in achieving an effective balance between the various rules and directions.
30. The Commission takes the view that the further that electoral equality departs from the average for the authority, the stronger the evidence of the other considerations we take into account will need to be.
31. Many local authorities have both urban and rural areas. During the most recent reviews some people said that urban areas should have proportionately more councillors than rural areas because urban areas present the more complex issues. Others argued that rural areas should have proportionately more councillors because rural populations are more dispersed, and therefore harder to contact. There is no provision in legislation for such proportionality. Increasing use of electronic communication methods generally makes no distinction between urban and rural areas. However, there may be exceptions where local characteristics, including topography, lead to an acceptance of a particular variance in electoral ratio for one or more divisions.
32. The Commission's general intent to improve electoral equality at the first election to occur after the making of an implementation order following a review and so places greater emphasis on immediate improvements in electoral equality over longer term equality. It is still a requirement, however, to have regard to electoral forecasts and to respond to the implications of changes in the number and distribution of electors. In the experience of the Commission the projected figures are often at significant variance with the actual change in number of electors. In general terms, all authorities will project an increase in the number of electors, often in every division. The reality however, is that there is a degree of population shift away from rural communities and authorities and towards more urban communities and authorities.

The appropriate number of councillors in a division

33. The Commission in the first instance looks to create single member divisions. However, given the constraints on creating divisions (i.e. out of communities and their wards), this may sometimes not be possible as the number of electors in individual communities or community wards may be significantly at variance from the county average. In these circumstances the Commission may, if it is within an area stated in the Minister's directions, consider the creation of a multi-member division if that is the direction in which the other criteria points.

34. It is considered that multi-member divisions typically and predominantly occur in urban areas where it is necessary. This is because a necessarily larger number of electors in an electoral division can be more concentrated within an urban area as opposed to a more geographically sparse rural area. The Commission's view is that, where the need arises from issues of electoral equality, multi-member divisions are more suited to urban areas, than they are to rural areas. This suitability is because, in areas of denser population such as is found in urban areas, it is possible that many of the issues which a councillor may be called upon will be broadly similar and will allow multiple councillors to deal with similar issues. This may not be the case in some rural areas where concerns may differ over a widely spread multi-member area. The tight urban nature also allows councillors to engage with their electorate more efficiently than it would be in a rural area who would have to travel not inconsiderable distances to meet large numbers of constituents.
35. When proposing changes to the existing pattern of multi and single-member divisions, the Minister's Directions state that such proposals should be 'broadly supported by the electorate'. The proposals where we must seek to discover such support is in areas where we make significant changes to an existing division and where we propose to change the pattern from single to multi-member divisions. Conversely, where there is a multi-member division and we proposed to divide it into single-member divisions, public support for such changes must also be sought.
36. How this support is gauged is then qualified by 'so far as their views can be obtained in fulfilment of the consultation requirement contained in section 60 of the Act'. Under section 60 of the Act the Commission are required to consult on their proposals with: the council of the area under review; the Police Authority for any police area affected by the review; other local authorities and bodies that may be concerned; local authority staff bodies that have asked to be consulted; and such other persons the Commission thinks may have an interest. This forms the standard distribution list for each review. To this list is added all those who send in representations and those who have expressed an interest in the review. All of these bodies and individuals are provided with a copy of the proposals report. In addition public notices are put in local newspapers and copies of the notice provided to the local councils for display in public places. The proposals are also placed on the Commission's web site.

Communities

37. There can be some confusion over what is meant by the word community. It means different things to different people. Some may consider it to be the street in which they live, others a more broad village area, others much larger areas. All of these are entirely accurate and reflect the lives of people and the differences and similarities of places where we live, work and interact. However, in Wales there is an additional and more technical meaning to the word as Wales is divided into Community Areas.

38. The whole of Wales is divided into Community Areas. Many Community Areas have community or town councils. Where a Community Area has a community or town council then these areas may be warded for electoral purposes. The electoral divisions of Wales are created using these Community Areas (and wards) as their building blocks; there is no legislation that allows the Commission to ward Community Areas to form electoral divisions. Communities can only be warded as part of a separate community electoral arrangements review carried out by the relevant Unitary Authority. This may change if the law is changed by the Welsh Government as recommended by the Mathias Report.

