

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>6th JUNE, 2017</b>
<b>PWNC</b>	<b>REVIEW OF GWYNEDD ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Senior Manager (Corporate Support)</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>To submit draft proposals to the full Council with a view to their submission to the Boundary Commission</b>

## **Background**

1. At its meeting on 2 March, the Council received a report on the Boundary Commission's review of the Gwynedd Council electoral boundaries. The report which explains the background of the review can be seen by clicking on the following link:-

<https://democracy.cyngor.gwynedd.gov.uk/ielistdocuments.aspx?cid=130&mid=1657&ver=4>

2. The Commission's proposals are driven by their own policies including a policy document on the size of councils that is appended to this report. In implementing those policies, the Commission's proposals are likely to lead to a reduction in the number of members on the Council from the current 75 to approximately 67 at the time of the 2022 election, with a further reduction to follow. There is an opportunity for the Council to seek to influence these proposals and the full Council agreed to ask officers to create draft proposals to be shared with all Council members following the election. It should be noted that the proposals have been created mainly to address problems in constituencies which could be under threat as a result of the Commission's work. In some situations, this has resulted in consequential changes in neighbouring constituencies.

3. For Gwynedd, the Boundary Commission has proposed that the average number of electors for each member should be 1,243 electors. Clearly, every constituency is different and it is not practical to adhere too stringently to this figure in every case. Therefore, the aim of the draft proposals is to allow for a variance of up to 25% above or below that figure, based on the sorts of variance allowed by the Commission in the past.

4. Another principle which is at the core of these proposals is to seek to reduce the number of two-member constituencies in the county. The Council's opinion is, where geography and the nature of communities allow, single-member constituencies should be sought in order to simplify accountability for the electors.

6. It is important to emphasise one other thing before elaborating on the specific proposals. While the Council fully understands that there are many elements which affect councillors' workload, the only consideration which the Commission will give any attention to in reality is the number of electors. Therefore, although reference can be made to population not on the electoral register including seasonal population or student population when submitting observations, in reality, these are not considerations which the Commission will address. This needs to be challenged with the Boundary Commission being asked to justify this in terms of the need for effective local representation for the whole population.

## **No Changes**

7. 1 Currently, it is suggested that the Council does not propose any changes to the following constituencies because, in general, they are comfortably within the sort of size that are likely to be acceptable to the Commission:-

**Arfon** – Arllechwedd, Bethel, Deiniolen, Dewi (Bangor), Gerlan, Glyder (Bangor), Llanberis, Llanrug, Ogwen, Pentir, Penygroes, Tregarth and Mynydd Llandygai, Felinheli.

**Dwyfor** – Criccieth, Dolbenmaen, Llanystumdwy, Nefyn, Porthmadog (East), Porthmadog (West), Porthmadog (Tremadog), Pwllheli (South), Pwllheli (North)

**Meirionnydd** – Barmouth, Brithdir and Llanfachreth / Y Ganllwyd / Llanelltyd, Bowydd and Rhiw, Corris and Mawddwy, Dolgellau (South), Dolgellau (North), Penrhyndeudraeth, Bala.

7.2 It is worth noting that there are two constituencies in Dwyfor for which we are not suggesting any change at present but which the Commission might consider changes, if not this year, then certainly by the review following the elections in 2022. The constituency of Dolbenmaen (with 920 electors) is a little under the threshold set at 25% lower than the average and the constituency of Porthmadog (Tremadog) (with 943 electors) currently with a little over that threshold. No change is suggested at present, but, if the need to change arises, the only possibility which could be considered is splitting the ward of Porthmadog (Tremadog) so that some of the wards in the area are merged with the Dolbenmaen constituency and others would move to one of two other constituencies in Porthmadog. That would result in a reduction of one seat.

### **Specific Proposals to Change**

8. The following are specific area-based proposals to change electoral boundaries for the committee to discuss and come to a conclusion about.

#### **8.1 Bangor City Area**

It must be acknowledged that the number of electors in Bangor has reduced significantly following substantial in the number on the electoral register, because everyone must register individually.

