

**Minutes of Meeting held at
Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh and by videolink
10 am on Wednesday 19 June 2024**

Present

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

Ms K Mavor, Secretary
Mr C Wilson
Mr D Campbell
Mr P Allan
Ms Y Croll

Apologies

1. Mr A Stewart.

Declaration of Interests/Connections

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

Minutes of previous meeting

3. The Commission agreed the minutes of the meeting of 16 May 2024.

Matters arising

4. The Commission was informed that a rolling action log will be provided at each meeting so that actions from previous meeting are monitored. The Secretary provided an update on the actions from the 16 May 2024 meeting.
5. The Secretary reported that she was in contact with Scottish Government about amendments to the Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations so Boundaries Scotland can access the electoral registers on request.
6. The Risk Register will be brought to the next meeting in July 2024.

Business update

7. A meeting with the new Minister for Parliamentary Business, Jamie Hepburn, MSP will be scheduled for late summer.
8. The Secretary updated the Commission that some communications from Ministers about reporting duties for public bodies have been received. The Secretary will review these and update the draft Annual Report for 2023/24 which will be brought to the next meeting.
9. The Secretary reported there has been an increase in website traffic to both the Boundaries Scotland and Boundary Commission for Scotland websites following the announcement of the UK General Election. There has also been a noticeable increase in enquiries about the new UK Parliament constituency boundaries.

10. The Secretary advised that the recruitment for a new Commissioner for Boundary Commission of Scotland has been extended until after the General Election.
11. Following discussion of Paper BS 97 Summary of Responses – Requests for Local Inquiries, by email after the 16 May 2024 Commission meeting, the Commission agreed to hold a local inquiry in Falkirk. Falkirk Council had objected to the Revised Proposals and had requested a local inquiry. The Secretariat has started arranging this local inquiry, provisionally scheduled for 22 August 2024 at Falkirk Stadium. Notices about the local inquiry will not be published until after the General Election.

Electoral Reform (oral)

12. The Secretary reported that the Standards Procedures and Public Appointments Committee had published their report on stage 1 of the Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill and a link to the report had been shared with the Commission. The stage 1 debate will take place on 27 June 2024.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Islands Community Impact Assessment (BS 98)

13. The Commission discussed Paper BS 98 and provided comments and suggestions on the Islands Community Impact Assessment document.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Project Plan (BS 99)

14. The Commission noted the updated project plan for the Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Full set of responses (BS 100)

15. The Commission was provided with a copy of all of the responses to the consultation on Revised Proposals for constituencies. Detailed discussions about the consultation responses relating to each Council group then took place. For future reviews, it was noted that further analysis about categorising the different types of responses, where respondents had heard about the review for future advertising etc. would be helpful.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Perth and Kinross Council Area (BS 112)

16. The Commission considered Paper BS 112 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Perth and Kinross Council area.
17. The Commission noted the low number of responses to the consultation but also noted that some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made.
18. The Commission noted that Perth and Kinross Council did not object to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies in the council area. The Commission agreed that it did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for the Perth and Kinross Council area therefore a local inquiry was not required.
19. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to

satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.

20. The Final Recommendations for Perth and Kinross Council area were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with two constituencies wholly within Perth and Kinross Council area; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with both constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required; and rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken) as there was minimal change to the existing constituency boundaries and that the boundaries now followed ward boundaries which may better reflect local communities.
21. The Commission agreed to consider the names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Dumfries and Galloway Council Area (BS 111)

22. The Commission considered Paper BS 111 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Dumfries and Galloway Council area.
23. The Commission noted the low number of responses to the consultation but also noted that some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made. In particular, the Commission considered the suggestion to create a more urban Dumfries constituency that avoided splitting Dumfries between constituencies and a more rural Galloway constituency. However, this suggestion did not meet the requirement to be as near to the electoral quota as practicable (rule 2).
24. The Commission noted that Dumfries and Galloway Council did not object to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies in the Council area. The Commission agreed that it did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for the Dumfries and Galloway Council area therefore a local inquiry was not required.
25. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.
26. The Final Recommendations for the Dumfries and Galloway Council area were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with two constituencies wholly within Dumfries and Galloway Council area; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with both constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required; and rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken) as there was no change to the existing constituency boundaries.

27. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Dundee City Council Area (BS 110)

28. The Commission considered Paper BS 110 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Dundee City Council area.

29. The Commission noted the low number of responses to the consultation but also noted that some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made. In particular, one suggestion received was to place Broughty Ferry and Monifieth in the same constituency but, as this suggestion did not meet rule 1 or 2, there was no compelling argument in support of this approach.

30. The Commission noted that Dundee City Council did not object to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies in the Council area. The Commission agreed that it did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for Dundee City Council area therefore a local inquiry was not required.

31. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.

32. The Final Recommendations for the Dundee City Council area were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with two constituencies wholly within Dundee City Council area; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with both constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required; and rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken) as there was no change to the existing constituency boundaries.

33. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Fife Council Area (BS 108)

34. The Commission considered Paper BS 108 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Fife Council area.

35. The Commission noted the low number of responses to the consultation but noted there were some suggestions for alternative constituency names and a suggestion to place Lundin Links, Lower Largo and Upper Largo in a North East Fife constituency. However, this suggestion did not meet the requirement to be as near to the electoral quota as practicable (rule 2).

36. The Commission noted that Fife Council did not object to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies in the council area. The Commission did not require any further

information on its Revised Proposals for Fife Council area therefore a local inquiry was not required.

37. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.
38. The Final Recommendations for Fife Council area were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with five constituencies wholly within Fife Council area; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with five constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required; and rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken) as there was no change to the existing constituency boundaries.
39. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council Areas (BS 107)

40. The Commission considered Paper BS 107 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas.
41. The Revised Proposals had adopted the suggested boundary submitted by both North Ayrshire Council and East Ayrshire Council.
42. The Commission discussed the responses to the consultation and noted some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made. The suggestion to place Collennan, Dundonald and Loans in a constituency with Troon was considered but it agreed to retain the existing constituency boundary by Troon as it followed a ward boundary and offered a more recognisable boundary. The Commission then considered suggestions to keep the three towns of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston together (and potentially Arran) but this suggestion did not meet the requirement to be as near to the electoral quota as practicable (rule 2).
43. The Commission reconsidered the suggestion from Willie Coffey MSP, previously considered at its meetings of 29 August 2023 and 22 February 2024. The Commission agreed it did not offer an improvement on its Revised Proposals because it suggested a Cunninghame South with variation from the electorate quota at 11% (rule 2).
44. The Commission considered if its proposals would impact on any island communities but noted the proposed Cunningham North constituency was unchanged. It includes the inhabited islands of Arran, Cumbrae and Holy Island.
45. The Commission noted that no Council had objected to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed

constituencies. The Commission did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas therefore a local inquiry was not required.

46. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.
47. The Final Recommendations were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with five constituencies wholly within East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council areas; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with five constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%. When reaching a view on the Final Recommendations, the Commission considered the special geographic considerations relating to the inhabited islands of Arran, Cumbrae and Holy Island and the responses made in relation to a separate island constituency. However, no suggestions were put forward that supported an acceptable variation from the electoral quota requirements (rule 2).
48. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council Areas (BS 104)

49. The Commission considered Paper BS 104 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council areas.
50. The Commission discussed the responses to the consultation. A number of respondents opposed the revised boundary by Causewayhead which had followed the River Forth creating an identifiable boundary. The Commission agreed to retain its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations in this area because no alternative suggestions were provided, no other solution would avoid breaking local ties and its proposals offered acceptable variation from the electorate quota.
51. The Commission noted that no Councils objected to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies. The Commission did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council areas therefore a local inquiry was not required.
52. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.
53. The Final Recommendations were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with two constituencies wholly within Clackmannanshire and Stirling Council areas; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the

electoral quota as is practicable) with two constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required.

54. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council Areas (BS 106)

55. The Commission considered Paper BS 106 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council areas.

56. The Commission discussed the responses to the consultation and noted that some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made. The Commission considered the suggestions relating to Forfar, Stonehaven and Cruden but the suggestions did not meet the requirement to be as near to the electoral quota as practicable (rule 2). The suggestion relating to Tomintoul and Broughty Ferry did not take into account local authority boundaries (rule 1). The Commission also agreed there was a lack of supporting evidence submitted with the suggestions therefore there were no compelling reason to make any changes.