Easily identifiable boundaries

39. The legislation requires that the Community Areas and, where they exist, Community wards are the building blocks for the electoral divisions. This in effect means that the boundaries of any proposed electoral divisions are formed from the boundaries of existing local government areas and as such should be easily identified. This does however depend on the Community Area and Community ward boundaries being regularly reviewed to take account of new developments that cross existing boundaries.
40. Major roads can be seen to be the focus of an area if they are the location of shops or community facilities which people visit regularly and where they interact. They may themselves be the subject of issue for communities, perhaps when safety, environmental or economic considerations are a catalyst to community interaction. Alternatively, major roads, rivers or railway lines are often physical barriers marking the boundary between different communities.
41. It is often argued that the geographical size of a division, allied to the number of Communities it contains, is a factor the Commission should take into account in reaching its conclusions on electoral patterns. This is because, traditionally, councillors are expected to attend community or town council meetings on a regular basis, thereby adding to their workload. This is not an argument the Commission has to date accepted, taking the view that councillor workload is a factor for consideration in terms of council size not electoral patterns.

Local ties

42. The legislation requires that the Commission must have regard to any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundary. This may occur when proposals are made for new arrangements that divide into two electoral divisions, Communities (or Community wards) that are currently together in the same electoral division. However, such is the complexity of the term "local ties" that people may consider that their area has ties to a number of other areas. It can also be the case that those sharing an interest in the physical maintenance and management of their immediate living environment may consider that their local ties are within quite confined boundaries. For example, the Commission has received comments from those who consider that their individual Community ward is separate and distinct from another

ward of the same Community and they adamantly oppose being placed in an electoral division containing another ward from the same Community.

43. However, the Commission may also receive representations from those who may have an interest in the way their general hospital or secondary school provides services or in the continuation of a large-scale employer and thus identify themselves as also part of a community much wider in extent. This often leads to suggestion of local ties between multiple Community Areas (whether they have a community or town council or not) and can often bring deep opposition to dividing Community Areas into two (or more) electoral divisions where they were previously contained within one.
44. The Commission is often accused of treating electoral reviews as a desk based exercise, ignoring evidence of local ties that would be broken by a particular electoral division boundary. There can be no doubt that many people feel, quite rightly, very strongly about their areas, and the Commission receives impassioned representations, often using historic or ecclesiastic references in support of respondents' contentions. That is why we ask those making a submission to make a case based specifically on local ties and how these may be broken by the proposed arrangements.
45. In some areas an electoral division will be greater in physical extent than an identifiable Community (or community ward): sometimes the Commission have to combine two or more distinct and separate Communities within an electoral division. This is particularly so in rural areas.

Electoral division names

46. Where the Commission propose to form new electoral divisions the Commission will also propose names for the new divisions. During the consultation period the Commission welcomes suggestions for alternative names and where appropriate the Commission will propose alternative English and Welsh names for the new divisions.

Conclusion

47. Electoral review is an exercise of the discharge of statutory responsibility, the application of powers given to the Commission, and the display of judgement which the legislation combined with the Minister's directions calls for. The Commission's policies are intended to give others confidence in how it will approach the challenges in any review, but do not preclude its striking of the right balance in the particular circumstances of the communities and local authorities under review.

**Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972
(as amended by the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994,
the Government of Wales Act 1998) and the Government
of Wales Act 2006).**

**RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN CONSIDERING ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS**

Welsh counties and county boroughs

- 1A -(1) This paragraph applies to the consideration by the Welsh Assembly Government or the Welsh Commission of the electoral arrangements for elections of councillors for principal areas in Wales.
- (2) Subject to any direction under sub-paragraph (3) below, the Welsh Commission shall, when considering the arrangements for elections of councillors for any principal area in Wales, provide for there to be a single member for each electoral division.
- (3) The Welsh Assembly Government may give a direction to the Welsh Commission requiring it to consider the desirability of providing for multi-member electoral divisions for the area to which the direction relates (which may be the whole or a specified part of a principal area in Wales).
- (4) For the purposes of this paragraph, an electoral division is a multi-member division if the arrangements made for the elections of councillors provide for a specified number of councillors (greater than one) to be elected for that division.
- (5) Having regard to any change in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the principal area likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration -
- (a) subject to paragraph (b), the number of local government electors shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every electoral division in the principal area;
 - (b) where there are one or more multi-member divisions, the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as

Appendix 1

may be, the same in every electoral division in the principal area (including any that are not multi-member divisions);

- (c) every ward of a community having a community council (whether separate or common) shall lie wholly within a single electoral division; and
- (d) every community which is not divided into community wards shall lie wholly within a single electoral division.

