



Comisiwn Ffiniau
i Gymru

Boundary Commission
for Wales

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for Wales

Public Hearings: Swansea

Transcript of the Public Hearing

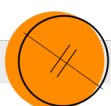
Swansea

Key

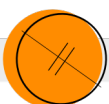
AC1:	Andrew Clemes
SP:	Steven Phillips
SW:	Shereen Williams
EH:	Estelle Hart
SK:	Stephen Kinnock
TG:	Tom Giffard
FO:	Francesca O'Brien
DC:	David Collins
CR:	Catherine Richards
JE:	Jamie Evans
LJ:	Lyndon Jones
GD:	Geraint Davies
AC2:	Alun Cairns
RS:	Robert Smith
PM:	Penny Matthews
AW:	Alex Williams
LJ:	Lynne Joyce
PHW:	Paxton Hood-Williams
ET:	Emma Turner
MO:	Mike O'Carroll
RH:	Riaz Hassan
EMA:	Elizabeth Myra Aldworth
WD:	Wayne David
CM:	Chris Morgan
JW:	Joanne Wallow
RA:	Robert Allender
TW:	Tina Williams
DP:	Dinah Pye
GH:	Gerald Holtham
KW:	Katherine Whitehead
JD:	Jacob Deluc

[Transcript starts at 00:00:00]

AC1: Bore da, croeso. Good morning and welcome to Swansea. My name is Andrew Clemes and I'm a, an assistant Commissioner for the Boundary Commission for Wales. I'll be chairing today's public hearing. The panel for today is made up of my fellow Assistant Commissioner Steven Phillips on my right, as well as Shereen Williams on my left, who is secretary to the Commission. I'm also responsible, with my fellow assistant Commissioners, for analysing all the representations received about the initial proposals, and then presenting recommendations to the Commission as to whether or not those initial proposals should be revised. The secondary consultation period of six weeks began on February the 17th, and will run until March the 30th, during which time representations in writing and orally at these public hearings will be received for assessment and ultimately, for report by us to the Commissioners. I should stress the representations made in writing in Welsh or in English, will save pride, receive precisely the same consideration and



weight as those made orally at any of the public hearings, and that anyone who speaks at a hearing may make additional representations in writing if they so decide. Written representations should, where possible, contain the same information for the Commission, as I should seek from each speaker at this hearing, namely the name, town or area of residence, affiliation, if any, in other words, are you speaking solely on your own behalf or on behalf of the group and if so, which group. It is very important to note that any representations must be received by the Commission prior to the end of the consultation period, which is March the 30th. Thus, any representations received after that date cannot and will not be considered in this consultation round under any circumstances. Representations can be made on the Commissioner's consultation portal, in writing or via email, and all the required information can be found on the Commission's website. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide an opportunity for people to make representations about any of the commercials, Commission's initial proposals relating to Parliamentary constituencies in Wales, including the name of only constituency and to present any counter proposals. Please bear in mind that any new proposals or suggested revisions or alterations to the initial scheme must comply with the same requirements laid down for the Commissioners as set out in the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 as amended. More details about the legislation set out in the Commission's initial proposals report and guide to the review, copies of which are available here today in paper or online. I shall conduct this hearing informally as circumstances permits, but there are certain requirements which we'll need to conform to, all speakers will come to the lectern on my left to make representations, each will be required to get name, area of residence and affiliation, if any. Please note that all representations will be recorded for transcription, therefore, please speak clearly and slowly so that your submission can be well understood and recorded. I do not propose to allow any cross examination, but I may permit questions seeking clarification on a particular point to be asked, but only through myself as chair. Any such questioner will be asked to supply the same personal details as those making representations. There is a running order of speakers which we shall try to keep to, but may need to change the order from time to time based on speaker availability. To facilitate the hearings and our task, please keep to your lot, allotted time allowance, or risk being stopped in mid track. And to that end, there is a member of staff warning card, which will be held up, telling you, you got two minutes left out of your 10 minutes allotted. Please indicate to which area, or areas, your representation relates. Help us by telling us why you're making a proposal, not merely what the proposal is. Try not to repeat yourself or the detailed submissions of others. If you wish to support a previous speaker's proposal, or representation, please say so but we don't need to hear the detail again necessarily. Be aware that we will not accept representations that are only concerned with objections to the rules laid down in statute rather than the proposals of the Commission. It is not the purpose of this hearing to discuss the Act that's been passed by Parliament, and of course, we've got no power in any event to recommend change, any changes to it. Address the hearing in Welsh or English as you choose, but please do state which language you'll be using before you make a representation, so that those who wish to use simultaneous headphones, simultaneous translation headphones may do so from the beginning. Please remain at the front following your representation in order that any class, clarification questions can be asked, if there are any. In a few moments, I shall invite the BCW secretary Shireen Williams, to outline our sitting hours, deal with some other housekeeping matters and to assist us by outlining the

