

Boundary Commission for Scotland

Corporate Plan 2012 - 2015

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Boundary Commission for Scotland Corporate Plan 2012-2015

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1 Introduction

This Corporate Plan sets out the main activities to be undertaken by the Boundary Commission for Scotland during the period 2012-13 to 2014-15 and forecasts the required resources and expenditure. The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for the latter years covered by this Plan will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

2 Boundary Commission for Scotland

2.1 Duties and Powers

The Boundary Commission for Scotland was established in its current form by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986. Our duties and powers are detailed in the 1986 Act and in Schedule 1 of the Scotland Act 1998. We are responsible for reviews of:

- constituencies in Scotland for the United Kingdom Parliament; and
- constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament.

The 1986 Act was substantially amended in February 2011 by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011. Although this was after the previous Corporate Plan was written, the provisions of the Act were largely as anticipated when that Corporate Plan was prepared.

We are an advisory Non-departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored and wholly funded by the Scotland Office. We are an independent and non-political body.

2.2 Membership

Our membership comprises a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and two further Commissioners. In addition, we also have two ex-officio Assessors.

2.2.1 Chairman

Our ex-officio Chairman is the Speaker of the House of Commons. In practice, the Chairman takes no part in our business.

2.2.2 Deputy Chairman

The Deputy Chairman is a judge of the Court of Session, appointed by the Lord President of the Court of Session. The Deputy Chairman is currently The Honourable Lord Woolman who was appointed from 1 January 2009 for a 4 year term ending on 31 December 2012.

2.2.3 Commissioners

In addition to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, Commissioners are appointed on a term basis and posts are filled through open competition using the procedures laid down by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Appointments are made by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

These Commissioners are:

- Mr Kenneth McDonald, appointed from 7 June 2007 for a 4 year term, and re-appointed for a further 4 years ending on 6 June 2015;
- Mrs Paula Sharp, appointed from 1 January 2011 for a 4 year term ending on 31 December 2014.

2.2.4 Assessors

Our two ex-officio Assessors are the Registrar General for Scotland and the Director General of Ordnance Survey.

2.3 Secretariat

We are supported by a small Secretariat. The work of the Secretariat includes:

- facilitating boundary reviews;
- dealing with the everyday administrative matters relating to our business such as finance, purchasing and accommodation;
- liaising with other UK Boundary Commissions and government departments with an interest in boundary matters;
- maintaining contact with Ordnance Survey and other relevant bodies on boundary related issues;
- maintaining links with organisations involved with electoral matters;
- improving and extending our published information explaining our work;
- responding to correspondence on our work and constituency boundary issues;
- providing ongoing training as appropriate to meet staff and review requirements; and
- continuing to meet all financial and other requirements of our Financial Memorandum and other key sponsorship documents.

The Secretariat also supports the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland which is responsible for reviewing electoral ward and local authority areas in Scotland. The Secretariat is funded separately by the Scottish Government for that work.

Secretariat staff are assigned from the Scottish Government. Staff numbers are dependent on the volume of review activity and the need to develop, maintain and update information systems and respond to enquiries etc.

3 Changes to legislation

3.1 Scotland Bill

The Government introduced the Scotland Bill into the House of Commons in November 2010. At the time of writing, the Bill has completed its passage through the House of Commons, and is awaiting its Committee Stage in the House of Lords. The Bill primarily deals with other matters, but proposes a number of technical amendments to Schedule 1 of the Scotland Act 1998. These amendments are minor, and will make no practical difference to our reviews of Scottish Parliament boundaries.

4 Planned activities

4.1 Year 2012-13

4.1.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

We will continue to progress the Sixth Review of UK Parliament Constituencies, on which we started work in March 2011. During 2012-13, we expect to:

- consider the evidence submitted during the public consultation on the Initial Proposals;
- develop Revised Proposals for constituencies;
- publish Revised Proposals for consultation;
- consider the evidence submitted during the public consultation on the Revised Proposals; and
- develop our Final Recommendations for constituencies, and start drafting the report of the review.

Scottish Parliament Reviews

No activity expected.

4.1.2 Membership

Lord Woolman's current appointment as Deputy Chairman ends on 31 December 2012. The Secretariat will work with the Scotland Office and the Lord President of the Court of Session to make arrangements for the period after that date.

4.1.3 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2012-13 are expected to be:

- £357,740

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2012-13 is expected to be:

- 4.20 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A. These costs are expected to be met by a resource allocation which is subject to the approval of Parliament.

4.1.4 Performance indicators

Success in the year will be judged by the following indicators:

- successful delivery of agreed stages of the UK Parliament constituency review;
- delivery within budget.

4.1.5 Changes from previous Corporate Plan

Significant changes in the plan for the year 2012-13 since the publication of the previous Corporate Plan have been:

- a reduction in the expected budget and staffing for the Sixth Review.

4.2 Year 2013-14

The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for 2013-14 will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

4.2.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

The Sixth Review of UK Parliament Constituencies is due to be completed by 1 October 2013.

Scottish Parliament Reviews

A minor change to the boundary between East Dunbartonshire and Glasgow City council areas near Robroyston took place on 1 April 2011 after a review by the Local

Government Boundary Commission for Scotland. As a result, the council area boundary in that area no longer coincides with the Scottish Parliament constituency and region boundary. We will consider whether to conduct an interim review of that Scottish Parliament boundary.

4.2.2 Membership

No changes to our membership are expected during the year.

4.2.3 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2013-14 are expected to be:

- £240,666

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2013-14 is expected to be:

- 3.54 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A. These costs are expected to be met by a resource allocation which is subject to the approval of Parliament.

