

Shereen Williams
 Chief Executive
 The Local Democracy and Boundary
 Commission for Wales
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Dear Shereen,

Review of Electoral Arrangements within the County Borough of Caerphilly

Further to the presentation by the Commission to the meeting of the Council on 5th March 2019, the Council agreed to establish a working group to review the electoral arrangements within the county borough. A seven member group, comprising of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Poole, who chaired the group, Cllr Mann, the Leader of the Opposition, Plaid Cymru, Cllr Etheridge, the Leader of the Independent Group, Cllr Jones, the Executive Member for Finance, Performance and Governance, Cllr Cuss, the Executive Member for Social Care and Wellbeing, Cllr Pritchard, Chair of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cllr Whittle, an experienced Plaid Cymru member and former leader of the council.

At the meeting of Council 4th June 2019, the Council approved this response to the consultation exercise currently being carried out by the Commission. I will take each ward in order:-

1. Aber Valley – no change. 3 councillors representing 4549 electors. This is a housing renewal area that has considerable council money spent on improving properties. The Windsor Colliery site was cleared using public finance and has some new homes and a school. United Welsh Housing Association has planning permission to complete the site which they will begin immediately the new development of the Panteg public house is completed. That development is well under way. There are also an extra 40 houses to be built at Ty Isaf wher planning permission has been granted and pre-building works have already been carried out.
2. Aberbargoed – **Reduce ward representation from 2 to 1 councillor.** 2651 electors. Transfer Bedwellty fields to Pengam ward. Boundary to ward at southern point with neighbouring Pengam ward will be the Angel Way spur past the fire station.
3. Abercarn – no change. 2 councillors representing 4070 electors.
4. Argoed – No change. One member representing 1981 electors.
5. Bargoed – Merge with Gilfach forming a new 3 member ward representing 5903 electors.
Net reduction of 1 member.

6. Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen – No change. 4 members representing 7673 electors.
7. Blackwood – retain 3 members but transfer Bedwellty Road and Bryn Road from the Cefn Fforest ward to the Blackwood ward. Extra 297 electors giving a total of 6500 electors.
8. Cefn Fforest – **Reduce to one member** but transfer Bedwellty Road and Bryn Road to Blackwood ward. One member representing 2512 electors.
9. Crosskeys – No change. One member representing 2470 electors. Compact ward.
10. Crumlin – No change. 2 members representing 4276 electors.
11. Darran Valley – No change.
12. Gilfach – Merge ward with Bargoed. **4 members reduced to 3.**
13. Hengoed – Leave as 2 members but transfer Firecrest Walk, Harrier Avenue, Kingfisher Way, Goshawk Rise, Brambling Crescent and Starling Walk to the Ystrad Mynach ward. Transfer Farm Close, Tiryberth to St Cattwg ward. This will result in Hengoed ward having 3727 electors.
14. Llanbradach – Leave as 2 members but transfer Clos y Felin, Camnant, llys y Coed, Castell Llwyd, Trem-yr-Felin, Coed y Graig, Clos Graddfa, Clos Mawr, Stryd Hywel Harris and Nant Twyn-yr-Harris to Llanbradach ward from neighbouring Ystrad Mynach ward. Llanbradach electorate increases by 621 electors to 3785. This proposal would affect the community area.
15. Maesycwmmmer – No change. One member representing 1680 electors. A housing estate is currently being constructed within the ward which will add a further 400 houses.
16. Morgan Jones – Leave as 3 members representing 5608 electors.
17. Moriah – merge with Pontlottyn ward to form new 2 member ward representing 4002 electors. **Net reduction of 1 member.**
18. Nelson – No change. 2 members representing 3549 electors.
19. New Tredegar – No change. Existing natural boundaries to ward. 2 members representing 3307 electors.
20. Newbridge – No change. 3 members representing 4766 electors.
21. Pengam – **Reduce from 2 members to one member.** Transfer Bedwellty fields to Pengam ward from Aberbargoed (cf 2 above).
22. Penmaen – No change except transfer Tirfilkins Close from Pontllanfraith ward. 2 members representing 4207 electors.
23. Penyrheol – No change. 4 members representing 8831 electors. This is a large but extremely compact ward that has existed in its present form for 48 years. It was an original Mid Glamorgan county council ward since 1971. The Community Council is also co-terminus in its boundary and recently one community councillor has been deleted. All schools are feeder schools to the existing comprehensive and it is recognised as a community. Whilst arguments could be made to increase the number of councillors it is recognised that the estates are well established. To link them would split the community. The majority of the estates are not areas of social deprivation.
24. Pontllanfraith – No change except transfer Tirfilkins Close to Penmaen (cf 22 above) and transfer Gelligroes to the Ynysddu ward. Use bypass as the boundary between the Pontllanfraith and Ynysddu wards. 3 members representing 6222 electors.
25. Pontlottyn – merge with Moriah to form new 2 member ward. Please see 17 above.
26. Risca East – Leave as 3 members but transfer Fernlea, Samson Street, York Place, Navigation Road, Church Road, Highfield Crescent, Darran Road and Highfield Close from Risca West to Risca East. The transfer would increase the electorate by 333 to 4954. These proposals will affect the community area. The boundary between Risca East and Risca West will be the railway line.

27. Risca West – Leave as a 2 member ward but subject to changes detailed in 26 above. The electorate will be 3515.
28. St. Cattwg – No change to 3 member ward except transfer Farm Close, Tiryberth from the Hengoed ward to St Cattwg, which will increase the electors by 67 to 5571.
29. St. James – No change. 3 members representing 4210 electors. This large ward is predominately rural but contains the large housing estate of Lansbury Park.
30. St. Martins – No proposed changes. 3 members representing 6401 electors.
31. Twyn Carno – Retain as 1 member ward. This ward has received and is eligible for grant funding to alleviate deprivation which may be lost if it is combined with another ward. Boundary will be the police station. Transfer Old Brewery Lane, The Terrace and Rhymney Walk from the former Pontlottyn ward, and transfer Tanyllan Terrace, Tre Evans, Goshen Street, Goshen Close, Cross Street, Menest Street, High Street, Tre York Street, Colenso Terrace, Castle Fields, Heol Aneurin Bevan, Golwg y Mynnydd, St. Davids Close and Cwrt Andrew Buchan from the former Moriah ward (please see 17 and 25 above). With these changes the ward will have 2155 electors.
32. Ynysddu – Retain as 2 member ward but move Gelligroes from Pontllanfraith ward and use bypass as boundary between Ynysddu and Pontllanfraith wards. (cf 24 above). Ward will now have 3040 electors.
33. Ystrad Mynach – Retain as 2 member ward but subject to changes highlighted in 13 and 14 above giving an electorate of 4161 for this ward.

You will note from our proposals that the representation in the county borough will be reduced from 73 to 68 members. In coming to its conclusions, the working group has taken into account the statutory factors of electoral equality, community identity and effective and convenient local government, whilst respecting the natural and man-made boundaries to the wards within the county borough.

I trust that you will give serious consideration to the council's proposals.

Yours sincerely

Leader to the Council

Interim Chief Executive