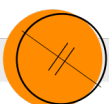


Commission's proposals, but please note that all materials relevant to the proposals are available at this meeting for consultation at any time during the hearing. Furthermore, staff from the Secretariat are available here all day. Please help. Please ask for any help or information if you need it, or if anything is unclear. May I end these, these remarks by, which, formally open this public hearing by underlining the fact that my colleagues and I have played no part in determining the initial proposals, we are not here, therefore to seek to support them, or indeed to oppose them. We are independent persons appointed by the BCW to consider objectively and independently all the representations which are made in respect of these proposals and in due course to recommend to the Commission, whether and how their proposals might be revised. It will then be for the Commissioners to consider such recommendation and determine whether they wish to make a new revision of the initial proposals. Any such revision would then be the subject for further period of public consultation. Shereen?

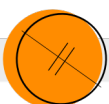
[00:06:26]

SW:

Bore da a chroeso. Dydd Gŵyl Dewi hapus, everyone. Today's proceeding is being live streamed and recording is in place for transcription purposes so please do not use your personal devices to take pictures or recordings of the proceedings. If you are intending to tweet, please tag us @BCOMWALES, as mentioned by Andrew, reports and the guide are available at the front desk so please help yourselves to them. Simultaneous translation is available from Welsh to English, if you'd like to make use of a service, please collect a headset from our translator, Yola, at the back of the room. Today's hearing will sit until 8pm. We will take a lunch break between 12 and one and we may also have some short breaks at other points during the day at the discretion of the chair. I'll use my time today, I know you look absolutely horrified [Laughter], it is a long day for all of us, but we'll get through it, it's our third public hearing, so we will soldier on. I'll use my time today to talk through the process, the Commission have undertaken in to date as well as the Commission's proposals. In developing its proposals, the Commission work to take account of the statutory factors are set out in the legislation, such as special geographical considerations, local authority bound, local government boundaries and local ties and the boundaries of existing constituencies. As you will know, UK Parliament has by Act of Parliament determined that each constituency in the UK shall have not more than 105% and not less than 95% of the UK electoral quota, which is 73,393 electors. This consequence of this legislation is that the number of constituencies in Wales will be reduced from 40 to 32 and each constituency, with the exception of Ynys Môn, must have between 69,724 and 77,062 electors. The Commission launched its initial proposals in September last year, and it was the start of the process, not the end. Publication of the initial proposals initiated our first consultation period, which ran from 8 September until 3 November 2021. We received 1,211 representations and these were published on 17 December last year. We are encouraging people to consider the detailed proposals and the representations that have been published and let us know what they think, and importantly, whether they've got counter proposals that would meet the requirements of the legislation. The public hearing and other public hearings that we're holding across Wales are fundamental to this process. As I mentioned earlier, we received a large number of representations in the initial consultation period. A small number of these were representations that covered all of Wales, and these were primarily from the political parties and some individuals. The majority of the