This results in the following draft proposals for consideration:-

- Menai Constituency - the ward will change from being a two-member constituency to be a single-member constituency with approximately 939 electors, that is very close to the lower limit
- Marchog Constituencies - the ward will change from being a two-member constituency to be a single-member constituency with approximately 1,558 electors
- Hendre, Hiraël, Deiniol and Garth Constituencies (total of approximately 2,952) - It is suggested that new boundaries are drawn up for these constituencies - creating two or three constituencies with one member each for the two or three constituencies. We welcome proposals for those boundaries. While a two-member constituency is possible, the Council's wish is not to have two-member constituencies if it can be avoided.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

There are clearly issues with Bangor in terms of the demands on councillor workload created by the student population and it seems unreasonable that those are not reflected in the Boundary Commission's work. However, given those limitations, Councillor Steve Collings has suggested that it would appear that the most sensible groupings at the moment would appear to be combining Garth-Hiraël into a new seafront constituency, and Deiniol-Hendre into a new high street / city centre constituency.

Bangor City Council's views have been sought and it is hoped to report those views to the meeting.

## 8.2 Caernarfon Town Area

Some suggestions are made to refine the boundaries in the town of Caernarfon, using the clear and obvious natural boundaries of Llanberis Road and the Link Road through the town.

This leads to a proposal to reduce the size of the Menai constituency to approximately 1,500, reduce the size of the Cadnant constituency to approximately 1,307 and increase the size of the Peblig constituency to approximately 1,485.

This leaves the situation of the current Seiont constituency which, as a result of the aforementioned changes, would be a two-member constituency with approximately 2,392. The Council has a choice to continue with a two-member constituency or splitting it into two constituencies - the Caernarfon Town Centre Constituency of approximately 1,177 and the Hendre Constituency of approximately 1,215 electors. These figures could change as we require local input in to the exact split between the two constituencies.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Caernarfon Town Council's views were sought and it is hoped to report those views to the meeting.

In terms of local observations, Councillor Roy Owen disagrees with the proposals whereas Councillor Cai Larsen has agreed that they are sensible but that it would be necessary to look at the location and suitability of the polling stations in the new Seiont and Hendre constituencies. Councillors Ioan Thomas and Jason Parry have also expressed their support for the proposals.

## 8.3 Ffestiniog Area

While the Bowydd and Rhiw area is fine as it is, the Diffwys and Maenofferen constituency with 750 electors is too small as it is and the Teigl constituency (1,315) is a little larger than the average. The two constituencies together would make a constituency of 2,065 electors which can justify two members. As the Council is seeking to avoid two-member constituencies, it is suggested that a new boundary is established between the Diffwys and Maenofferen constituency and the Teigl constituency, across Manod Road, which creates two single-member constituencies.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Councillor Glyn Daniels is in agreement with moving the boundary to increase the size of the Diffwys and Maenofferen constituency. Ffestiniog Town Council have proposed a natural community boundary higher up Manod Road but this unlikely to satisfy the Boundary Commission since it would only bring the size of the constituency to a little over 800 electors.

## 8.4 Tywyn Area

The Tywyn constituency is currently a two-member constituency of 2,388. As the Council is seeking to avoid two-member constituencies, it is suggested that two new constituencies are established; Tywyn (Morfa) with 1,240 electors and Tywyn West (1,094), leaving Tywyn (East) with 54 members.

For the time being, it is suggested that these should sit with Tywyn West unless it needs to be linked with the Aberdyfi and Pennal constituency to increase the size of that constituency from 884 to 938 (which is just about within the variance of 25% that we have tried to provide for). However, there are forecasts of further reductions in the number of electors in Aberdyfi and Pennal by 2022 to fewer than 800, which appears to be unsustainable to the future.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Councillors Anne Lloyd-Jones and Mike Stevens have expressed their support for the proposals.

#### 8.5 Abersoch, Aberdaron, Botwnnog, Tudweiliog, Morfa Nefyn and Llanbedrog Area

Various existing constituencies require attention in this area with the constituencies of Abersoch (523) Llanbedrog (734), Aberdaron (724) Tudweiliog (660) Morfa Nefyn and Edern (897) and Llangian (503) all too small to warrant individual seats according to the Commission's guidelines, and there are three options for consideration:-

##### Option 1

Merging the constituencies of Llanbedrog (768) and Llangian (503) to create one new constituency of 1,271 electors (all from the community of Llanbedrog) and one ward from Llanengan.

