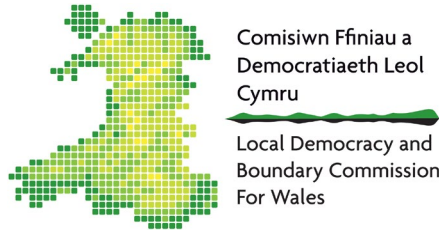


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Chair  
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
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03 January 2020

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Dear Mr Griffiths AM,

Thank you for the invitation to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission to provide verbal evidence to the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2020.

In preparation for the 9<sup>th</sup>, please find attached written evidence from the Commission in relation to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill.

I have also included the Commission's analysis of the extending the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds and its potential impact on the Commission's current electoral reviews.



**Shereen Williams**

*Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive*  
Comisiwn Ffiniau a Democratiaeth Leol Cymru  
Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales

## **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill Written Evidence Submission**

### **Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (The Commission)**

1. The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body established in its original form by the Local Government Act 1972 and under its current name and functions by the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. The Commission's duty under the legislation is to monitor the areas and electoral arrangements relevant to local government in Wales for the purpose of considering whether it is appropriate to make or recommend changes. In carrying out its duties the Commission must seek to ensure effective and convenient local government.
2. A framework has been agreed between the Commission and its Welsh Government Sponsor Division (Local Government Democracy Division). This sets out the framework within which the Commission operates and details the terms and conditions under which the Welsh Ministers provide grant-in-aid to the Commission.
3. Each year Welsh Ministers set out the Government's policy aims and areas of key performance indicators by means of a Remit Letter to the Commission. The Remit letter also includes details of the voted grant-in-aid figure and related budgetary control totals for the coming financial year.
4. The Commission's Secretariat also supports the Boundary Commission for Wales which is responsible for reviews of United Kingdom Parliament constituencies in Wales. The Secretariat is funded separately by the Cabinet Office for that work.

### **Electoral Review Arrangements of Principal Authorities**

5. The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (the 2013 Act) requires the Commission to conduct a review of the electoral arrangements for each principal area at least once every ten years. The ten-year period began at the beginning of October 2013 and ends at the end of September 2023.
6. Following a Ministerial request to suspend the start of the programme, in June 2016 the then Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government wrote to the Commission to request the commencement of a programme of electoral reviews to be completed in time for the 2022 local government elections. The Commission has since made considerable progress in undertaking this compressed programme of reviews of the electoral arrangements of the 22 principal authorities in Wales. So far, the Commission has submitted 11 Final Recommendation Reports to the Minister for Housing and Local Government which are currently awaiting Orders. The remaining reports will be submitted by the summer of 2021 at the latest to allow sufficient time for preparations for the elections to be made.

## **Sections of the Bill that have a direct impact on the work of the Commission**

7. Sections within parts 1, 7 and 9 of the Bill have a direct impact on the work of the Commission therefore we have focussed on those provisions.

## **Part 1 – Two voting systems and relevant sections relating to it & Part 7 – Mergers and Restructuring of Principal Areas**

8. The Commission's current Policy and Practice for the 2017 Electoral Reviews Programme is based on 'First Past the Post' (FPTP) system. This policy provides for recommendations to be made that each electoral ward will be represented with between one and four members depending on the characteristics of the ward.
9. Prior to commencing the 10-year electoral reviews programme in 2023, the Commission will review and consult on its Policy and Practice and Council size policy. If the legislation is passed the Commission intends to consult on the how reviews will be carried out in relation to the following four categories: -
  - a) Principal Authority utilising FPTP
  - b) Principal Authority utilising Single Transferrable Vote (STV)
  - c) Merged/Restructured Principal Authority utilising FPTP
  - d) Merged/Restructured Principal Authority utilising STV
10. Given the known work commitments of the Secretariat at this time, the Commission may require additional resources to carry out the engagement and consultation work necessary. This process will be essential as the Policy and Practice developed prior to 2023 will be the basis of all reviews to the end of 2033. The main impact on moving to an STV system of representation is that a review would likely be based on larger, multi – member electoral wards comprising between 3 to 6 members
11. In this current review cycle, the 22 reviews were scheduled in advance and programmed over four and a half years, with each review taking up to two years to meet the legislative requirements. It is anticipated that for the next programme, the reviews of Principal Authorities that have experienced significant growths in population would be done at the beginning of the cycle.
12. Currently, the Commission only has time to carry out one round of consultation on its Draft Proposals. It is hoped that within a 10-year cycle, there would be flexibility to carry out an additional round of consultation particularly in relation to proposals that are deemed to be contentious or where viable boundary changes are suggested during the Draft Proposals consultation period. This is likely to extend the review cycle by approximately six months.