(6) Subject to sub-paragraph (5) above, in considering the electoral arrangements referred to in sub-paragraph (1) above, regard shall be had to -

- (a) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (b) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundary.

 SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

2009 NO. 2

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Directions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for
Wales 2009

<i>Made</i>	2009
<i>Coming into force</i>	2009

The Welsh Ministers, in exercise of the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by section 59 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972(1) and now vested in them (2) make the following Directions:

Title, commencement and application

1.—(1) The title of these Directions is the Directions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales 2009.

(2) These Directions come into force on the day after the day on which they are made.

(3) These Directions are given to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales and apply in relation to Wales.

Interpretation

2. In these Directions—

“the Act” means the Local Government Act 1972; and

“the Commission” means the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales.

Multi Member Divisions

3.—(1) Pursuant to paragraph 1A(3) of Schedule 11 to the Act (3) the Welsh Ministers direct that the Commission shall consider the desirability of multi member electoral divisions in each county council and county borough council (4) in the principal areas in Wales mentioned in section 20, Schedule 4 of the Act.

(1) 1972 c.70.

(2) By virtue of the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/672) and paragraph 30(1) and 2 (a) of Schedule 11 to the Government of Wales Act 2006.

(3) as inserted by section 7(3) of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994.

(4) as referred to in the Local Government Act 1972, section 20, Schedule 4, substituted by the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994, section 1 (2), Schedule 1, paragraph 2.

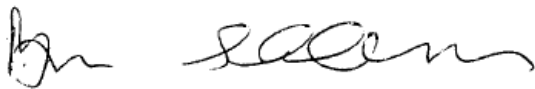
Review of electoral arrangements

4.—(1) Pursuant to section 59 (1) of the Act the Welsh Ministers give the following directions to the Commission for their guidance in conducting the review of electoral arrangements which they are required to carry out under section 55 of the Act—

- (a) It is considered that a minimum number of 30 councillors is required for the proper management of the affairs of a county or a county borough council;
- (b) It is considered that, in order to minimise the risk of a county council or a county borough council becoming unwieldy and difficult to manage, a maximum number of 75 councillors is ordinarily required for the proper management of the affairs of a county or a county borough council;
- (c) It is considered that the aim should be to achieve electoral divisions with a councillor to electorate ratio no lower than 1:1750;
- (d) It is considered that a decision to alter the existing pattern of multi and single member divisions in the areas referred to in paragraph 3 of these Directions should only be taken where such proposals for alteration are broadly supported by the electorate so far as their views can be obtained in fulfilment of the consultation requirement contained in section 60 of the Act;
- (e) It is considered that the Commission shall, when conducting reviews under Part 4 of the Act, comply with paragraph 1A of Schedule 11 to the Act and these Directions.

Reports of the review of electoral arrangements

5.—(1) Pursuant to section 58(1) of the Act the Welsh Ministers direct that reports prepared by the Commission in respect of the review of electoral arrangements in relation to county and county borough councils in Wales shall be submitted to the Welsh Ministers by no later than 30 June 2011.



Signed by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

Date 13 / 1 / 2009

Brian Gibbons AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Llywodraeth
Leul
Minister for Social Justice and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref MB/BG/291/09

Paul Wood
Chair
Local Government Boundary
Commission for Wales
Caradog House
1-6 St Andrews Place
Cardiff
CF10 3BE

12th May 2009

Dear Paul,

Directions on Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

I am aware that you have now commenced preliminary work on the cycle of reviews of electoral arrangements in each of the principal councils. Representations I have received from local government suggest to me that you may have interpreted my directions as being more prescriptive than those issued by the Secretary of State for Wales in 1995 prior to the last review cycle. I want to make clear that this is not the case.

The directions are issued for your guidance and are not to be viewed as instructions. In a number of respects – notably, in relation to the areas appropriate for multi-member divisions and the timetable – the last directions were more prescriptive but in relation to the central issue of the councillor to elector ratio the wording is identical. This means that the ratio remains as the aim to be worked towards and not as a goal to be achieved in each case. In doing so attention should be paid to local communities having their own identifiable representation even where the indicative figure of 1750 electors/councillor is not always achievable.

I do, of course, recognise that since 1995 we have seen the introduction of executive or alternative arrangements in principal councils, which may have implications for the number of councillors required to make a council fully functional. The 1995 directions were also introduced at a time of reorganisation, in a different political atmosphere from now.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

Appendix 3

Finally, I should also point out the stipulation in Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972, that regard should be had to the need to fix boundaries which are easily identifiable and which recognise local community ties.

