

**Minutes of Meeting held by video-conference at  
13:00 on Wednesday 16 April 2025**

**Present**

Prof. A Henderson, Chair  
Mr S Jones, Deputy Chair  
Ms A McNab  
Mr G Macmillan  
Mr M Smith  
Mr A Stewart

Ms K Mavor, Secretary  
Mr C Wilson  
Ms Y Croll

**Apologies**

None.

**Declaration of Interest or Connection**

1. The Commission noted previous declarations about the constituency each Commissioner resides in.

**Minutes of previous meeting**

2. The Commission agreed the minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2025 with minor amendments.

**Matters arising**

3. The Secretary confirmed the Scottish Government Gaelic team were currently translating the Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA). The ICIA will be published on the Commission's website soon.
4. The Secretary reported that a paper on lessons learned from the Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries and a background paper on electoral reviews will be brought to a future meeting.

**Business update**

5. The Chair reported that she had met with the Deputy Director, Scottish Government Elections and Constitutional Projects, to discuss progress of the Second Review and other matters. The regular meetings between the Secretariat and the Scottish Government sponsor team are now back in place.

**Electoral reform (oral)**

6. The Secretary advised that the Independent Review of the Approval Process for Electoral Boundaries in Scotland (Independent Review) has been formally announced. Andrew Kerr will Chair the Independent Review. Consultation is likely to take place in May 2025 with the Independent Review concluding in Autumn 2025.
7. The Chair had an informal meeting with the Independent Review Chair to discuss the background to the Independent Review and the general approach. The Secretary has also shared a briefing note, schedule of correspondence and meeting papers with the Sponsor Team for sending on to the Independent Review Chair. The Independent Review Chair and representatives from the

Scottish Government Elections team will attend the Commission's next meeting on 5 June 2025.

8. The Secretary reported that she is continuing to liaise with the Sponsor Team about the secondary legislation relating to access to the electoral register and attainer information. A further update will be provided when more detail is known.

**Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Consultation responses (BS 175)**

9. The Commission considered paper BS 175 which included all responses to the consultation on Further Proposals for regions and Supplementary Proposals for constituencies.
10. The Commission noted that the seven consultation responses received did not contain any objections from either a local authority or a body of 100 electors (or 500 electors for regions). No further information was required that only a local inquiry could provide so the Commission agreed that no further local inquiries should be held. It was also noted that the upcoming deadline for submission of the final recommendations did not provide sufficient time to engage with the substance of a local inquiry and devise alternative proposals before consulting on them further.
11. The Commission also noted the representations that were submitted outwith the formal consultation. In particular, the Commission considered the alternative option presented by Falkirk Council. It was noted that this alternative would result in a proposed constituency with a variation of +15.5% above the electoral quota. It was agreed that this was not an improvement on the existing proposals for Falkirk East and Linlithgow; and Falkirk West, which had been agreed as Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory design in neighbouring constituencies. The Commission also considered the comments made on the constituency name of Aberdeen Deeside and North Kincardine. As no better alternatives had been put forward, the Commission agreed that it was not minded to change its recommendations in relation to the name of the Aberdeen Deeside and North Kincardine constituency.

**Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas (BS 176)**

12. The Commission considered Paper BS 176 and noted the two responses to its consultation on its Supplementary Proposals for the proposed Almond Valley and Bathgate constituencies.
13. The Commission noted that West Lothian Council had supported the revised boundary at Polbeth between the proposed Almond Valley and Bathgate constituencies. The Commission further noted that West Lothian Council had been in contact separately about the decision not to hold any further local inquiries.
14. The Commission then considered the alternative suggestion to rename the proposed Bathgate constituency as West Lothian Central. The Commission recalled that it had previously considered this constituency name at an earlier meeting. The Commission remained of the view that Bathgate was the

appropriate recommended name for this constituency as it is the largest settlement in the proposed constituency.

15. The Commission agreed to adopt placing Polbeth in an Almond Valley constituency as it would better reflect local ties. Also, Polbeth is currently in the existing Almond Valley constituency (Rule 4). It was noted that this would have minimal impact on variation from the electorate quota across the two proposed constituencies of Almond Valley and Bathgate, both of which are wholly within the West Lothian Council area (Rules 1 and 2).

16. The Commission agreed to adopt its Supplementary Proposals as its Final Recommendations for the Almond Valley and Bathgate constituencies. For the other constituencies in this grouping, the Commission confirmed its earlier decision to:

- adopt the Revised Proposals as Final Recommendations for the Argyll and Bute; Clydebank and Milngavie; Clydesdale; Coatbridge and Chryston; Dumbarton; East Kilbride; Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse; Motherwell and Wishaw; and Strathkelvin and Bearsden constituencies.
- adopt the Further Proposals as Final Recommendations for the Rutherglen and Cambuslang and Uddingston and Bellshill constituencies and the Additional Proposals as Final Recommendations for Falkirk East and Linlithgow and Falkirk West constituencies
- revert to the existing boundaries for Airdrie and Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituencies.

### **Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Further Proposals for Regions (BS 177)**

17. The Commission considered Paper BS 177 and the five responses to its consultation on Further Proposals for the Glasgow region.

18. The Commission noted that Glasgow City Council had supported the proposed Glasgow region. The Commission considered the alternative suggestions submitted by members of the public. It was noted that many of these had previously been considered when developing earlier proposals or had been consulted on previously. For some of these alternative submissions, it was noted there had been strong opposition in previous consultation rounds.

19. After considering the consultation responses, the Commission agreed to adopt its Further Proposals as its Final Recommendations for the Glasgow region. For the other regions, the Commission confirmed its previous decision to adopt the Provisional Proposals as Final Recommendations (Central Scotland and Lothians West; Highlands and Islands; Mid Scotland and Fife; North East Scotland and South Scotland) and the Revised Proposals as Final Recommendations (Edinburgh and Lothians East; and West Scotland).

### **Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Draft Final Report and News Release (BS 178)**

20. The Commission discussed the Second Review draft final report and news release and provided some suggested amendments.

### **Independent review of the process for determining electoral boundaries (BS 179)**

21. The Commission discussed Paper BS 179 and provided some suggested discussion topics for when it meets with the Review Chair on 5 June 2025. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a briefing note, to be shared with the Commission in advance that meeting, with a summary of the key areas for discussion.

**Finance update (BS 180)**

22. The Commission noted the finance update and underspend.

**Future meetings**

23. The Commission will next meet on 5 June 2025.

**Any other business**

24. There was no other business.