13. In the event that the Commission is directed to start a new review as a result of 9 b, c or d above, the Commission would amend the reviews schedule to prioritise the affected Principal Authorities. If such directions would severely impact the Commission's ability to deliver a 10-year programme, the Commission would seek additional resources from the Sponsor Division to second additional staff to complete the work as it has done for the current compressed programme.

### **Part 1- Extension to the right to vote in local government elections**

14. In developing its Council Size policy, the Commission utilises census population figures in order to model the councillor numbers for each principal authority. This ensures that all residents, not just those eligible to vote are considered when determining Council size.

15. In the creation of electoral wards, the Commission is required to consider several factors. This includes the ratio of local government electors to the number of members of the council to be elected. The Commission also takes into account any discrepancy between electors registered and the number of persons that are eligible to vote as well as the projected electorate in five years' time to ensure that any recommendations made, take account of future growth patterns.

16. The census data and the data relating to number of persons eligible to vote but who are not on the electoral register are provided by the Office of National Statistics. The local government electors data and 5-year projections are provided by the principal authority.

17. The Commission was asked in its revised Remit Letter 2018/19 to provide an analysis of the effects of the extension of the electoral franchise and to consider the possible impact of such extension on the Commission's current electoral reviews. In its analysis of the extension to 16 and 17 year olds, the Commission utilised the only data set available to it which covers the whole of Wales and is broken down by age and existing electoral ward. These are the experimental mid-year estimates provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). There is no specific data available on the number of foreign nationals not presently eligible to vote broken down by wards within Wales. Our analysis of extending the franchise for 16 and 17 year olds has been included in this submission.

18. Our analysis confirmed that the residence of 16 and 17yr olds is usually spread out over the whole of the principal authority and not concentrated within particular electoral wards. The Commission is satisfied from the analysis of the data available to it, that the impact of the introduction of the 16 and 17 year olds to the registers would not have a significant effect on the outcome of the current reviews.

19. For reviews beyond 2022 the registers should be updated by the Electoral Registration officers to include both 16 and 17 year olds and foreign nationals

currently not eligible to vote in both the existing and projected figures. It is the Commission's view that the extension of the franchise to these categories would not have any detrimental effect to the conduct of reviews.

20. Prior to the next review programme the Commission will revise its Policy and Practice as well as its Council Size Policy to reflect the changes of extending the franchise where relevant.

### **Part 1 – Change of Electoral Cycles**

21. The main impact on the Commission of the proposed change to the electoral cycle from four to five years would be that more reviews could potentially be completed between each electoral cycle.

### **Part 1- Creation of an All Wales Electoral Registration database**

22. The Commission would be prepared to take on the responsibility of being the keeper of the database. A significant amount of pre- planning would be required to develop the capacity and capability of the Commission in terms of Resources, Staffing, Premises, IT and Security before it would be in a position to become the keeper.
23. If the Commission is responsible for maintaining the database there would be efficiency benefits as it would have direct access to complete and accurate electorate figures required to conduct reviews.