representations received were focussed on specific areas and here are some of the highlights. The proposed Caerfyrddin constituency was broadly supported by the representations received, however, there were objections relating to the transfer of the community of Llangunnor hanging out into the proposed Llanelli constituency. Many of the respondents argued that the community of Llangunnor shouldn't be included in the Caerfyrddin constituency. The proposed Cardiff West constituency received a number of representations in opposition, primarily due to the inclusion of Pontyclun from Rhondda Cynon Taf. Respondents argued that Pontyclun should remain within a Pontypridd Rhondda Cynon Taff constituency. There were a number of representations that oppose the proposed Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare and Pontypridd constituencies due to the division of the Cynon Valley. It was argued that the identity of the Cynon Valley should be preserved and the area retained within a single constituency. A number of representations opposed the proposed Cardiff South and Penarth constituency due to the inclusion of Dinas Powys from the Vale of Glamorgan and wanted Dinas Powys to remain in the Vale of Glamorgan constituency. Objections to the proposed Swansea East and Neath constituency was mainly focused on the combination of parts of Swansea with parts of Neath Port Talbot. A number of representations also argued that the Pontardawe, upper Swansea Valley area should be included in the Swansea constituency, and the, and not in the proposed Brecon and Radnorshire constituency. Several representations oppose the proposed Bridgend constituency as it splits the Bridgend local authority area between two constituencies. Some argued that Porthcawl should not be joined with Aberafan Port Talbot, and others oppose the division of the areas outside Bridgend town centre. A significant number of representations oppose the proposals for Aberconwy and Dwyfor Meirionnydd. The representations argued that Bangor, proposed to be in Aberconwy, should be wholly included within an Arfon constituency. The main objections to the proposed Wrexham constituency was due to the inclusion of Brimble and Manara in a neighbouring constituency of Alyn and Deeside. Respondents argued that these communities should remain within Wrexham. There was support for the proposed Ceredigion Preseli constituency. The, some representations received stated that they would prefer a constituency that is wholly formed of the Pembrokeshire local authority. The proposed Newport West and Caerphilly constituency received strong opposition due to the combination of two separate local authority areas. Respondents argued that the Sirhowy Valley, currently in the Islwyn constituency would be a better fit with Newport than Caerphilly proper. Newport East was opposed by a small number representations who requested that Caldicott remain in Newport East, although there was broad support for the proposed Monmouthshire constituency. A small number of representations opposed to combining Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney into a single constituency due to the issues around deprivation. Unfortunately, no alternative combination was provided. The main objections related to Delyn was due to its name, there was a preference for Clwyd East to be used instead. Several representations disagreed with the proposed Clwyd, Clwyd constituency, arguments were varied, including how Llandrillo yn Rhos should be included in Clwyd instead of the Llandrillo and Corwen, Ruthin, Prestatyn and [inaudible 00:12:17]. Arguments against the proposed Alyn and Deeside and Delyn constituencies were mainly focused on the inclusion of Fflint and Bagyllt within Delyn, as it felt that they should be included in the proposed Alyn and Deeside constituency. Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr received broad support with a small number opposing the name of the constituency. The Commission is looking



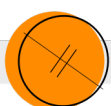
forward to receiving more representations during this consultation period, and will support our assistant Commissioners in their recommendations for revised proposals. We hope to publish the revised proposals report in October of this year, opening up our next consultation period for four weeks. Diolch for giving me your time and listening to us today. I'll hand over the session back to the chair so he can begin inviting the speakers.

AC1: Thank you Shereen, we'll now call on our first speaker, who is Estelle Hart, who is, I think appearing to represent Tonia Antoniazzi for Gower, thank you.

[Pause 00:13:10 to 00:13:16]

AC1: So if you could start by outlining your name, your area of residence on your affiliation, if any, and then if you're speaking on your own behalf, or on behalf of the group. Thank you.