Merging the constituencies of Abersoch (523), Llanengan (333) and Botwnnog (246) to create one new constituency of 1,102 electors (two Community areas - the rest from the community of Llanengan and one ward from the Botwnnog community).

Merging the community wards of North, South and East Aberdaron (733), Bryncroes (265) and Mellteyrn (213) to create one new constituency of 1,211 electors (all from the community of Aberdaron and two wards from Botwnnog).

Merging the constituencies of Tudweiliog (660) and Morfa Nefyn and Edern (897) to create one new constituency of 1,557 electors (one area including one entire community council area (Tudweiliog) and part of the Nefyn community).

NB This all results in a reduction of three members.

##### Option 2

It is suggested that natural boundaries within the community should be followed, namely Coed y Fron cross-road, with one constituency for the Llanbedrog community extending from Penrhos to the Coed y Fron cross-road, which includes Llanbedrog (768) and Mynytho up to Coed y Fron (about 450) (A single-member constituency with approximately 1,218 electors). The other constituency would be for the Llanengan community from the Coed y Fron cross-road which would include the remainder of Llangian (about 53 electors beyond Mynytho), Llanengan (333) and Abersoch (523) with the Botwnnog ward itself leaving a single-member constituency with approximately 1,155 electors.

This would leave the following changes for the other constituencies:-

Merging the community wards of North, South and East Aberdaron (733), Bryncroes (265) and Mellteyrn (213) to create one new constituency of 1,211 electors (all from the community of Aberdaron and two wards from Botwnnog).

Merging the constituencies of Tudweiliog (660) and Morfa Nefyn and Edern (897) to create one new constituency of 1,557 electors (one area including one entire community council (Tudweiliog) and part of the Nefyn community).

NB This all results in a reduction of three members.

Option 3 - Another option was considered, namely:

Merging the existing constituencies of Abersoch (523) and Llanengan (836) to create one new constituency of 1,359 electors (one Community Council area).

Merging the constituencies of Aberdaron (733) and Botwnnog (724) to create a new constituency of 1,457 electors (two entire Community Councils).

Merging the constituencies of Tudweiliog (660) and Morfa Nefyn and Edern (897) to create one new constituency of 1,557 electors (two entire Community Council areas).

NB This all results in a reduction of three members but does not address the situation of the Llanbedrog constituency which is under threat as it has only 768 electors.  
(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Correspondence was received from Botwnnog Community Council expressing concern on the numbers criteria that the Commission is using and its impact on representation for rural areas arising from huge rural constituencies.

Discussions have been held with local members with some expressing view on the basis of the options on the table, Of the options on the table, Councillors Angela Russell, Dewi Wyn Roberts and John Brynmor Hughes favour Option 2 and Councillor Gareth Williams favours Option 3. However, the members' main concern was the reduction of three in the numbers of councillors in the area arising from all these options and its impact on effective local representation for the whole population. Discussions are continuing amongst the local members and it is likely that another proposal will be reported verbally at the committee.

#### 8.6 Trawsfynydd, Harlech, Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr Area

Various existing constituencies require attention in this area with the constituency of Llanbedr (789) too small according to the Commission's guidelines, and other constituencies which will require attention in the longer-term in relation to their size. There are two options for consideration:-

##### Option 1

Changing four seats (Trawsfynydd, Harlech, Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr) into three, affecting Dyffryn Ardudwy (1,179), Llanbedr (442), Llanfair (347) Harlech (1,045), Talsarnau (428), Maentwrog (428) and Trawsfynydd (672). Therefore, the new constituencies would be:-

One seat - Harlech, Talsarnau and Llanfair (1820) (three entire community council areas)

One seat - Llanbedr and Dyffryn Ardudwy (1,621) (two entire community council areas)

One seat - Trawsfynydd and Maentwrog - no change (one community council area)

NB This proposal would result in a reduction of 1 seat.