### **Part 9 – Appointment by the Commission of its chief executive**

24. The Commission welcomes the powers to appoint its chief executive, in consultation with the sponsor division within Welsh Government. This will bring it in-line with other WGSBs.

### **Part 9 – Directions under section 48 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013**

25. If the legislative changes referred to above take place the ability of the Minister to direct the Commission to conduct a further review, stop conducting a review or not conducting a review at all will be required to ensure that review work is conducted efficiently and effectively.

# LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES



Comisiwn Ffiniau a  
Democratiaeth Leol  
Cymru

Local Democracy and  
Boundary Commission  
For Wales

## ANALYSIS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE ELECTORAL FRANCHISE ON THE ELECTORAL REVIEW PROGRAMME 2017

DECEMBER 2018

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# LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

## ANALYSIS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE ELECTORAL FRANCHISE ON THE ELECTORAL REVIEW PROGRAMME 2017

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The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English.  
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Commission has been asked by the former Cabinet Secretary in his revised Remit Letter 2018/19 to provide an analysis of the effects of the extension of the electoral franchise and to consider the possible impact of such extension on the Commission's electoral reviews.

### Scope

- 1.2 The proposals to be put before the Senedd are to extend the local government franchise to include foreign nationals not presently eligible to vote and to lower the voting age to 16.
- 1.3 The Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013 sets out the legislative framework the Commission must operate under in the conduct of an electoral review. An electoral review is the review of electoral arrangements of a principal council, namely: the number of members for a council; the number and boundaries of the electoral ward a member represents; the number of members for each electoral ward; and, the name of each electoral ward.
- 1.4 In the consideration of the creation of electoral wards Section 30 (1) (a) sets out that the Commission must seek to ensure that the ratio of local government electors to the number of members of the council to be elected is, as nearly as may be, the same in every electoral ward in the principal area. Section 30 (4) defines a local government elector as "*...a person registered as a local government elector in the register of electors in accordance with the provisions of the Representation of the Peoples Acts.*". For the purpose of this work the Commission is assuming that Section 30 (4) is either to be amended or the relevant Representation of the Peoples Act is to be amended.
- 1.5 In this analysis the Commission has utilised the only data set available to it which covers the whole of Wales and is broken down by age and existing electoral ward. These are the experimental mid-year estimates provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). In this analysis it has looked at the latest published statistics available to it at the time of writing – the 2016 mid-year estimates.
- 1.6 Ideally, this analysis would utilise information from every council with the number of potential 16- and 17-year olds in their area, broken down by community and community ward. These community areas are the building blocks the Commission uses in the creation of electoral wards. However, only two councils at time of writing have begun piloting work within their council areas to begin the registering of 16- and 17-year olds and working with schools and others in the education of 10 to 17-year olds in their ability to become an attainer and vote at 16.
- 1.7 When all local authorities have updated their registers, a full analysis based on accurate and live data may be undertaken.
- 1.8 In this analysis the Commission has looked at the impact of adding those in the census data that are 16 and 17. A brief analysis was done looking at those who

## ANALYSIS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE ELECTORAL FRANCHISE

would be 16 in 2022 but the Commission did not proceed on that basis. The Commission is not confident that it can use the experimental mid-year estimates for those who were estimated to be 10 in 2016 (those who were 5 when the census was undertaken) and project those in their wards in 4-years' time based on a projection from 2011. The Commission conducts its reviews on the basis of the existing number of registered electors, not including attainers. Therefore, in order to conduct an as close to like-for-like analysis as is possible the Commission has applied the same principle to this analysis.

- 1.9 There is no specific data available on the number of foreign nationals not presently eligible to vote broken down by ward for Wales. However, all foreign nationals are included in the census and, as a consequence, the mid-year estimates published by the ONS which the Commission is utilising. By using this data, the Commission has included foreign nationals not presently eligible to vote in its analysis but cannot make specific reference to them as a data set. The analysis will, therefore, also include 16- and 17-year old foreign nationals not presently eligible to vote.