EH: Okay, I'm Estelle Hart, I'm a resident in Gower, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Member of Parliament for Gower, Tonia Antoniazzi. Firstly, as per, will be Tonia's position is that she agrees with the Welsh Labour proposals that have been put forward for commission, and think the current proposals actually go against some of what the Commission is attempting to achieve, as it cuts across a lot of natural communities of interest within the Swansea constituency. For example, decoupling Sketty and Uplands and areas such as Pontarddulais and Gorseinon. Swansea North and Centre as it stands now is, from a sort of local perspective, quite an odd constituency. It can't really be justified as communities and natural first, extending, as it does, from [inaudible 00:14:09] on the outskirts of Ammanford, a small Welsh speaking village, to the, almost the city centre, taking in some a Sketty ward, the current Swansea West and Gower wards is an incongruous amalgamation of distinct communities of [inaudible 00:14:24] and North Gower and that Gower Peninsula, with areas that, I think, locally would seem to be more than the start of the city proper in Sketty Ward, and, you know, areas within that, particularly the university campus, particularly the inclusion of Mayals within this area actually contradicts several previous Boundary Commission hearings that cited Mayals was not part of the Gower constituency and fitted better with that more city centre constituency. The alternative proposal supported by Tonia proposes creating a core urban constituency and a peripheral sort of constituency of the rural communities of the north of Swansea and the Gower Peninsula. So it retains much of the current Gower constituency, excluding Clydach and adds more of those distinct villages such as Dunvant and Waunarlwydd, Waunarlwydd which is currently part of the Cockett ward, and the proposal, which would remove Mayals and Sketty from the, that constituency, adding back in Gorseinon, Penyrheol, Kingsbridge, Upper and Lower Loughor, Penllergaer, Llangyfelach, [inaudible: 00:15:34] actually leaves with, it meets the conditions of the Commission in terms of constituency numbers. So it's the supporting arguments for that would be that these proposals would create two far more cohesive constituencies, one focussed on the centre of Swansea and avoiding an artificial division between the communities of Sketty and Uplands, thus preserving that university student area Swansea and keeping their links with the city centre. It also maintains the strong community links and ties between areas such as Gorseinon, Pontarddulais, Gowerton and the surrounding areas. Those communities have, prior to local government reorganisation, sat within the same local authority of Clyne Valley, and



they access the same services and support hubs together so they operate in Clyne Valley identity and access of service, though they're still quite distinct. I suppose specifically, the proposals would, say those parts of Swansea that are closest to the city centre would be included in Swansea central constituency, Gower would contain, would continue to contain a variety of small towns and villages of varying sizes and quite distinct communities. Taking in those things that I mentioned previously – Dunvant, [inaudible 00:16:49] and Waunarlwydd all of which have very distinct village identities. Both of the major hospitals in the area would then be in that central Swansea constituency, along with the main University and student areas, and the traditional Welsh speaking communities, commonly like more to the north of the constituency, so Pontarddulais, Gorseinon, Loughor, those surrounding villages, would all be included in sort of, one constituency. Also, the importance of tourism in Gower can't really be understated, and the sort of natural setting of the Gower Peninsula with other tourist destinations, such as Mynydd y Gwair on the edge of the black mountains would all be one thing giving quite a distinct still identity to the constituency. So think, importantly, for, for constituents, the people in Swansea to understand how they're represented, these proposals would match more closely with the current Senedd constituencies, which I think obviously has a very big impact for the people who live there. So they feel that they're represented. Speaking as somebody who grew up in Swansea, the thought of perhaps that, that Sketty has more than common with Pontarddulais than Gorseinon seems a bit of [inaudible 00:18:05] to me even before you get to any of the kind of politic of it. So in terms of representing sort of, constituents and understanding and feeling or placing a voice within a constituency, particularly in those rural parts surrounding the city, and we feel that our counter proposal that we're supporting makes more sense and fits in well with the Commission's goals of creating, you know, constituencies focussed on kind of natural communities that have similarities. Thank you.

AC1: Thank you. Are there any clarification questions from the floor? In the panel? Thank you very much.

