



COUNCIL – 29TH NOVEMBER 2023

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY REVIEW – DRAFT PROPOSALS

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) was appointed by the Council to carry out a review of the communities within the county borough. The Council also established a cross party working group to help frame the review. Following an initial consultation the Commission has now published a set of draft proposals and the purpose of this report is to outline these to members and consider a council response.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The initial consultation for the community review began on 23rd March 2023 and closed on 18th May 2023. The views of the Cross Party Working Group formed a basis for the Commission's considerations along with the Council Size Policy and the Commission's own policies.

2.2 The Commission published its draft report on 10 October 2023 and the closing date to submit any views on the proposals is 4th December, 2023.

2.3 When carrying out the review the Commission placed an emphasis on maintaining community ties, the Council Size Policy and has also given regard to the number of uncontested/unfilled seats at the last community council elections.

2.4 They have recognised that potential changes to the 'building blocks' that form Community areas may have consequential effects on the county wide electoral arrangements. Any necessary consequential changes to county borough wards also form part of the proposals.

2.5 The Commission proposes:

- An overall reduction in the number of community areas in Caerphilly from 27 to 24.
- An overall increase in the number of town and community councillors from 202 to 203.

- Changes to the boundaries of 13 communities. Consequently, changes to the electoral arrangements of 13 communities
- 15 un-changed communities (Aber Valley, Abercarn, Argoed, Blackwood, Crosskeys, Crumlin, Darran Valley, Llanbradach & Pwllypant, New Tredegar, Newbridge, Penmaen, Penyrheol, Treceenydd & Energlyn, Van and Ynysddu).
- A maximum Council Size of 18 councillors (Risca) and a minimum of 8 councillors (Maesycwmmmer).

2.6 The cross party working group has considered the Commission's draft proposals and their responses to the proposals are outlined in this report.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that:

3.2 The Council endorse the Commission's draft proposals subject to the amendments proposed by the cross party working group.

3.3 The Chief Executive provides a response to the consultation by 4th December.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To comply with the Council's statutory duty to keep its communities under review.

4.2 To allow community boundaries to be realigned where they have overgrown historical boundaries so as to ensure efficient and effective local government.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The Commission's proposals along with the views of the Cross Party Working group are outlined below:-

5.2 **Communities of Risca West and Risca East** – The Commission proposes to abolish the two existing communities and establish a new one called Risca. The existing community wards carry forward to the new council and that the Ty isaf Fields ward be renamed Ty Isaf Fields and Ochrwyth. The number of Councillors representing the Pontymister Upper ward be increased to 3 (from 2).

5.2.1 **Cross Party Working Group** – Opposes the proposal and recommends that the existing arrangements in Risca remain in place.

5.3 **Communities of Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen and Rudry** - The Commission proposes to abolish the two existing communities and establish a new one called Bedwas, Trethomas, Machen and Rudry. The existing community wards carry forward to the new council. The number of Councillors representing the Bedwas ward be increased to 5 (from 4). The number of Councillors representing the Llanfedw and Rhyd-y-gwern wards be decreased to 1 (from 2) and in Rudry the number to be reduced to 2 (from 5).

5.3.1 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal to merge the two communities. However, it recommends that the Llanfedw, Rhyd-y-gwern and Rudry

wards be merged and be represented by 2 councillors.