## 2. ANALYTICS

### Overview

2.1 As described in 1.5 the Commission has used the 2016 experimental mid-year estimates from the ONS to conduct the analysis. The number of population, population eligible to vote (18+) and 16- and 17-year olds has been broken down in two parts: By principal council; and, by electoral ward. The last breakdown is the most crucial in terms of analysis due to the way in which the Commission conducts its electoral reviews.

### Overall Council Data

2.2 The table below shows the total population: over 18; over 16; 16 and 17 only; the percentage of population and population eligible to vote (PETV); and, the standard deviation of its wards, broken down by principal council.

County	Total	18+	16+	16-17	16-17		Standard Deviation
					% Pop	% PETV	
Blaenau Gwent	69,628	55,915	57,583	1,668	2.40%	2.90%	0.32
Bridgend	143,177	114,114	117,412	3,298	2.30%	2.81%	0.50
Caerphilly	180,462	142,097	146,301	4,204	2.33%	2.87%	0.37
Cardiff	361,468	287,473	294,905	7,432	2.06%	2.52%	0.71
Carmarthenshire	185,610	148,522	152,764	4,242	2.29%	2.78%	0.48
Ceredigion	74,146	61,720	63,208	1,488	2.01%	2.35%	0.73
Conwy	116,538	95,074	97,703	2,629	2.26%	2.69%	0.57
Denbighshire	94,805	75,389	77,589	2,200	2.32%	2.84%	0.66
Flintshire	154,419	122,395	126,005	3,610	2.34%	2.86%	0.48
Gwynedd	123,627	100,135	102,727	2,592	2.10%	2.52%	0.77
Isle of Anglesey	69,723	56,243	57,728	1,485	2.13%	2.57%	0.36
Merthyr Tydfil	59,810	47,124	48,556	1,432	2.39%	2.95%	0.40
Monmouthshire	92,843	75,185	77,439	2,254	2.43%	2.91%	0.78
Neath Port Talbot	141,588	113,631	116,839	3,208	2.27%	2.75%	0.48
Newport	149,148	115,368	119,027	3,659	2.45%	3.07%	0.48
Pembrokeshire	123,954	99,744	102,645	2,901	2.34%	2.83%	0.53
Powys	132,160	107,664	110,896	3,232	2.45%	2.91%	0.94
Rhondda Cynon Taf	238,306	188,406	193,852	5,446	2.29%	2.81%	0.44
Swansea	244,513	197,178	202,551	5,373	2.20%	2.65%	0.50
Torfaen	92,052	72,995	75,146	2,151	2.34%	2.86%	0.56
Vale of Glamorgan	128,463	101,513	104,744	3,231	2.52%	3.08%	0.66
Wrexham	136,710	107,359	110,451	3,092	2.26%	2.80%	0.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,113,150</b>	<b>2,485,244</b>	<b>2,556,071</b>	<b>70,827</b>	<b>2.28%</b>	<b>2.77%</b>	<b>0.56</b>

Note: data used is ONS' experimental 2016 mid-year estimates.

## ANALYSIS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE ELECTORAL FRANCHISE

- 2.3 There are 70,827 16- and 17-year olds across Wales. This is 2.28% of the population and 2.77% of the population eligible to vote (16+). Whilst the greatest numbers are in the more populous council areas, the highest proportions of electors are in Newport (3.07%) and the Vale of Glamorgan (3.08%). The lowest proportion of potential electors are in Ceredigion (2.35%), Cardiff (2.52%) and Gwynedd (2.52%).
- 2.4 In terms of deviation there is a relatively small amount of deviation in each ward with an average deviation of 0.56 from their respective county average. The lowest deviations are in Blaenau Gwent (0.32), Caerphilly (0.37) and the Isle of Anglesey (0.36). Those with the most deviation in their wards are Gwynedd (0.77), Monmouthshire (0.78) and Powys (0.94).
- 2.5 The standard deviation is less than 1 for all of Wales. The overall impact of the addition of 16- and 17-year olds when considered on a whole county basis are negligible and consistent across the country. However, this is not how the Commission considers these statistics when conducting a review. A ward by ward analysis was therefore required.

## LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

### Electoral Ward Data

2.6 The table below shows the average percentage of 16- and 17-year olds of the total population over 16 eligible to vote; the minima and maxima wards in each authority as a percentage of population eligible to vote (PETV); and, the name of the ward, broken down by principal council.

County	%PETV	+	-	+	-
Blaenau Gwent	2.90%	3.45%	2.56%	Rassau	Abertillery
Bridgend	2.81%	3.95%	1.48%	Llangeinor	Coychurch Lower
Caerphilly	2.87%	3.71%	1.90%	Darren Valley	Risca West
Cardiff	2.52%	4.07%	0.60%	Adamsdown	Cathays
Carmarthenshire	2.78%	3.96%	1.65%	Felinfoel	Llanddarog
Ceredigion	2.35%	4.31%	0.75%	Llanbadarn Fawr-Padarn	Aberystwyth Canol/Central
Conwy	2.69%	4.10%	1.63%	Llasannan	Craig-y-Don
Denbighshire	2.84%	4.63%	1.76%	Rhyl South West	Tremeirchion
Flintshire	2.86%	3.91%	1.89%	Mold South	Hawarden
Gwynedd	2.52%	4.48%	0.52%	Groeslon	Garth
Isle of Anglesey	2.57%	2.99%	1.71%	Canolbarth Môn	Bro Aberffraw
Merthyr Tydfil	2.95%	3.55%	2.52%	Penydarren	Vaynor
Monmouthshire	2.91%	5.90%	1.53%	Dixton with Osbaston	Mardy
Neath Port Talbot	2.75%	3.60%	1.59%	Cadoxton	Britton Ferry East
Newport	3.07%	4.13%	2.08%	Pillgwenlly	Caerleon
Pembrokeshire	2.83%	4.08%	1.45%	Pembroke: Monkton	Tenby: South
Powys	2.91%	8.94%	1.66%	St. David Within	Llanwrtyd Wells
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2.81%	4.29%	1.78%	Rhydfelen Central/Ilan	Trallwng
Swansea	2.65%	4.02%	1.46%	Penderry	Castle
Torfaen	2.86%	4.12%	1.86%	Greenmeadow	Croesyceiliog North
Vale of Glamorgan	3.08%	4.83%	2.16%	Stanwell	St. Augustine's
Wrexham	2.80%	3.94%	1.84%	Little Acton	Erddig

Note: data used is ONS' experimental 2016 mid-year estimates.

2.7 As described in 2.5 the average deviation is not significant across council areas. There are however extremes; Garth in Gwynedd (-2.00%), Dixton with Osbaston in Monmouthshire (2.99%) and St David Within in Powys (6.03%). With these three wards excepted, the level of variance from the county average is less than 2% across Wales.

2.8 The Commission considers each ward within the local authority based on their variance from the proposed county average, as defined by the Commission Council Size Policy. The statutory duty in the Act sets out we must achieve a level of parity within each authority. In order to do this the Commission has a policy whereby there is an approximate rule for the appropriate level of variance it considers appropriate for this programme of reviews. The Commission considers that a level of variance in excess of +/-25% of the proposed county

## ANALYSIS OF THE EXTENSION OF THE ELECTORAL FRANCHISE

average is inappropriate, although the preference is always to improve electoral parity to as close to 0% as possible.

