

Meeting of:	<b>Community Liaison Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Tuesday, 21 May 2024</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources
Report Title:	Vale of Glamorgan Community Review
Purpose of Report:	To inform Committee of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission publication of their Final Recommendations Report in relation to the review of community arrangements of the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan as accepted when reported to Full Council on 29th April 2024 (with formal submission of the report to the Welsh Ministers on 7th May 2024).
Report Owner:	Rob Thomas; Electoral Registration Officer
Responsible Officer:	Amy Rudman; Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Cross-Party Working Group and Group Leaders
Policy Framework:	It is now for Welsh Government and its Ministers to consider the Boundary Commission's recommendations and decide how to proceed and whether to make an Order. The recommendations can be taken forward either as submitted, or modified or it can take no action.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 considered a report relating to the Council's Community Review and the process to be adopted; minute number C133 refers.</li> <li>• Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 were presented with a reference from Community Liaison Committee of 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2023; minute number C265 refers.</li> <li>• The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission (the Commission) published their Draft Proposals on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 and a consultation period followed from 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 until 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2023.</li> <li>• The Commission, at this time notified all mandatory consultees, including Town and Community Councils, of the publication of their Draft Proposals. In addition, correspondence was issued to all Clerks of Town and Community Councils in early September to advise that the Commission would be publishing their draft proposals on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.</li> </ul>	

- The Commission encouraged the Vale of Glamorgan Cross-Party Working Party Group (VoGCPWG) to submit further representations and comments on the Draft Proposals as part of the consultation by 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 and the matter was reported to both the Community Liaison Committee and Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023, a copy of the referenced reports can be found at the following link :  
[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Community%20Liaison/2023/23-10-05/Vale-of-Glamorgan-Community-Review.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Community%20Liaison/2023/23-10-05/Vale-of-Glamorgan-Community-Review.pdf)
- That report set out all the proposals put forward by the Boundary Commission and paragraph 2.26 summarised the response of the Council at that time. As a consequence, it is not repeated here and this report will concentrate on the final proposals now published.
- The Commission published its Final Report which was released on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The matter was reported to Full Council on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The report was factual in nature. Full Council considered the report, and following debate, accepted the report, recommending that a copy of the report be circulated to all Clerks of all Town and Community Councils for information and to enable Town and Community Councils and to submit any additional comments in response to the review. As agreed by Full Council the Council has responded to the Welsh Ministers and a copy of the report was submitted to Welsh Government on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The Welsh Ministers were informed that all Councillors were advised to reply separately if they wished to do so.
- A special meeting of the Community Liaison Committee has been scheduled to run through the final recommendations as approved by Full Council, and submitted to the Welsh Ministers, as well as to give Community and Town Councils the opportunity of airing views which, in turn, will allow them to respond either on an individual basis or as a collective in groups and/or clusters directly to Welsh Ministers, noting that there is no further time permitted within this process to make specific recommendations to Cabinet as outlined.

## **Recommendation**

1. It is recommended that all Committee Members consider the report and should they consider it appropriate, forward any comments directly to the Welsh Government Minister in response to the review.

## **Reason for Recommendation**

1. To allow all Councillors the opportunity to respond to the review.

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council has a duty under s22 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 to report every ten years on its community review activities.
- 1.2 At the conclusion of a s25 boundaries review, the Principal Council may recommend “community boundary changes”. These are defined in section 23(4) of the Act as including changes to the boundary of an existing Community Council, but also the abolition of an existing community and the creation of a new community.
- 1.3 At the conclusion of a s31 electoral review, a Principal Council is entitled to “propose and make” changes to the electoral arrangements for the community under review. Consideration in this instant should be given in particular to the degree in which ‘electoral parity’ is achieved.
- 1.4 On 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 Community Liaison Committee was presented, as part of pre-engagement, with an overview of the Vale of Glamorgan Council Community Review and the process to be adopted.
- 1.5 A report was presented to Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 to update Members on the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Community Boundary Area Review (“the Review”) and the process to be adopted. The report was referred to Community Liaison Committee and a copy of the report was circulated to all Town and Community Councils in the Vale of Glamorgan area. The Council’s Terms of Reference (“ToR”) of the review was appended to the Cabinet Report at Appendix A and included a Council Size Policy.
- 1.6 The Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Community Review which is being undertaken by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales commenced on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2023. The first stage of the review included investigation and an initial consultation period, which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2023. As part of the initial consultation, a briefing / workshop for all Town and Community Councils was held at the Civic Offices on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2023, which was led by the Commission. Of the 26 Community Councils in the Vale of Glamorgan, 22 were represented at the workshop. A meeting of the Vale of Glamorgan, set up prior to the pre-engagement work being undertaken, was held on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.