##### Option 2

Option 2 was another that was under consideration; however, it was thought that the proposed constituency for Trawsfynydd, Talsarnau and Maentwrog did not make sense in terms of local community links.

Changing four existing seats (Trawsfynydd, Harlech, Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr) into three, affecting Dyffryn Ardudwy (1,179), Llanbedr (442), Llanfair (347) Harlech (1,045), Talsarnau (428), Maentwrog (428) and Trawsfynydd (672). Therefore, the new constituencies would be:-  
One seat - Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr (1,621) (two entire community council areas)  
One seat - Llanfair, Harlech without Talsarnau (1,392) (two entire community council areas)  
One seat - Talsarnau, Maentwrog and Trawsfynydd (1,534) (three entire community council areas)

NB This would result in a reduction of 1 seat.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Councillor Elfed Roberts has stated that he has no strong feelings either way on these options

### 8.7 Llanrug Area

There is a need to refine the situation in the Llanrug area in order to even-out the constituencies by dealing with the communities of Cwm y Glo (438), Brynrefail (224) and Ceunant (305) and also Penisarwaun (560) and Rhiwlas (533).

Two modified constituencies are proposed:-

One constituency of Cwm y Glo, Brynrefail and Ceunant (967)

One constituency of Penisarwaun and Rhiwlas (1,093)

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Councillors Charles Jones and Berwyn Parry Jones are in favour of this proposal, that has also been supported by Llanrug Community Council. Councillor Elwyn Jones' wish would be to retain the Penisarwaun constituency as it is.

### 8.8 Bontnewydd, Llanfaglan and Caeathro Area

The local community links within the existing constituency of Bontnewydd suggest that the boundaries need to be revised.

It is suggested that the existing constituencies of Bontnewydd and Llanfaglan (840) and Caeathro (213) are merged to create one new constituency of 1,053 (one community council area and one ward from the Waunfawr community).

(Maps showing the current boundaries and the new proposals are being sent in a separate e-mail)

### 8.9 Waunfawr, Betws Garmon and Rhyd-Ddu Area

Changes to these constituencies have come about to some extent as a result of the proposed change for Bontnewydd, Llanfaglan and Caeathro but it also suggests a more suitable community connection between the three villages in question.

It is suggested that Waunfawr (870) Betws Garmon (121) and Rhyd-Ddu (61) are merged to create one new constituency of 1,052 (a ward from the Waunfawr community and the entire community of Betws Garmon).

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

#### 8.10 Dinas and Dinas Dinlle Area

This again is a change which seeks to respond to the change in the Bontnewydd area to some extent but it also seeks to use the communities surrounding and under the A499 highway as a fairly natural boundary between communities.

Merging the constituencies of Dinas (499) and Dinas Dinlle (435) is suggested to create one new constituency of 934 electors (one ward from the community of Llandwrog and one ward from the community of Llanwnda).

(Maps showing the current boundaries and the new proposals are being sent in a separate e-mail)

#### 8.11 Llanllyfni, Talysarn, Nantlle and Nebo Area

The existing ward of Talysarn (which includes Carmel) has been the subject of local discussion for some time because of the obvious natural boundary between the two main areas of the constituency and there are various small communities within the constituency. Merging Llanllyfni (513) Talysarn (714) Nantlle (152) and Nebo (253) to create one new constituency of 1,612 (the entire Llanllyfni Community Council with the exception of Penygroes).

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Councillor Dilwyn Lloyd has stated that he is not opposed to the suggestion but that the new constituency (Groeslon, Carmel a Ceserea – see below) would have very varied demography.

#### 8.12 Groeslon, Carmel and Ceserea Area

This is a change now which deals with the rest of the Talysarn ward which is affected by the aforementioned change. It also reflects recent community changes including establishing a new school for the area.

It is therefore suggested that Groeslon (849) Carmel (396) and Ceserea (241) are merged to create one new constituency of 1,486 (the entire Llandwrog Community Council with the exception of Dinas Dinlle ward).