- 2.9 Furthermore, to assist a council and ensure there are no surprises in the Commission's proposals and recommendations, at the outset of a review the Commission colour codes each existing ward based on its variance from the proposed county average. Wards within +/-10% of the proposed county average are green; between +/-10% and +/-25% are yellow; between +/-25% and +/-50% are orange; and those in excess of +/-50% are red.
- 2.10 Due to the way the Commission considers each ward when conducting a review, the wards which are the extremes within their council area do not define whether it would affect how the Commission considers each ward within an electoral review. The wards must therefore be considered in another way.
- 2.11 In the table below is the total number of wards for each council; whether, when adding in 16- and 17-year olds, a ward has changed category; and, if that was a material change, i.e. it had moved from a yellow to an orange or vis a versa. If there is a material change the name of the ward is noted and the level of change is identified.

<b>County</b>	<b>Wards</b>	<b>Changed</b>	<b>Material</b>	<b>Ward Name</b>
Blaenau Gwent	16	0	0	
Bridgend	39	0	0	
Caerphilly	33	0	0	
Cardiff	29	1	0	
Carmarthenshire	58	0	0	
Ceredigion	40	1	0	
Conwy	38	0	0	
Denbighshire	30	1	1	Llanarmon-yn-Ial/Llandegla
Flintshire	57	2	1	Mostyn
Gwynedd	71	2	0	
Isle of Anglesey	11	0	0	
Merthyr Tydfil	11	0	0	
Monmouthshire	42	1	1	Dixton with Osbaston
Neath Port Talbot	42	0	0	
Newport	20	2	1	Pillgwenlly
Pembrokeshire	60	1	1	Scleddau
Powys	73	2	0	
Rhondda Cynon Taf	52	2	1	Hawthorn
Swansea	36	0	0	
Torfaen	24	1	1	Trevethin
Vale of Glamorgan	23	0	0	
Wrexham	47	1	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	

2.12 As can be seen in the table above, of the 852 wards in Wales only 17 of these (2.00%) change category. Of these only 7 (0.82%) change materially.

### 3. ANALYSIS – IMPACT ON REVIEWS

- 3.1 In this chapter the Commission has analysed the seven wards and the impact on those ongoing or completed reviews. Following that is an overall impact assessment and, finally, the Commission proposed next steps for this review programme and the one commencing in 2023.
- 3.2 The seven wards affected are: Dixton with Osbaston, Hawthorn, Llanarmon-yn-Ial/Llandegla, Mostyn, Pillgwenlly, Sceddau and Trevethin.

#### Dixton with Osbaston (Monmouthshire)

- 3.3 This ward sees the greatest overall increase from 24.9% of the county average to 28.9%. At 24.9% this ward would be marginal in terms of consideration to its continued viability. This decision would be informed by the projected figures and the representations received for the area. However, the Council has recently completed a community review and if the changes to this ward take place there would be very significant changes to this ward (the areas of Dixton and Osbaston are now in separate wards). It is therefore impossible for the Commission to consider this ward in its existing form as it would be inappropriate to do so.

#### Hawthorn (Rhondda Cynon Taf)

- 3.4 Similarly to Dixton with Osbaston, this ward too moves from 24.9%, by 0.3%, to 25.2%. This ward would be a marginal one in terms of consideration to its continued viability. However, this ward is highly likely to change in the ongoing electoral review of RCT. The foremost reason is, within the present register of electors the ward is 35.3% of the proposed county average. This alone is an inappropriate level of variance. If the population trend is matched in the registered electorate, an increase by 0.3%, this would increase the inappropriate level of variance further.

#### Llanarmon-yn-Ial/Llandegla (Denbighshire)

- 3.5 This ward changes from 25.2% to 24.8% from the proposed county average. This ward, in isolation, could be considered by the Commission to have an appropriate level of variance, albeit marginal. However, the ward is located next to Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd/Llangynhafal. When we look at the electorate for these wards in the ongoing review, the Llanarmon-yn-Ial/Llandegla ward is 28% above the proposed county average and Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd/Llangynhafal is 25% below the proposed county average. If the population trend is matched in the registered electorate, a decrease by 0.4% there would continue to be an inappropriate level of variance. Furthermore, by moving one community between the two wards, as the Commission has proposed in its Draft Proposals, the two new wards have significantly improved levels of variance at 18% and -11% from the proposed county average.