EH: Thanks. I can't believe you're gonna be here till eight o'clock.

[Laughter].

SW: And on St David's Day as well. [Laughter].

AC1: The next speaker is...

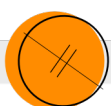
SW: Stephen Kinnock.

AC1: Stephen Kinnock, MP.

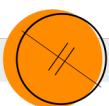
[Pause 00:18:56 to 00:19:06]

AC1: Okay, if you could just supply your name, town where you're a resident and your affiliation. And if you speak on your own behalf or a part of the group.

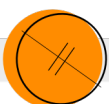
SK: Morning, thank you very much for the opportunity today. I'm Stephen Kinnock. I'm the Labour member of Parliament for Aberafan, so my political affiliation clearly to



the Labour Party. Was that, did you need anything else? No. Thanks. The Boundary Commission has a difficult job to do given the strict and prescriptive criteria set out in the legislation, and the significance The Act gives to the UK electoral quota. The task is even more problematic when you factor in the topography in Wales and the contrasting population patterns whereby areas around the M4 and A55 are densely populated, as opposed to the sparsely populated areas in mid Wales. Having said all of this as context, I'd, I'd like to say that the Commission's proposals in relation to the existing Aberafan constituency and to the new Aberafan Porthcawl constituency are welcome. They recognise and respect the local ties that exist between the 13 wards from Aberafan that are proposed to form part of the Aberafan Porthcawl constituency. Looking at the three key areas of historical ties, economic ties and transport ties, and of course, community ties, that fourth important area, on historical ties these wards all share an industrial heritage, whether that be the communities that grew up around the steelworks or the mining heritage in the communities of the Afan Valley. On economic ties that communities look to the town of Port Talbot as their economic centre, and it is from these communities that the workforce of the steelworks is drawn. Many of the local businesses in these communities rely on the steelworks, either through the supply chains, or from the workforce using their businesses. On transport ties, these communities are served by the Port Talbot railway station, and the bus services are linked to Port Talbot. On community ties, children from the Afan Valley and from Britain ferry receive their secondary education in schools based in the Aberafan, Baglan and Taibach areas of constituency. The Afan Valley is intrinsically linked at Port Talbot. Transport and economic links are with the town. The Afan Valley takes its name from the River Afan in the same way that Aberafan does. It is disappointing that the three, quite frank Wards that includes Skewen, Jersey Marine, and Crymlyn Burrows do not form part of the proposed Aberafan Porthcawl constituency, but it is understandable that they would be included in the constituency with Neath, where they do have a great affinity. Looking specifically at Aberafan Porthcawl, the new proposed constituency. The wards of Cornelly, Pyle, Rest Bay, Nottage, Porthcawl East Central, Porthcawl West Central and Newton were part of the Aberafan constituency prior to the 1983 boundary review when these areas, along with areas from Ogmore were used to create the current Bridgend constituency. Like the coastal communities in Aberafan, they share many of the same characteristics. Port Talbot is a port town and Porthcawl used to be a cold port, like Aberafan, Porthcawl has a history as a seaside resort, and is still a tourist destination. Pyle is geographically very close to the Afan ward of Margam and there is a small number of Aberafan constituents that have a Pyle address. It also has an industrial heritage, collieries, coking plant and iron works like the communities in Aberafan. There are good transport links between Port Talbot and Porthcawl via the A48. By creating the new constituency out of 13 wards from the Aberafan constituency, and 10 from the Bridgend constituency, this limits the disruption across existing constituency boundaries. While it's preferable for constituents to be coterminous with local authority boundaries, the prescriptive nature of the legislation means that this is not always possible. This proposal minimises the disruption to local government boundaries with just two local authorities, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend involved. Looking at the counter proposals against Aberafan Porthcawl, having looked at the responses to the initial proposals for Aberafan Porthcawl, I'm aware of concerns around including wards which form part of the town of Bridgend in this proposal. However, the alternative proposals that have been suggested, which would include the Llynfi, Garw and