I wish you well in the review process.

Yours sincerely



Brian Gibbons AM

Technical Note: Requirements for each Unitary Authority for the provision of statistical data to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales.

Introduction and History

1. In order to conduct an electoral review of a Unitary Authority it is necessary for the Commission to have the requisite statistical information upon which it can make decisions about both the number of councillors in an Authority and the number of electors in each electoral division.
2. At the start of an electoral review the Commission requests from the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) the latest electoral figures for each community area and ward (where a community is warded). A 5-year projection of the number of electors is also requested on the same basis.
3. In respect of the existing figures, these have not been provided in a consistent format and, on a number of occasions, this has required the Commission to go back to the ERO for clarification of the figures. The inconsistencies have taken a number of forms such as electorate broken down by polling district rather than community/community ward, missing data, incorrect totals etc. The clarification and correction of this data has taken time and effort to resolve and, on occasions, this has had an impact on the timely running of a review.
4. In respect of the projected figures, the Commission has received a number of different ways of calculation, ranging from blanket increases by percentile, to carefully thought-out determination of attainers, deaths and development proposals. On rare occasions we have been told that it is not possible to provide such statistics. In such circumstances the Commission has to just use the existing electorates when proposing electoral arrangements and is then unable to gauge the future suitability of the arrangements. Again, the difficulties in obtaining of these statistics have, on occasion, had an impact on the timely running of a review.
5. In order to avoid the problems that have previously occurred in respect of electoral statistics, the Commission has created this Technical Note. This will assist the ERO's of each Unitary Authority to understand the precise requirements of the Commission with regard to the electoral data it will be requesting before the start of a review.

Requirements

1. The Commission requires three different sets of data from the ERO of each Unitary Authority:
 - i. The existing arrangements;
 - ii. A 5 year projection; and,
 - iii. Each of the last 5 years data.

Existing Arrangements

2. The Commission requires the most up-to-date number of registered local government electors in each **community and community ward** (where a community is warded) in the Unitary Authority. These are the building blocks to which the Commission at present **must** adhere. Numbers of electors by postcode or electoral division are **not** acceptable. The information should be ordered alphabetically by community name (and where warded, the community ward data should be ordered alphabetically by community ward name). Where there are alternative Welsh and English names these should both be given.

A Five-Year Projection

3. The Commission requires a carefully considered and, so far as is possible, accurate, projection of the number of electors in each existing **community and community ward** (where a community is warded) in the Unitary Authority that are forecast in the year that is five years after the year of the existing electoral figures (e.g. for 2016 where the existing electorate is for 2011). These projected figures should be provided in the same format and in exactly the same order as the existing electorates are provided. These projected figures should be calculated using determination of attainers, deaths, development proposals and trends of population shift. It is unacceptable to merely provide projected population figures or blanket increases across the unitary authority.
4. In addition to the data the Commission would like a report that sets out how the projected figures have been calculated.
5. These new conditions have been set due to the historical inaccuracy of the projected figures provided in past reviews, both in terms of eventual numbers of electors in each area and the manner in which they have been created. It is clear when looking back at projections provided by Authorities in the past and then comparing them with the relevant figures at the time of attainment that there is a significant differential between the two.

6. Whilst the Commission recognises that it is not straightforward to provide a completely accurate projection in every case a significant effort should be made by the Authorities to attain the best possible evidence based projection.

Each of the last five years data

7. In order to gain an understanding of the electoral changes over time within an Authority, the Commission is also requesting the number of electors in each existing **community and community ward** (where a community is warded) in the Unitary Authority for the same month as provided for the 'existing arrangements' for the previous five years. As with the existing arrangements, numbers of electors by postcode or electoral division are **not** acceptable. Where changes to the boundaries of communities or community wards have occurred during the five-year period, this should be noted.

Section A, Part 1, Item 3

3 **COMMUNITY SAFETY PROJECTS FUND:** **APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION**

Purpose of the Report:

To decide upon applications received for grant funding from Community and Voluntary Organisations and from the Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership.

Background:

Introduction

Since 2000/2001 the Council has provided financial assistance to community-based and voluntary organisations to fund projects and schemes, which are designed to contribute towards the objectives of the Community Safety Strategy. The Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership also develops projects for the same purpose. The combined budget for these purposes for 2011/12 is £12,000.