57. The Commission noted that no Councils objected to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies. The Commission did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council areas, therefore a local inquiry was not required.

58. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.

59. The Final Recommendations were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with eight constituencies wholly within Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council areas; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with eight constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required and rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken) by amending a boundary by Arradoul to align constituency and ward boundaries.

60. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Highland Council Area (BS 109)

61. The Commission considered Paper BS 109 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Highland Council area.

62. The Commission discussed the responses to the consultation. The Commission noted some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries including the suggestion that there should be a separate constituency for the islands or a separate Skye constituency. The Commission agreed that although special geographical circumstances applied to the island communities the suggested alternatives would vary significantly from the electoral quota (rule 2).
63. The Commission felt the proposed option at paragraph 50 in Paper BS 109 did not account for the requirement for the electorate of a constituency to be as near the electoral quota as is practicable (rule 2).
64. The Commission considered other alternative suggestions and agreed to adopt the suggestion from Highland Council by Strathdearn to follow a ward boundary and existing constituency boundary to maintain local ties in the area (rule 4). The Commission considered the suggestion to align the constituency boundary with ward boundaries by Kinmylies (west of Inverness) but considered this would break local ties in that area and that it would place part of Inverness in a constituency with Skye and Lochaber (Skye, Lochaber and Strathspey).
65. The Commission noted that Highland Council did not object to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies in the council area. The Commission did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for Highland Council area therefore a local inquiry was not required.
66. After considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed to amend its Revised Proposals to align the boundary near Strathdearn with the ward boundaries. The Commission will consult further on this slight change to the constituency boundaries as it affects 14 electors.
67. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Midlothian and Scottish Borders Council Areas (BS 105)

68. The Commission considered Paper BS 105 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Midlothian and Scottish Border Council areas.
69. The Commission noted the low number of responses to the consultation but also noted some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made.
70. The Commission noted that there was no objection from the Councils to the Revised Proposals for constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies object. The Commission did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals for Midlothian or Scottish Borders Council areas therefore a local inquiry was not required.
71. After discussing and considering all of the consultation responses including the suggestion to create an urban and rural constituency, the Commission agreed to adopt its Revised Proposals as its Final Recommendations, subject to

satisfactory constituencies being designed in neighbouring areas. Therefore, no further consultation was required.

72. The Final Recommendations were agreed on the basis that the following rules were met: rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas) with three constituencies wholly within Midlothian and Scottish Borders Council areas; rule 2 (the electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable) with three constituencies having variation from the electorate quota within 10%; that rule 3 (special geographical considerations) was not required and rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken) had been taken into account.

73. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council Areas (BS 103)

74. The Commission considered Paper BS 103 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas.

75. The Commission noted that Falkirk Council had objected to the proposed: Cumbernauld and Kilsyth; Falkirk North; and Linlithgow and Falkirk South constituencies and had requested a local inquiry. The Commission agreed to hold a local inquiry regarding those proposed constituencies.

76. The Commission noted that no other Councils objected to the Revised Proposals for the other constituencies nor did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the other proposed constituencies. The Commission did not require any further information on its Revised Proposals therefore a local inquiry was not required for Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas.

77. The Commission agreed to defer making a decision on these constituencies until after the outcome of the Falkirk local inquiry.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Council Areas (BS 102)

78. The Commission considered Paper BS 102 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Council areas.

79. The Commission discussed the responses to the consultation and noted some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries.

80. The Commission noted that the Council did not object to the Revised Proposals for constituencies, but Neilston Community Council did on the basis that local ties in the Levern Valley would be broken. There had been a previous local inquiry covering this grouping and as such the Commission is not required to hold a second local inquiry unless justified. The Commission's view was that a

second local inquiry would be justified if a) the nature of the objection was different from the issues raised in the previous objection and local inquiry and b) the solution was not immediately obvious. In this case, the nature of the concern was slightly different (the location of Neilston rather than the previous issue about Eastwood constituency as a whole) but the solution was obvious. As a way forward the Commission agreed to contact Neilston Community Council to advise them of the proposed solution. If Neilston Community Council did not raise any concerns with this proposed approach, the Commission agreed a second local inquiry would not be justified.