- 5.4 **Communities of Gelligaer and Nelson** - The Commission proposes to transfer properties between the following community areas.
- **Cefn Hengoed to Ystrad Mynach** – Transfer 6 streets from the Cwm Calon Housing development to Ystrad Mynach.
 - **Cefn Hengoed to Tir-y-berth** – Transfer Farm Close to Tir-y-berth.
 - **Greenhill to Llwyncelyn** - Transfer small area to west of Greenhill ward (close to Llancaiach Fawr) to Llwyncelyn. Minor change affecting 8 electors.
- 5.4.1 The existing community wards carry forward to the new council. The number of Councillors representing the Cascade ward be increased to 3 (from 2) and in the Ystrad Mynach ward be increased to 4 (from 3). The number of Councillors representing the Greenhill be decreased to 2 (from 3).
- 5.4.2 Consequential changes would be made to the boundaries of the county borough wards of Hengoed, Nelson, St Cattwg and Ystrad Mynach.
- 5.4.3 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal.
- 5.5 **Community of Caerphilly** - The Commission proposes to transfer properties between the following community wards.
- **Parcyfelin to Tonyfelin** – Transfer 38 electors from Castell y Fan (allowing Castell y Fan to be united in one ward).
 - **Tonyfelin to Parcyfelin** – Transfer of Haner Erw, Cwrt Gwaun Fach and Heol Bro Wen (Includes leisure centre and affects 119 electors) .
 - **Parcyfelin to Tonyfelin** - Transfer the polling district JB3 to Tonyfelin. Change affects 159 electors.
 - **Castle to Brynccenydd** – Transfer the front area of the grounds of Caerphilly Castle to Brynccenydd – no electors affected.
- 5.5.1 The existing community wards carry forward to the new council. The number of Councillors representing the Tonyfelin and Watford wards be increased to 2 (from 1).
- 5.5.2 Consequential changes would be made to the boundaries of the county borough wards of Morgan Jones and St Martins.
- 5.5.3 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal to change the community ward boundaries. However, the group wished to maintain the number of councillors at the current level of representation for the community (12).
- 5.6 **Communities of Bargoed and Pengam** - The Commission proposes to transfer properties between two community wards and one community area.
- **Bargoed to Gilfach** – transfer 135 electors from Bargoed to Gilfach. Heol Fargoed will form the western boundary, Park Drive the north and Cardiff road the eastern.
 - **Gilfach to Park** – Transfer 3 streets from Gilfach to Park to unite the Park estate into Park ward – 40 electors.
 - **Aberbargoed to Pengam** – Transfer the Llanmoor development from Aberbargoed to Pengam.
- 5.6.1 The existing community wards carry forward to the new council. The number of Councillors representing the Aberbargoed ward be increased to 5 (from 4), the

Bargoed ward to 6 (from 5) and the Gilfach ward to 3 (from 2).

5.6.2 Consequential changes would be made to the boundaries of the county borough wards of Aberbargoed and Bargoed, Gilfach and Cefn Fforest and Pengam.

5.6.3 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal to change the ward boundaries within the community. The group recognised that it was more sensible for the Llanmoor development to be situated in the Pengam community but wished to highlight to the Commission that this would mean the development sitting within the new Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney parliamentary constituency whereas the remainder of the Pengam community sits in the new Caerphilly constituency. However, the group opposed the increase in the number of community councillors.

5.7. **Communities of Cefn Fforest and Pengam** - The Commission proposes to abolish the two existing communities and establish a new one called Cefn Fforest and Pengam.

5.7.1 As described in 5.6.2 there would consequential changes to be made to the boundary of the county borough ward of Cefn Fforest and Pengam.

5.7.2 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal.

5.8 **Communities of Maesycwmmmer and Pontllanfraith** - The Commission proposes to transfer the Hawtin Meadows development from Maesycwmmmer to Pontllanfraith. The change affects 278 electors.

5.8.1 The number of Councillors representing the Maesycwmmmer ward be decreased to 8 (from 9).

5.8.2 Consequential changes would be made to the boundaries of the county borough wards of Maesycwmmmer and Pontllanfraith.

5.8.3 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal to transfer the Hawtin Meadows development to the Pontllanfraith Community. However, the group recommends that the number of community councillors for Maesycwmmmer be decreased to 7.

5.9 **Community of Rhymney** – The Commission proposes that the Community wards of St David's and Moriah be combined and be served by 3 councillors (Overall reduction of one councillor)

5.9.1 **Cross Party Working Group** – Agrees with the proposal.

5.9.2 **Conclusion**

There has been over 12 years since the last community review and in that time, there have been many changes, such as new housing developments, that mean that some community boundaries need to be reviewed. The Commission's and Working Group's proposals allow for many of these to be amended and made fit for purpose ahead of the next scheduled local government elections in 2027.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no assumptions in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An assessment has not been completed for this report as the Council has a statutory responsibility to carry out a community review.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications in this report. The costs associated with the Community Review will be met from the existing Electoral Services budget as previously agreed by Council in January. The Commissions fee for conducting the review is £13,500.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 All consultation responses are incorporated into the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013

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Background Papers:

Review of the Community Arrangements of the County Borough of Caerphilly Draft
Proposals Report (Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales)
Caerphilly Community Review - Draft Proposals | LDBCW (gov.wales)
beechd@caerphilly.gov.uk

Initial proposals – Caerphilly Cross Party Working Group available from
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