Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland

Note of Meeting held on 23rd August 2022 at 3.30pm

Erskine House, Belfast & Microsoft Teams

**In Attendance**

Mr. Justice Michael Humphreys, Deputy Chair to the Boundary Commission (MH)

Sarah Havlin, Boundary Commissioner (SH)

Vilma Patterson, Boundary Commissioner (VP)

Siobhan Carey, Registrar General of Northern Ireland (SC)

Jim Lennon, Chief Survey Officer, LPS (JL)

Angela McGrath, Commissioner of Valuation, LPS (AMcG)

Virginia McVea, Chief Electoral Officer (VMcV)

Heather McKinley, Secretary to the Boundary Commission (HMcK)

Andrea Richardson, Deputy Secretary to the Boundary Commission (AR)

Lisa Hay, Office Manager to the Boundary Commission (LH)

Lyn McBride, Support Officer to the Boundary Commission (LM)

**Apologies**

David Marshall, Director of Census and Population Statistics, NISRA

# Welcome and Apologies

Attendees were welcomed to the hybrid meeting. SC noted her thanks to David Marshall for deputising for her in her absence. There were no declarations of interest.

# Note of Previous Meeting held on 24th May 2022

# Members agreed the note of the BCNI meeting held on 24th May 2022. There were no matters arising.

# BCNI Annual Report 2021/22

An overview of the draft BCNI Annual Report 2021/22 (as circulated to attendees ahead of the meeting) was provided, and there was some discussion. It was noted that BCNI is not required to lay its Annual Report in Parliament, but that a copy should be sent by email to SOSNI and the Speaker, for information, and published on the Commission’s website. Attendees confirmed they were content with this arrangement for the 2021-22 Report, subject to some minor drafting amendments.

It was agreed that the Secretariat would make these edits and circulate an updated draft of the Annual Report for clearance. It was proposed that the Report be published in early September, subject to that clearance.

# Update on the 2023 Boundary Review Third Consultation Stage

Attendees were provided with an update on progress on the 2023 Review. It was noted that Commissioners had considered representations received during the initial and secondary consultations and various options for delineation were being explored. Commissioners had also undertaken site visits in order to more fully inform any revisions to their initial proposals. The statutory third, 4-week, consultation period is planned to launch in early to mid-November 2022, closing before Christmas. Following discussion, Commissioners asked the Secretariat to draft a tweet and short news item for the Commission’s website to give the public an early indication of the planned November launch date.

There was also a discussion around SOSNI’s statutory duty to call an election if a Northern Ireland Executive is not formed by 28th October 2022, and how any pre-election period might impact the planned consultation launch (per the election guidance which applies to all public bodies, including ALBs). However it was also agreed that in the absence of any certainty at this stage, we should proceed as planned and receive a further update on scenario planning at the September BCNI meeting.

# AOB

Attendees received a finance update, including an update on VAT advice received from NIO Finance. It was agreed that the Secretariat should continue to liaise with NIO Finance on this.

# Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is 27th September 2022 in Erskine House, Belfast.