### Mostyn (Flintshire)

3.6 This ward changes from 25.1% to 24.8% from the proposed county average. This ward, in isolation, could be considered by the Commission to have an appropriate level of variance, albeit marginal if the review were conducted using this data. When we look at the electorate for this ward in the ongoing review, it is 23% below the proposed county average. This ward, in isolation, could be considered by the Commission to have an appropriate level of variance, albeit marginal. The surrounding wards are also of an appropriate level of variance.

### Pillgwenlly (Newport)

3.7 This ward too moves from 24.9%, by 1.3%, to 26.2%. This ward would be marginal in terms of consideration to its continued viability, if the review were conducted using this data. When we look at the electorate for this ward (taken from the June 2018 registers), it is 15% above the proposed county average. This ward, in isolation, could be considered by the Commission to have an appropriate level of variance. If the population trend is matched in the registered electorate, an increase of 1.3%, there would continue to be an appropriate level of variance.

### Scleddau (Pembrokeshire)

3.8 This ward moves from -24.3%, by -0.9%, to -25.2%. This ward would be marginal in terms of consideration to its continued viability. However, this ward is likely to change in the ongoing electoral review of Pembrokeshire. The ward is located next to Dinas Cross and Llanrhian. When we look at the electorate for these wards in the ongoing review, the Dinas Cross ward is 17% below the proposed county average, Llanrhian is 22% below the proposed county average and Scleddau is 27% below the proposed county average. If the population trend is matched in the registered electorate, a decrease by 0.9%, there would continue to be an inappropriate level of variance. By altering the warding arrangements for this area, as the Commission has proposed in its Draft Proposals, the three new wards have significantly improved levels of variance at -1%, -9% and 5 electors from the proposed county average.

### Trevethin (Torfaen)

3.9 This ward too moves from -25.3%, by -0.9%, to -24.4%. This ward would be a marginal one in terms of consideration to its continued viability. However, this ward is likely to change in the ongoing electoral review of Torfaen. The ward is located next to St. Cadocs and Penygarn. When we look at the electorate for these wards in the completed review, the St. Cadocs and Penygarn ward is 25% below the proposed county average and Trevethin is 29% below the proposed county average. If the population trend is matched in the registered electorate, an increase by 0.9%, there would continue to be an inappropriate level of variance. By altering the warding arrangements for this area, as the Commission has recommended, the new ward (covering the whole of the Community of Trevethin) has a significantly improved level of variance at 9% from the proposed county average.

3.10 As can be seen from the analysis above, the seven affected wards by the introduction of 16- and 17-year olds to the electorate, is negligible and would not affect the Commission's proposals or ongoing reviews.

### **Overall Impact Assessment – Current Electoral Review Programme**

3.11 The Commission is satisfied, following the analysis it has conducted on the data available to it, that the impact of the introduction of 16- and 17-year olds to the registers would be negligible. The overall picture shows that there is a very consistent picture across Wales with a less than 1% average deviation from the existing eligible electorate. Furthermore, when considering individual wards, the impact is also negligible. The way the Commission conducts reviews and the present distribution of electorate across the principal areas results in 0.82% of wards being potentially materially affected. As can be seen above, even these seven wards, due to their specific circumstances and the Commission's statutory duty to improve electoral parity, do not cause concern for the Commission in terms of the decisions made to date.

3.12 It is therefore the view of the Commission that the current review programme should be unaffected by the proposed extension to the franchise and the reviews should be completed in accordance with its current policies, procedures and the 2013 Act.

### **Initial Impact Assessment – 2023 Electoral Review Programme**

3.13 It is anticipated that by the start of the first review of the 2023 Programme, the extension of the franchise will have become law and that one local government election will have been conducted on that basis. The 22 Principal Councils will have updated their registers and procedures and a programme of educating potential electors will be underway across schools in Wales.