4.2.4 Triennial review

During 2013-14, the Cabinet Office proposes to review all 4 parliamentary Boundary Commissions in the UK as part of a triennial review programme by the UK Government of all Non-departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs). The reviews will comprise two stages:

- the first stage is to examine the functions of the NDPB and whether the functions are still required, and if so how they should be delivered in future;
- where the functions should continue, the second stage of the review will assess whether appropriate control and governance arrangements are in place to ensure that the NDPB is operating in line with Government policy, including good corporate governance, openness, transparency and accountability.

We look forward to cooperating fully with that review.

4.2.5 Performance indicators

Success in the year will be judged by the following indicators:

- completion of Sixth Review of UK Parliament Constituencies;
- submission of the report to the Secretary of State by the statutory deadline of 1 October 2013;
- supporting Cabinet Office as necessary in the implementation of the recommendations of that Review; and
- delivery within budget.

4.2.6 Changes from previous Corporate Plan

Significant changes in the plan for the year 2013-14 since the publication of the previous Corporate Plan have been:

- inclusion of interim review for Scottish Parliament boundaries (see 4.2.1);
- a reduction in the expected budget for the Sixth Review (see 4.2.3)
- addition of the proposed NDPB triennial review (see 4.2.4).

4.3 Year 2014-15

The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for 2014-15 will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

4.3.1 Review activity

United Kingdom Parliament Reviews

No review activity expected.

Scottish Parliament Reviews

No review activity expected.

4.3.2 Membership

Mrs Sharp's current term as a Commissioner ends on 31 December 2014. Mr McDonald's term as a Commissioner ends on 6 June 2015. The Secretariat will work with the Scotland Office to ensure appropriate continued membership of the Commission.

4.3.3 Finance and staffing

The overall costs of the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2014-15 are expected to be:

- £165,065

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2014-15 is expected to be:

- 1.90 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A. These costs are expected to be met by a resource allocation which is subject to the approval of Parliament.

4.3.4 Performance indicators

- delivery within budget.

5 Long term outlook

UK Parliament constituency reviews are required to take place every 5 years. This Corporate Plan sets out our intention to complete our current UK Parliament constituency review by September 2013. Subsequent UK Parliament constituency reviews will be due to be conducted between spring 2016 and September 2018, and again between spring 2021 and September 2023.

The most recent review of Scottish Parliament boundaries reported in May 2010. The interval between Scottish Parliament boundary reviews is 8 to 12 years. We expect to carry out our Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries between September 2018 and March 2021, completing it in time to allow work to begin on a UK Parliament constituency review in 2021.

Appendix A – Costs

Overall Costs

The overall costs of the Boundary Commission for Scotland are expected to be as follows.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Staffing costs	150,740	133,051	80,378
Commissioners' fees and expenses	24,000	12,000	8,000
Accommodation, rent and rates	10,000	11,000	12,100
Administration	19,000	19,665	20,353
Mapping	40,000	41,400	42,849
Travel and Subsistence	2,000	1,550	1,385
Review costs	112,000	22,000	0
Total	357,740	240,666	165,065

Staffing costs

The allocation of staff by grade, and the salary ranges for each of those grades is as follows:

Grade	FTE 2012-13	FTE 2013-14	FTE 2014-15	Salary range (£)
C1	0.50	0.50	0.50	43,736 to 52,595
B2	0.90	0.90	0.20	25,165 to 30,267
B1	2.30	1.64	0.70	22,173 to 25,165
A3	0.50	0.50	0.50	15,792 to 17,882
Total	4.20	3.54	1.90	

Overall staffing costs include National Insurance and Pension contributions, in addition to the salary in the listed range.

Commissioners' fees and expenses

These are approximately £2000 per meeting, and the figures are based on monthly meetings during a review and meetings as required otherwise.

Accommodation

Accommodation costs cover rent and utility bills, and are divided equally with the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland.

Administration

Covers training, IT costs, postage, telephones etc.

Mapping

This item covers licence fees for use of Ordnance Survey data through the One Scotland Mapping Agreement (OSMA), a collective agreement negotiated on behalf of public bodies in Scotland by Scottish Government. OSMA lasts until 31 March 2013, and the fee is increased in line with the Retail Price Index in that period. This item is assumed to continue in future years on the same basis, and is divided equally with the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland.

Travel and subsistence

Covers travel and subsistence costs for Commissioners and staff excluding travel costs specifically related to a Review.

Review costs

The major variable elements are the costs associated with a Review. The substantial elements of those costs during the planning period are:

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Advertising	80,000	10,000	0
Professional fees	30,000	7,000	0
Local Inquiry and Public Hearing costs	0	0	0
Travel	2,000	0	0
Report publication	0	5,000	0
Total	112,000	22,000	0

Advertising – We publicise our proposals as part of our public consultation at certain stages of a review. In 2012-13, we expect that we will advertise our Revised Proposals for constituencies in print media, as well as on our website, as part of our Review of UK Parliament constituencies.

Professional fees - From time to time, we may require external professional assistance, for example in order to consider and evaluate all evidence submitted in representations in response to its constituency proposals. The provision for Professional fees is to allow for the use of external resources to assist in this.

Public Hearing and Local Inquiry costs - Reviews of UK Parliament constituencies involve the holding of Public Hearings, and reviews of Scottish Parliament boundaries involve holding Local Inquiries. No Public Hearings or Local Inquiries are expected during the period covered by this Corporate Plan.

Report publication costs – At the conclusion of a Review, we submit a report to the Secretary of State for Scotland. Although the predominant means of disseminating the report is electronic, there is still a requirement to produce a limited number of hard copies.