81. The Commission agreed to make the boundary change by Phoenix Retail Park in Paisley suggested at paragraph 48 in Paper BS 102 as it took into account both inconvenience and local ties (rule 4).
82. The Commission discussed the alternative suggestion at paragraph 50 in Paper BS 102 whereby Cardonald was added to a Paisley constituency and agreed that it did not take into account the requirement to have regard to the boundaries of local government areas (rule 1).
83. The Commission agreed to make the boundary change by Govan suggested at paragraph 86 in Paper BS 102 as it took into account Rule 1 (regard must be had to the boundaries of local government areas); and Rule 4 (inconveniences of any alterations of constituencies and local ties which would be broken).
84. After discussing and considering all the consultation responses the Commission agreed that further consultation was required and asked the Secretariat to present a paper at the next meeting to assist in agreeing boundaries for further consultation.
85. The Commission agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries: City of Edinburgh and East Lothian Council Areas (BS 101)

86. The Commission considered Paper BS 101 and noted the responses to its consultation on its Revised Proposals for constituencies for City of Edinburgh and East Lothian Council areas.
87. The Commission discussed the responses to the consultation and also noted that some suggestions for alternative constituency boundaries had been made.
88. The Commission agreed that the suggestion by Leith Walk at paragraph 39 in Paper BS 101 did not take into account the requirement for the electorate of a constituency to be as near the electoral quota as is practicable.
89. The Commission agreed more discussion was needed on the boundary change suggested by Davidson's Mains at paragraph 42 in Paper BS 101. The Commission asked that a further paper be brought to the 23 July meeting considering this and other suggested alternatives.
90. The Commission agreed more discussion was needed on the boundary change suggested by Gorgie and Dalry at paragraph 54 in Paper BS 101.

91. The Commission agreed more discussion was needed on the boundary change suggested by Morningside at paragraph 59 in Paper BS 101.
92. For the Edinburgh North-Eastern constituency, the Council did not object, nor did a body of 100 electors but the Commission received a petition with more than 750 names objecting to the exclusion of Leith from the constituency name. As the solution was an obvious one, the Commission agreed to write to Ben Macpherson MSP to confirm whether the inclusion of Leith in the constituency name would alleviate concerns. If so, the Commission believed a local inquiry on the constituency name would not be justified.
93. The Commission noted East Lothian Council had objected to the Revised Proposals for Lothian Eastern. There had been a previous local inquiry covering this grouping as such the Commission is not required to hold a second local inquiry unless justified. The Commission's view was that a second local inquiry would be justified if a) the nature of the objection was different from the issues raised in the previous objection and local inquiry and b) the solution was not immediately obvious. In this case, the nature of the concern was similar to that raised in the previous Council objection and already addressed by the first local inquiry and the inquiry report. After considering the matters discussed at the local inquiry and the relevant representations received, the Commission agreed a further local inquiry was not justified. The Secretariat was asked to advise East Lothian Council of this decision. As a way forward the Commission agreed to identify further alternative boundaries for East Lothian and to discuss these at the next meeting.
94. The Commission agreed that a decision on whether further consultation was required in the City of Edinburgh and East Lothian Council areas will be made at its next meeting in July 2024 after consideration of further alternative boundaries.
95. The Commission also agreed to consider names for all constituencies at a later meeting.

Local Government electoral arrangements: Request for interim review: Knoydart/Highland (BS 113)

96. The Commission discussed Paper BS 113 and the request for an interim review of electoral arrangements at Inverguserain Farm, Knoydart between Ward 5 (Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh) and Ward 11 (Caol and Mallaig) of Highland Council area. The Commission agreed that there was insufficient evidence provided in the request to suggest that a review of the ward boundary in this location would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

Finance update (Paper BS 114)

97. The Commission noted the finance update.

Future meetings

98. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 23 July 2024.

Any other business

99. The Commission discussed its general approach for developing constituency names. A paper will be drafted on constituency names for the next meeting on 23 July 2024.