

## **Minutes of the fifth meeting of 2021 of the Boundary Commission for England, held on 14 September 2021**

Mr Justice Lane (Deputy Chair)  
Colin Byrne (Commissioner)  
Sarah Hamilton (Commissioner)  
Tim Bowden (Secretary to the Commission)  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Business Manager  
Business Support Officer

### **1. Welcome and minutes of the last meeting**

- 1.1 Commissioners suggested grammatical changes to the draft minutes of the Commission meeting on the 21st May 2021. Subject to these changes, the minutes were agreed by the Commission.
- 1.2 Commissioners formally approved the final list of Assistant Commissioners for appointment, which they had previously agreed to via correspondence.

### **2. Paper 1: 2023 Review initial proposals consultation update**

- 2.1 The Deputy Secretary noted the success of the consultation portal used during the initial consultation, as well as the positive and constructive feedback received from users.
- 2.2 The Deputy Secretary presented the Commissioners with an overview of consultation responses in each of the nine regions in England. He outlined the nature of the feedback received in each of the regions and main issues.

### **3. Paper 2: 2023 Review - Public hearings**

- 3.1 The Head of Corporate Services presented the Secretariat's recommendations for the holding of both physical public hearings and the hybrid approach to public hearings.
- 3.2 Mr Bowden noted that the public hearings are now being held in the secondary consultation period, the locations of public hearings can now be informed by the representations received during the initial consultation period.
- 3.3 Commissioners agreed the number of public hearings should be determined by the main issues that have arisen during the consultation on the initial proposals, while also being mindful of identifying suitable venues for hearings, and ensuring good transport links. Based on this information the Commission agreed to hold 30 public hearings during the secondary consultation.

- 3.4 Commissioners agreed on the locations of these 30 public hearings. Commissioners agreed that the lead public hearing for the North East Region should be held in Newcastle.
- 3.5 Commissioners agreed to the recommendations set out in the paper in relation to physical public hearings.
- 3.6 Commissioners agreed that all hearings should be live streamed on a streaming platform, and a record of the hearing provided.
- 3.7 The Head of Corporate Services presented the two options for the hybridisation of public hearings. Option one - the hybridisation of all hearings and option two - the hybridisation of one hearing per region. The Commissioners agreed on option two that one hybrid hearing should be run per region, resulting in nine hybrid hearings overall.
- 3.8 The Commissioners agreed that the hybrid hearings should be held as the second hearing in each region. Mr Byrne questioned the possibility of holding one lead hearing as a hybrid hearing and asked the Secretariat to explore this further. The Secretariat will seek legal advice on delivering hybrid public hearings.
- 3.9 The Secretariat will work to produce guidance for users and Assistant Commissioners on public hearings. The Secretariat will update Commissioners on this at the next Commission meeting.

#### 4. **Any other Business**

- 4.1 Commissioners agreed the next meeting should be held on 22nd November 2021.