



## REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ARRANGEMENTS OF CAERPHILLY

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## **Introduction**

The legislation that covers community reviews is the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act). Under the Act the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) has a general duty to monitor arrangements for local government across Wales. Each principal council however has a duty to monitor the communities in its area and, where appropriate, the electoral arrangements of such communities for the purposes of considering whether to make or recommend changes. These changes are brought about by means of community boundaries reviews and community electoral reviews.

The Commission is conducting a review of community arrangements following a request received from the Principal Council (the Council). This review is being carried out under section 26 of the Act.

The first stage of the review is to ask all interested parties to consider the current community boundaries and submit their views on any changes required to create communities that provide for effective and convenient local government. All submissions will then be considered, and the Commission will publish a Draft Proposals Report and will hold a consultation on those proposals. All submissions will then be considered, and Final Recommendations will be submitted to Welsh Government Ministers. Welsh Government Ministers will then if it thinks fit, to give effect to these recommendations either as submitted, or with modifications.

The review will start in February 2023 with final recommendations being provisionally scheduled to be submitted for adoption in April 2024.

### **Why are we undertaking this review?**

The Commission has received an official request from the Council to review the community arrangements across the principal council area with the aim of ensuring that communities continue to reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government.

### **What is the aim of the review?**

The Commission aims to ensure that community boundaries reflect the identities and interests of the communities across the principal council area and that they are both effective and convenient.

As part of the review, the Commission will have regard to:

- the creation, abolition or merging of communities and community wards
- the name of the community and, where warded, the name of community wards
- Where changes have been made to the boundaries of communities or community wards the number of councillors representing the community and, where warded, the number of councillors per ward.

### **What can be considered under this review?**

This review will look at the community boundaries across the principal council area. Any changes to electoral arrangements for communities will only be considered as a consequence of any changes to community boundaries.

### **Who will undertake this review?**

The Commission has entered into an agreement with the principal council to exercise the councils' functions under section 25 (5) of the Act. The Commission is therefore responsible for undertaking the review under section 26 of the Act. On completion of the review the Commission will submit recommendations to Welsh Government Ministers. Welsh Government Ministers will then if it thinks fit, to give effect to these recommendations either as submitted, or with modifications.

## **Public Consultation and Submissions**

When undertaking the review, the Commission is required to undertake such steps as it thinks fit to ensure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of the review and are informed of any draft proposals or recommendations. The Commission undertakes to meet these duties by writing to:

- The Principal Council
- The Town and Community Councils across the principal council
- The Senedd Member representing the area,
- The Regional Senedd Members for the area,
- The Member of Parliament representing the area
- The principal council elected members
- Welsh Language Commissioner
- The Welsh Government, and
- Ordnance Survey.

The Commission will also give official notice at different stages of the review, deposit copies of reports and documents at the Principal Council's Election Office and place appropriate documents on the Commissions website.

Comments and submissions may be made at two stages of the review, the initial investigations and draft proposals consultation periods.

All comments and submissions will be given due consideration in the review if the following criteria are met: -

- Comments are received by 11.59pm of the timetabled deadline.
- All comments are received with a name and address identifying the sender. Anonymous submissions will not be accepted, though personal details of members of the public will not be made public. Submissions from representative bodies and persons such as Councillors and Members of the Senedd etc will be named within the report.
- Where an organisation or an individual is making submissions concerning the review, they shall show how either maintaining the status-quo or making changes are desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

## **Council Size Policy**

The Commissions' community review will be undertaken subject to section 26 of the Act and therefore will focus on making boundary changes to ensure that community boundaries reflect the identities and interests of the communities across the principal council area and that they are both effective and convenient. Any consequential changes to electoral arrangements will only be made when changes to community or community ward boundaries have been made.

The principal council has stated that communities should be represented by no less than 7 councillors and no more than 25 councillors. The principal council has also stated that community wards should be consist of no less than 500 electors.

## **Welsh Language Names Policy**

In the creation of any new names the Commission will consult the Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC). The WLC is responsible for advising on the standard forms of Welsh place-names. The WLC has convened a Place-names Standardisation Panel to provide recommendations and expert advice in this field. In forming its recommendations, the Panel follows national standardisation guidelines and also gives consideration to the meaning, history and etymology of the place-names, as well as their usage. The WLC will be included as a mandatory consultee in the review.

### **Timetable for the Review**

The review will start in February 2023 with final recommendations being provisionally scheduled to be submitted in April 2024. Any changes that occur as a result of the review process would then come into effect for the next Local Government Elections.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Date</b>
Start of Review		February 2023
Initial Investigations	8 Weeks	February 2023 to April 2023
Draft Proposal Publication/ Consultation	8 Weeks	August 2023 to October 2023
Final Recommendation Submission		April 2024

### **Supporting Information**

Further information relating to the review, including electorate figures (provided by the Principal Council), a map of the existing community boundaries and guidance, are available on the Commissions' website.