When convening the VoGCPWG, consisting of County Councillors, the political balance of the Council was disregarded in agreement with party leaders and a representative from each political group, including the independent members, were included in that group.

- 1.7** The Commission as part of their pre-engagement communications plan advertised the Vale of Glamorgan Community Review in local papers, social media outlets and local radio. These adverts included a link to the Commission website where representations on the review can be submitted by members of the public.
- 1.8** All mandatory consultees and stakeholders received by letter or email the Initial Notice of Consultation and Terms of Reference. The Council's Electoral Registration Officer provided an update on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2023 to Party Leaders and Town and Community Council Clerks alerting them to the publication of the Commission's Draft Proposals. On 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2023, the Commission published their Draft Proposals and commenced a consultation period from 5<sup>th</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2023. A report was presented to Cabinet and Community Liaison Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> October and that report set out the proposals and proposed a response. A link to these reports is provided in the Executive Summary. The Minutes of the Community Liaison Committee of the 5<sup>th</sup> October are attached via the following link for completeness: [https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Community%20Liaison/2023/23-10-05/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Community%20Liaison/2023/23-10-05/Minutes.pdf) These minutes were forwarded to the commission for completeness as part of the response to the consultation phase of the review (see below).
- 1.9** In relation to the views expressed and the recommendations made at Community Liaison Committee, these were referred to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023 when Cabinet resolved, as follows:
- (1) T H A T the discussion and comments made at the Community Liaison Committee meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 be noted.
- (2) T H A T the response to the Boundary Commission as set out in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.26 of the report to Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 be approved and a copy of the report be forwarded to the Boundary Commission as the formal response to the consultation.
- (3) T H A T in pursuance of Resolution 2 a full copy of the minutes of Community Liaison Committee are also forwarded to the Boundary Committee, so that the Commission could consider all views expressed by Members of that Committee and therefore had the full picture of the views of Town and Community Councils as well as the 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 Cabinet report.
- 1.10** The Commission has now finalised its report and this was published on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. All Members have had sight of the report as it was e-mailed to them by the Boundary Commission on the day of release and a further e-mail was also sent by the Chief Executive / Electoral Registration Officer on the same day to draw attention to the report.

**1.11** The Boundary Commission Report was also considered by the Vale of Glamorgan Full Council on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> April whereby Members resolved:

(1) T H A T the content of the report be noted and that the recommendations of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales be supported.

(2) T H A T a copy of the report be circulated to all Clerks of all Town and Community Councils for information and to enable Town and Community Councils to submit any additional comments in response to the review.

(3) T H A T all Councillors consider the report and, should they consider it appropriate, forward any comments directly to the Welsh Government Minister in response to the review.

**1.12** This report will now outline the proposals and indicate the next steps.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

### **The next steps in the Review Process.**

**2.1** As stated above, the Commission has now published its Final Recommendations for the future community arrangements for the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan and submitted them to Welsh Government Ministers on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**2.2** In terms of the process, it is now for Welsh Government and its Ministers to decide how to proceed. Ordinarily they will make an Order.

**2.3** The Final Recommendations Report contains all of the Commission's recommendations for the County Borough of The Vale of Glamorgan. Where it has made changes to the existing arrangements a description of the change, the representations it has received, the reasons for any change and a map of the recommendations are contained in the report. The report also indicates how comments (if any) can be submitted within a 6 week period from 16<sup>th</sup> April. The review has been considered in detail previously by Cabinet, Community Liaison Committee, and Vale of Glamorgan Full Council notes. The Full Council report was referred to all Town and Community Councils so that any responses can be made directly to the review. It is recommended that Town and Community Councils respond either on an individual basis or as a collective in groups and/or clusters directly to the Welsh Government Minister.

### **Summary of recommendations**

**2.4** In summary, the changes proposed through the review are broadly in line with those that were the subject of consultation back in the Autumn 2023, with the exception of some additional changes. For completeness, all the proposals are summarised below, with a reference to particular sections of the report where helpful.

**2.5** **Barry** – In summary, the changes suggested are broadly in keeping with what was suggested by the Cabinet at the initial consultation stage and subsequently

consulted upon in the Autumn of last year. The main change in Barry relates to the creation of a new Waterfront ward. However, there are in total, 12 proposed changes to the existing internal town boundaries, which in the main reflect suggestions from the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Barry Town Council. The new Waterfront Ward will benefit from 2 new Town Councillors, while internal changes between other wards will result in the Town Council having a representation of 23 Councillors in comparison to the existing number of 22. In terms of consequential changes to the Principal Council (Vale of Glamorgan), the representation within Barry will increase from 20 Members to 23 (as a result of 2 additional Members for the Waterfront and 1 additional Member for Dyfan ward). Full details are set out in pages 8 to 27 of the report.