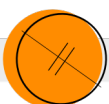


Ogmore Valleys with the third, 13 wards, with the 13 wards from Aberafan create real problems around transport links. Poor transport links can lead to residents feeling cut off from those who are elected to represent them. While the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore valleys are similar to and share many of the same characteristics as the Afan Valley, the topography of these Valley communities make links between them very difficult. The counter proposals for Aberafan Porthcawl would either mean an arduous journey to reach parts of the constituency, or involve travelling through the neighbouring Bridgend constituency to get to your destination. The most straightforward route to travel from Port Talbot to the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore valleys is along the M4 motorway. However, under the counter proposals, that would mean traversing the neighbouring Bridgend constituency. To travel from Port Talbot to the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore valleys and stay in the counter proposal Aberafan Porthcawl constituency, you would have to travel up the Afan Valley. While the road links between the Afan Valley and Caerau and Maesteg are good, in order to reach communities like Pontycymer and Blaengarw in the Garw Valley, you would have to travel up the Afan valley, down the Llynfi Valley and back up the Garw Valley, a journey of approximately one hour. Another alternative would be to travel up the Afan Valley, across to the Ogmore Valley, down the Ogmore Valley and back up the Garw Valley again, again the journey of approximately one hour. In reality, people will use the shortest and most direct route along the M4, going through the neighbouring constituency. Public transport linking the Garw and Ogmore valleys would also involve travelling via the neighbouring constituency of Bridgend. Public transport is available from Port Talbot to Maesteg, but public transport from Port Talbot to either Blaengarw or Nant-y-moel requires a bus, bus journey to Bridgend town in the neighbouring constituency, and then back up the respective Valley. So the Aberafan Porthcawl proposal is welcomed and would work going forward, but given the concerns around including wards which form part of the town of Bridgend in the Aberafan Porthcawl proposal, and given the close community ties these residential areas have with Bridgend, should the Commission be minded to look again at the proposal and address these concerns, then a more minor adjustment would be the ward of Llangewydd and Brynhyfryd and the ward of Cefn Glas becoming part of the proposed Bridgend. This would leave the Aberafan Porthcawl constituency with 73,554 residents, which is at the lower end of the UKEQ, and would mean the proposed Bridgend constituency would exclude, would exceed the UK electoral quota with an electorate of 77,626. To accommodate this, the ward of Cefncribwr would, could move from the proposed Bridgend constituency to the proposed Aberafan Porthcawl constituency, which would leave them with electorates of 76,446 and 74,734 respectively. Cefncribwr has a mining background like much of the Aberafan Valley and is also, it also has close links with Kenfig Hill which has already proposed to be part of Aberafan Porthcawl. In conclusion, the Boundary Commission of Wales has the unenviable task of implementing this legislation. Whatever proposals are put forward are bound to upset some, but that is because of the narrow and rigid parameters set out in the legislation that the Commission must work to. Aberafan Porthcawl is a proposal that meets the electoral quota, and as far as practically possible recognises special geographical considerations, local government boundaries, boundaries of existing constituencies, local ties, and the inconveniences such changes create. While the proposal is by no means perfect, we cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good. This is a proposal that meets the requirements set out in the legislation and given time, it can work for the electorate. Thank you.

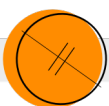


[00:27:38]