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

#### 8.13 Rhostryfan and Rhosgadfan Area

Another change suggested proposes following more of the area's natural community boundaries. The existing constituency of Llanwnda crosses one of those boundaries and runs from Saron at one end, across the A499 to the highest end of Rhosgadfan.

It is suggested that a more meaningful community unit is created by merging villages which are natural neighbours, namely Rhostryfan (515) and Rhosgadfan (433) to create one new constituency of 948 (the entire Llanwnda Community Council with the exception of Dinas ward which it is suggested should move to be with Dinas Dinlle). There is some concern about the size of these constituencies in 2022 but the proposal put forward is a sensible one at present.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

#### 8.14 Clynnog, Trefor, Llithfaen and Ffôr Area

Various existing constituencies require attention in this area with the constituency of Clynnog with only 713 electors requiring specific attention. There are two options for consideration:-

##### Option 1

Merging Clynnog (723) and Trefor (528) is suggested to create one new constituency of 1,241 (two community council areas).

This would also lead to an associated change by merging Llithfaen (243), Carnguwch (30), Llanaelhaearn (238) and Ffôr (540) to create one new constituency of 1,051 (an area covering three Community Councils)

The result of Option 1 would be a reduction of one seat.

##### Option 2:-

Merging with Nebo ward from the Llanllyfni Community (236) - This would create a constituency of 946 but would be unlikely to create a comprehensible geographical unit as the community of Nebo would be expected to look to Llanllyfni not Clynnog. It would also cross Community and Area boundaries.

In terms of natural connections, the most obvious connections for Clynnog are with the Trefor and Llanaelhaearn area but the existing seat also includes Pantglas.

NB The result of Option 2 would be a reduction of one seat again.

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

Option 3 (An option proposed by Councillor Aled Wyn Jones) is that the current constituency of Llanaelhaearn (1,151) remain as it is, although calling it "Yr Eifl" would be more sensible. The Nebo ward would then be added to Clynnog bringing that constituency up to 946 electors (that is still a small constituency in the Commission's terms), coming from the Llanllyfni constituency reducing the size of that constituency to a more reasonable 1,379. This would address concerns from Pistyll Community Council about joining small rural communities with larger and very different areas.

This would mean no reduction in members

#### 8.15 Abererch, Efail Newydd, Pentre Uchaf and Buan Area

There are numerous small communities in this area and the community links that need to be protected must be considered when the Commission's changes are put forward.

For the time being, the suggestion is to merge Abererch (449) Efail Newydd (367) and Pentre Uchaf (252) and the entire Community of Buan (379) to create one new constituency of 1,447 (an area across two Community Councils).

This, together with the change proposed in 8.14 would lead to a reduction of 1 member  
(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)



### 8.16 Penllyn Area

This area needs to be refined a little to safeguard the situation of some small constituencies which could be under threat.

It is suggested that two wards (Cwm y Glyn) and (Llanycil) are swapped between the two current constituencies, keeping two seats so that there would be three seats in the whole area, namely Bala and also Penllyn West - Llanuwchllyn (494), Cwm y Glyn (83) and Llanycil (323) (a constituency of 900) and Penllyn East - Gwalia (125), Llan y Betws (456) and Llanfor (347) (a constituency of 928). Looking to the future, the constituencies are small, but this is inevitable in such a rural area. (Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

### 8.17 Llanegryn, Brynchrug and Friog Area

The situation of the constituencies in the area needs to be addressed. (Brynchrug and Llanfihangel has only 755 electors currently while the constituency of Llangelynnin has 1,577 electors). It is suggested that the Llanegryn ward is moved from one constituency to the other in order to create two re-organised constituencies:-

Llanegryn, Brynchrug and Llanfihangel = 1,000 (three Community Council areas)

Y Friog, Islaw'r Dre and Llangelynnin = 1,332 (two Community Council areas)

(Maps showing the current boundaries and what is being proposed are attached)

### **Summary**

9. The committee is invited to:-

- a. Submit recommendations to the full Council on proposals by this Council to the Boundary Commission.
- b. Recommend to the Council that it presses again on the Boundary Commission that it again considers the need for effective local representation on the impact of those not on the electoral register when preparing their proposals.