Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland

Note of Meeting held on 24th May 2022 at 3.30pm

Erskine House, Belfast

**In Attendance**

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

Sarah Havlin, Boundary Commissioner (SH)

Vilma Patterson, Boundary Commissioner (VP)

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

Siobhan Carey, Registrar General of Northern Ireland

# Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Attendees were welcomed to the in-person meeting and apologies noted. There were no declarations of interest.

# Minutes of last meeting

Members agreed the note of the BCNI meeting held on 29th March 2022. There were no matters arising.

# Risk Register

An updated risk register for 2022/2023 had been circulated to attendees ahead of the meeting. An overview of risks and their RAG status was given, and it was agreed that it was now timely for two risks (relating to practicalities of the accommodation move, and to Secretariat handover after the Commission’s period of abeyance) be removed from the register.

Attendees were advised that the RAG status around the potential impact of COVID-19 had been reduced in the updated risk register as the statutory public hearings had now been completed. It was noted that the Commission will continue to monitor public health guidance for any possible impact on the third consultation period. Regarding BCNI’s budget, attendees were content that highlighting the demand-led nature of BCNI’s work was appropriate, and that regular monitoring of the financial position was ongoing. After some further discussion, the updated risk register was agreed.

# Budget Update

Members were apprised that NIO ALBs recently met with the NIO Permanent Secretary (PUS) and were provided with an overview of the current UKG budgetary position, further to the Spending Review which saw a 5% reduction to BCNI’s budget for 2022-23. The meeting also highlighted UKG’s focus on accurate financial forecasting and reprioritising in order to stay within budgets.

Attendees were also advised of recent correspondence received from PUS which highlighted some new HM Treasury requirements around financial governance. It was noted that BCNI already has regular meetings with its FBP, which have been valuable. Following some discussion around the practicalities relating to matters raised by the correspondence, Commissioners confirmed that that they were broadly content, but looked forward to the various new processes being clarified.

# Boundary Review - Next Steps

It was agreed that the records of the public hearings and written representations received during the secondary consultation should be published on the Commission’s website within the next week or so. This publication would be accompanied by a short news piece on the BCNI website and a tweet. Additional publicity would accompany the launch of the third consultation, which would further highlight these representations and records.

The broad timeline of the next stage of the Review was discussed, and it was agreed that the third consultation period, along with any revised proposals, should be planned for autumn 2022.

# AOB

The date of the next meeting is 23rd August 2022, and the venue will be Erskine House, Belfast.