- 2.6 Penarth** – Again, in general terms, the changes proposed are broadly in line with those consulted upon previously. In total, there are 6 changes to existing town boundaries (which in the main follow suggestions from the Town Council). This includes the creation of a new ‘Cosmeston’ ward to the south-west of the town by the transfer of part of the Lavernock ward from Sully and Lavernock Community Council. Fort Road will form the southern boundary of the new ward. The Cosmeston ward will be represented by one new Community Councillor, taking the Penarth total of Councillors at Town Council level to 17 from the existing 16. In terms of consequential changes at Principal Authority level, the town will be represented by 10 Members instead of the current 9 Members, by virtue of an additional and new Member for the Cosmeston ward. The details relating to Penarth can be found at pages 28 to 40 of the report.
- 2.7 Sully and Lavernock** – As a consequence and in relation to the above, Sully and Lavernock will see changes with the land to the north of Fort Road creating a new ‘Cosmeston’ ward within Penarth. A total of seven (7) Community Councillors are proposed for Sully (6) and Lavernock (1) as detailed on page 31 of the report.
- 2.8 Llantwit Major** – There are no further comments to make in relation to Llantwit Major over and above those made during the earlier part of the process. The two changes recommended will see an area transfer from Llanmaes to the Boverton ward and the transfer of a small area from the west ward to the south-east ward. Membership will increase by 1 Member from the current 14 to 15. There are no changes to membership levels at the Principal Authority level, although the community of Llanmaes will no longer fall within Llantwit Major at Principal Authority level. The details relating to Llantwit Major are contained on pages 41 to 46 of the report.
- 2.9 Cowbridge with Llanblethian**- The proposals have changed from those consulted upon in Autumn 2023 in that the initial proposal to in effect combine Llanfair / St Hillary and Cowbridge is no longer being proposed. The other proposed changes to existing town boundaries, also including the inclusion of Darren Farm/ Clare Gardens within Cowbridge (from Penllyn) remain. There are no changes to Town Council Member numbers proposed and no consequential changes in terms of membership levels at Principal Authority level, although the community of Llanfair will no longer fall within Cowbridge at Principal Authority level. The details relating to Cowbridge with Llanblethian can be found at pages 47 to 56 of the report.

- 2.10 Penllyn** – The incorporation of Darren Farm / Clare Gardens into Cowbridge is as suggested previously by the Council. There are a total of 4 changes to existing community boundaries as set out on pages 57 to 64 of the report. The membership of the Community Council is proposed to be 9 Members (compared to 11 currently).
- 2.11 Dinas Powys** – A total of 7 changes are proposed to existing community boundaries. There are no changes recommended to be made to the number of Community Councillors per ward or in total and the same applies at Principal Authority level. The details can be found on pages 65 to 75 of the report.
- 2.12 Llandough, Michaelston and Leckwith** - The proposal that has been made to combine the Community Councils was supported at the previous consultation round and the report recommends a new community known as Llandough and Cwrtyrala. It is recommended that there be a total of 8 Councillors (Llandough – 6, Leckwith – 1 and Michaelston – 1). In terms of the consequential changes, the Commission recommends that the electoral ward becomes Llandough and Cwrtyrala, with 1 Member serving 1,834 electors. Full details appear on pages 76 to 80 of the report.
- 2.13 Llancarfan, St Nicholas & Bonvilston and Wenvoe** – The details in relation to these communities can be found on pages 81 to 105. In summary, the Community Council arrangements in Llancarfan consists of 2 wards, the same applies for St Nicholas and Bonvilston and the same applies in Wenvoe. In terms of proposals, it is proposed to create new Community wards for Dyffryn and Brooklands and also transfer of areas between a series of community wards. Many of these proposals were shared during the previous consultation. It is therefore proposed that Llancarfan is served by 7 Councillors (5 – Llancarfan and 2 – Llantrithyd). St Nicholas & Bonvilston will be served by 11 Councillors (4 – Bonvilston, 6 – St Nicholas and 1 – Dyffryn). Wenvoe will be served by 10 Councillors (4 – Brooklands and 6 – Wenvoe). In terms of consequential changes, there is a proposed change relating to St Georges-super-Ely and this is covered in the report under paragraph 2.14.
- 2.14 Peterston Super Ely and St Georges Super Ely** – The proposals are in line with those previously consulted upon and will see minor changes to the boundaries of the two community areas and their merger to create a single community ward with 7 Community Councillors. In relation to consequential changes, it is proposed that a new Principal Authority electoral ward be created which consists of Peterston Super Ely & St Georges Super Ely and Pendoylan and Welsh St Donats. These proposals are all detailed on pages 106 to 111 of the report.
- 2.15 Pendoylan and Welsh St Donats** - The proposals involve minor boundary changes to the two community wards and their merger to create a single Community Council of Pendoylan and Welsh St Donats with a total of 8 Community Councillors. (Pages 112 to 118 of the report).
- 2.16 Llandow, Llanfair and Llanmaes** - The proposals can be found on pages 119 to 124. In summary, the proposal is to create a single Community Council for the existing Councils of Llandow, Llanfair and Llanmaes with some alterations to existing boundaries between Llanmaes and Boverton (Llantwit Major). The