- AC1: Thank you. Are there any questions, we have clarification from the floor? Mr Kinnock could you? There is a question from the panel, sorry?
- SP: Just a quick point of clarification. What you were saying about the Bridgend constituency, does that reflect the view of the Bridgend constituency Labour Party?
- SK: I can't speak for Bridgend constituency Labour Party, sir. I believe on the whole, Welsh Labour across the board has been supportive of these proposals. I think there are some concerns that I mentioned specifically about splitting up the Bridge, Bridgend constituency. And there is support that I have had in consultation with, of course, there isn't a Labour MP at the moment in Bridgend.
- SP: No, no.
- SK: But with the Labour MP for Ogmore, who supports that tweak that I set out at the end there, a suggested alternative that we think could potentially help to resolve some of the issues around Bridgend.
- SP: Helpful.
- SK: So that, that is supported by the MP for Ogmore.
- SP: Okay.
- SK: And by his CLP.
- AC1: Thank you. Thank you very much.
- SK: Sorry. Thank you.
- AC1: We now call Tom Giffard. Mr Giffard, if you could come to the lectern and give your name, where you live, and your, not your address, obviously the, the area and your affiliation, if any. You have got 10 minutes, and you'll be told when you have two minutes left, by the lady on your left.
- TG: Very, very useful. Thank you. I'm Tom Giffard. I'm the member of the Senedd, or South Wales West, I represent the Welsh Conservative Party. And I live in Brackla in Bridgend, where I've been a councillor for the past, nearly five years. So I just really wanted to start by reflecting on some of the Commission's proposals that rest in my region. And I wanted to thank the Commission for the work that they've done. And I know as Mr Kinnock mentioned before me, there are very strict parameters that the Commission has had to work through and I think, you know, a lot of the proposals on things speaking in favour of because I think actually, some of the, some of the solutions that they've come up with have been actually quite sensible. So I wanted to start by outlining my support for the new Brecon and Radnorshire constituency to start with. I think it's very important when looking at those strict numerical parameters, that the Swansea Valley community has now become one. So there is, despite the name of the Brecon and Radnor constituency,



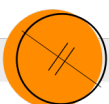
there has always been that element of the, of the, of the Swansea valley in the Brecon and Radnor constituency, around 20% is in that Ystradgynlais area. And now that brings together communities in Pontardawe and Ystalyfera from the Neath constituency. So those two communities are intrinsically linked with Ystradgynlais and Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera is proof of that, with many pupils from those communities falling in to that catchment area. So that means that the changes would be in line with community expectations and actually improve that cohesion within the community. Pupils from further afield in Powys or in Breconshire go to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera for their Welsh language education as well so it actually ties in with the rest of the of Powys area. Due to Welsh Language School provision in the, in the south of Powys. Pontardawe and Ystalyfera, as I've said before, link very well with the Ystradgynlais area and are similar in nature and character. There are good communication and transportation links upon the A4067 and there are numerous bus routes that link those communities together. Therefore, in my view, it makes total sense to include these already established organic communities together in a common constituency, as opposed to artificially separating them as the, as the current, as current boundaries do. I secondly wanted to speak in support of the Swansea East and Neath constituency, which I believe is in keeping with the history, geography and character of the area. Many communities in the current Swansea East community share a lot in common with Neath, both in terms of culture and infrastructure and would therefore sit quite comfortably within that new constituency. The inclusion, most notably of Clydach will ensure good transport links between that ward in the west of the proposed constituency as well as the communities of St Thomas and Cloyd Frank West, in, in the South. It's also important to remember that the new Swansea University Bay campus for example, is based in that Cloyd Frank West Ward, people, or students that attend that university, many of them I'm, I'm sure, perhaps don't realise that they, they are based in Neath Port Talbot. It's also helpful that the proposals keep together similar areas such as Llansamlet and Bon-y-maen, which would help any, minimise any disruption caused by those changes. I think it creates a well-connected constituency with villages and communities that share that common identity and therefore can function cohesively as an electoral constituency. And I strongly support the combining of the 20 wards from the county borough of Neath Port Talbot, three from Aberafan and 17 from Neath, along with four wards from the city and county of Swansea, compromising three from the current Swansea seats and the one, as I said before Clydach from Gower. I think those changes are reasonable, proportionate, sensitive to local feeling and bring together areas that already have a lot in common. And this will help make the transition to new boundaries as smooth as possible by building upon foundations that already exist. I'm therefore happy to support the county constituency in Neath and Swansea, with an approximate electorate of 75,641, which would be in the margin, favoured by the Commission. Also wanted to speak in support of the creation of a new Swansea West and Gower constituency. I believe the composition of each of the wards include, that it includes keep local communities together, as we've discussed for some of the other proposals and strengthen the cohesion of the area. For example, the Gower Peninsula and Mumbles are already intrinsically linked with one another and have been for some considerable time in our, in the current, in the current Gower seat, and it's good to see that that remains. Oystermouth, Newton West Cross, Penarth, Bishopston and Fairwood are all heavily linked, and tie in with Penclawdd and Fairwood and those other wards to the east. And these are communities that have been linked together for many years with common