The Process

Grant application forms are available from the Council's Community Safety Team which offers advice and guidance to applicants on the eligibility criteria and completion of the application form. Applications are assessed against the eligibility criteria prior to the application being reported to the Cabinet Board for determination. Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership submissions are agreed between the relevant partners prior to be presented for decision. Appendix 1 shows applications approved to date.

Submitted Applications

	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Grant</u>
1.	Neath & Melin Amateur Boxing Club	Extend opening hours	£500

The Neath & Melin Amateur boxing club provides facilities, equipment and coaching with the aims of achieving excellence in the sport of amateur boxing and to promote health & well being. The grant will be used as a contribution for the rent and running costs of the club to enable the club to open for longer hours and attract more young people in to use the facilities.

Partnership Projects

The Safer Neath Port Talbot Christmas Campaign

The 2011 Christmas campaign will look to address a number of crime prevention issues causing some concern to Safer Neath Port Talbot. To reduce and prevent handbag and purse thefts, Safer NPT will give out 'jingle bells'; these have proved very popular and effective in previous years. To target the problem of burglaries where large amounts of cash has been stolen from property we will be giving out Bingo Dabbers with an appropriate message. There has recently been an increase in thefts from motor vehicles, to raise awareness and to prevent an increase in the seasonal trend, a number of car air fresheners will be distributed to drivers along with the message 'Do not leave property and valuables in your car'. To address the problem of mobile phone thefts among young people, mobile phone cloth cases will be given out again with an appropriate message regarding keeping the phone safe.

The Campaign will also promote and encourage residents to take care of their property in the run up to Christmas. The partnership will organise community days and take part in community events throughout the County Borough giving out the promotional items. Posters and leaflets will be distributed through Neighbourhood Watch and Pact meetings. The campaign will also be raising awareness in the local media.

Costings

2000 Jingle Bells	£520.00
1000 Bingo Dabbers	£710.00
500 Mobile phone cases	£476.00
1,000 Air fresheners	£830.00
Total	£2,536.00

Posters and leaflets will be designed and printed in-house.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the above applications be approved.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The applications recommended for approval meet the eligibility criteria and the projects will contribute to the objectives of the Community Safety Strategy.

List of Background Papers:

Eligibility criteria

Wards Affected:

All

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – grants approved to date – 2011/12

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

3 COMMUNITY SAFETY PROJECTS FUND **APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION**

(a) Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call-in period.

(b) Sustainability Appraisal:

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity	- positive impacts
Education & Lifelong Learning	- positive impacts
Better Health & Well Being	- positive impacts
Environment & Transport	- no impact
Crime & Disorder	- positive impacts

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	- no impact
Sustainable Development	- no impact
Equalities	- positive impacts
Social Inclusion	- positive impacts

(c) Consultation

There has been no requirement under the constitution for external consultation on this item.

Appendix 1

YOUTH RELATED PROJECTS

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Area of Benefit</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Approved</u>
Upper Afan valley	Summer Programme	£500	14/7/11
Cwmgors Boxing Club	Boxing 4 All	£495	1/9/11
Fairyland Football Club	Forward 4 Fairyland	£300.50	1/9/11
Baglan RFC	Baglan Junior Section	£325	1/9/11
Port Talbot Arts Group	Port Talbot & Baglan	£500	23/9/11

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION PROJECTS

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Area of Benefit</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Approved</u>
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PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Area of Benefit</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Approved</u>
Safer NPT Crucial Crew	Neath Port Talbot	£1,500	2/6/11

Total 2011/12 **£3,620.50**

Section B, Part 1, Item 4

4 OFFICER EXECUTIVE URGENCY ACTION

The following urgency action was determined by the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the requisite Members on 7th October 2011. The decision was for immediate implementation. This matter is reported for information only.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PROJECTS FUND: APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY PORT TALBOT YOUNG ARTISTS

An application for financial assistance from the Community Safety Projects Fund was submitted by Port Talbot Young Artists shortly after the deadline for the last Cabinet Board report. The application is for a grant of £500 for the group's Art4All project. Using community safety as a theme, the group will undertake an art project in Baglan Community Centre. At the end of the project the group will publicly exhibit their work in the town centre. The project's aim is to promote a positive outlook and attitude towards living in Port Talbot together with a compassion for its history through the medium of art. The urgency action was taken to avoid delaying the project, which meets the eligibility criteria of the fund.

OFFICER'S RESOLUTION

That the application be approved.

OFFICER CONTACT

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