3.14 These underlying assumptions being correct, the Commission proposes no fundamental change to the way it would conduct reviews as a result of the extension of the franchise. It is the view of the Commission that 16- and 17-year olds will be included in the registers at the start of a review and that those potentially eligible to vote will be including in a council's calculations for their five-year projections.

3.15 The Commission will, during its meetings before the commencement of the reviews, ensure that the councils are reminded of their responsibilities to ensure there is a consistent approach to reviews across Wales.

3.16 Prior to the outset of the next programme of reviews, the Commission will draft and consult on a new policy and practice document, including a council size policy. The Commission will conduct a further analysis of the impact of the extension of the franchise prior to that publication, once the full and accurate data is available. The Commission may, at that point, include any changes in its policy and practice document. If there have been any material changes as a result of the extension of the franchise these will be taken into account in the scheduling

of the next review programme. This is presently the case where there are greater or lesser increases in electorate than the 5-year projections had anticipated in this programme. Where these are shown in the variances of wards within councils, the council areas affected are likely to be reviewed earlier in the programme.

## APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Commission</b>	The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales.
<b>Directions</b>	Directions issued by Welsh Ministers under Section 48 of the Act.
<b>Electoral wards</b>	The areas into which principal areas are divided for the purpose of electing county councillors, previously referred to as electoral divisions.
<b>Electoral review</b>	A review in which the Commission considers the electoral arrangements for a principal council.
<b>Electorate</b>	The number of persons registered to vote in a local government area.
<b>Order</b>	Order made by an implementing body, giving effect to proposals made by the principal council or the Commission.
<b>Population Eligible to Vote (PETV)</b>	The number of persons whom may be eligible to vote as determined by age group. In this document that can mean those 18 and over, or those 16 and over.
<b>Principal area</b>	The area governed by a principal council in Wales: a county or county borough
<b>Principal council</b>	The single tier organ of local government, responsible for all or almost all local government functions within its area. A county or county borough council.
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	A measure that is used to quantify the amount of variation or dispersion of a set of data values. A low standard deviation indicates that the data points tend to be close to the mean (average) of the set, while a high standard deviation indicates that the data points are spread out over a wider range of values.
<b>The Act</b>	The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013

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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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26<sup>th</sup> September 2018

### Remit Letter 2018/19 - Revised

I wrote to you on the 10 May 2018 setting out the objectives for the Commission in 2018/19. At that point, the Welsh Government was consulting on three options for reform set out in the Green Paper 'Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People' and I said the objectives might need to be revised.

The consultation finished on the 12 June and the implications for the Commission's work for this year are now clear as the Welsh Government has decided not to proceed with comprehensive mergers outlined in the Green Paper at this time. This is on the basis of local government continuing to work with the Welsh Government to deliver reform.

However, the current work programme of the Commission therefore still needs to take account of the elements of the reform of local government relevant to the Commission's work such as the electoral reforms. In particular, as set out in the White Paper of June 2017 and in the Oral Statement I made to Plenary in January 2018, it is the intention of the Welsh Government to extend the franchise to 16/17 year olds and all foreign nationals for the 2022 local government elections. I expect the Commission to consider the implications of this as part of its electoral reviews.

The objectives, therefore for the Commission remain as:

- To continue with the electoral review programme with the aim of completing all 22 reviews in accordance with the published timetable;

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- To ensure that all aspects of reviews are quality assured;
- To take forward the project for new ITC provision in conjunction with Qualifications Wales;

And, in addition:

To provide me with an analysis of the effects of the extension of the electoral franchise, as described above, and a consideration of the possible impact of such extension on electoral reviews, and of the action, if it is considered necessary, taken by the Commission following its consideration

The budget of the Commission remains the same.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alun', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**Alun Davies AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Lywodraeth Leol a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus  
Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services