proposal involves a Community Council of 13 Councillors. As detailed on page 122, a new Principal Authority arrangement will cover this Community Council and the adjoining proposed Colwinston and Llangan (see paragraph 2.17 below).

- 2.17 Colwinston and Llangan** – Pages 125 to 128 details the proposals in relation to Colwinston and Llangan. In summary the proposal is to create a new community known as Colwinston and Llangan which represents the utilisation of the current two communities. A total of 7 Community Councillors are proposed (3 – Colwinston, 3 – Llangan, 1 – St Mary Hill). In terms of consequential changes, the new principal arrangement is detailed above in paragraph 2.16.
- 2.18 Ewenny and St Bride’s Major** – The proposal is to create a new community of Ewenny and St Brides Major. A total of 13 Councillors is proposed (3 – Ewenny, 6 – Ogmore by Sea, 4 – St Brides-Major). In terms of consequential changes to the principal area, the Commission recommends that the electoral ward of St Bride’s Major is made up of this new community and the new proposed community of St Donats and Wick (see below). The details are provided on pages 129 to 132 of the report.
- 2.19 St Donats and Wick** – The proposals are provided on pages 133 to 136 of the report. In summary, the proposals recommend the creation of a new community known as St Donats and Wick with 9 Councillors (Marcross – 1, Monkash – 1, St Donats – 2, Wick – 5). Consequential changes to the Principal area are considered above (paragraph 2.18)

#### **Next steps**

- 2.20** The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales has now completed its review of the Vale of Glamorgan Principal Community area. Its final recommendations have been submitted to Welsh Government on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. It is now for Welsh Government and its Ministers to consider the Boundary Commission’s recommendations and decide how to proceed and whether to make an Order. The recommendations can be taken forward either as submitted, or modified or it can take no action.
- 2.21** The report makes it clear that any further comments should be addressed to the Welsh Government no later than 6 weeks from the date of the Commission’s report (this being Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024). A postal and e-mail address is included in the report.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The review of community arrangements safeguards the long-term needs of local residents to ensure an effective and convenient local government and electoral equality.
- 3.2** The Vale of Glamorgan Council considered submissions to the review previously (during the Autumn of 2023) and those proposals had full regard to the above and desire to ensure effective collaboration between bodies.



- 3.3** The Commission have undertaken the review, but the Vale of Glamorgan Council has provided support to the Commission in ensuring the relevant notices are published and facilitating presentations to encourage engagement with stakeholders.

## **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** There are no direct climate change implications arising from the carrying out of the Review.

## **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 5.1** The final proposals put forward by the Commission for the consideration of the Welsh Government Minister would see a reduction in the number of community councils and clerk positions. This is a matter that was raised by the Community Liaison Committee in October 2023, and that concern was forwarded to the Commission at that time. A guidance note published by Welsh Government outlining key considerations for community and town councils affected by a community or electoral review has been circulated and shared previously as part of earlier reports.

### **Employment**

- 5.2** Other than the implication set out in paragraph 1 above, there are no other employment implications.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 5.3** Each Principal Council has a duty to monitor the communities in its area and, where appropriate, the electoral arrangements of such communities for the purpose of considering whether to make or recommend changes. These changes are brought about by means of community boundary reviews under s25 and community electoral reviews under s31 of the Act.
- 5.4** The statutory process for conducting a community review is set out in Part 3 of the Act. Section 34 of the Act stipulates the 'mandatory consultees' for a community review.
- 5.5** When conducting a community review the Principal Council must have regard to its statutory obligations – for example obligations under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Welsh Language Standards, and the Equality Act 2010, which will all influence and inform the conduct and decisions made during a community review.

## **6. Background Papers**

Local Democracy and Boundary commission for Wales – Review of the Community Arrangements of the Vale of Glamorgan. Final Recommendations Report (April 2024).