interests and concerns and therefore ensuring that these areas have been included within a common constituency would be ideal, as well as facilitating ease of travel throughout the constituency. I'm also very, very pleased to see that this proposal has corrected what, in my view was, was a historical wrong with current proposal which is bringing the community of Mayals in with the rest of Mumbles, because at the moment, Mayals is the only, within Mumbles Community Council that sits outside of the Gower constituency. Mayals is very much a part of Mumbles and therefore it's really good to see that this new proposal brings in Mayals into the new, into the new constituency. It's also welcome to see the Gorseinon community become one, so that would be Gorseinon and the two Loughor wards and Kingsbridge and Penyrheol. These are all closely linked to school catchment areas, reflect that, the fact that there is a cohesive community there represents that as well. So it's, it makes good sense to build on those pre-existing links by including them in a, in a proposed new constituency. The inclusion of a Sketty Ward is also very welcome as well. I think Sketty links very well with some of the other wards that have been put into this new seat, such as Killay and Dunvant and Mayals, so it makes a lot of sense to see that in the new constituency as well. It's often the case in Sketty that a lot of those communities will shop in those local areas, will have children attend school in those local areas and use the same public facilities, libraries and halls and to split that in any way would make very little practical sense. I would however, recommend that the name of the constituency should be Gower and Swansea West as there are some 12,500 more electors drawn from the Gower seat than, than there are from the Swansea west, so Gower makes up 58% of the proposed new constituency compared to 42% that are from Swansea West. So I think a reasonable name for that constituency would be Gower and Swansea West and represent the composition of the new seat. And finally, the constituency is wholly within the City and County of Swansea has good communication, communication and transport links, makes for a cohesive constituency, and makes a lot of sense. People will recognise and identify with that constituency as well. The final one I just wanted to reflect on very quickly was the proposal for Bridgend. I speak in, in favour of my party's proposals, which I think you're familiar with in Bridgend so I won't bore you with the, with the details of that. But what I, what I did want to, what I did want to point out, which is what I think is a critical error is the removal of the Llangewydd Brynhyfryd ward, Cefn Glas ward and Bryntirion, Laleston and Merthy Mawr wards from Bridgend. I think those are part of that community. The two catchment schools, Bryntirion and Brynteg, the two secondary schools, both have catchment areas sort of within, within those constituents, within those wards and outside of those wards as well, if that makes sense. So I think from that perspective, it would make, it would be a real shame to split up the town of Bridgend, I understand, as I said at the beginning, you've got numerical considerations to consider, but I think splitting up a town in two parts would be a real mistake and wouldn't really identify as a seat that people would, would know and identify with. So on the whole, thank you very much for your time, I support the vast, vast majority of the Commission's proposals and your difficult set of circumstances, but I would request that you look at that Bridgend constituency once more. Thank you.

[00:37:40]

AC1: Thank you very much. Are there any questions of clarification from the floor? The panel?



SP: Sorry, just one, one point of clarification. You clearly support the Brecon and Radnor constituency and, and the addition to the existing constituency of the Swansea and upper Amman Valleys, is that solely based on the fact that adjacent to Ystradgynlais and that area of Southwest Powys?

TG: Yes, I, I think that area is very well linked, but I think that the Ystradgynlais bit, although I don't represent that area, is very well linked to the rest of Powys in turn, so that if you like, but I think that Ystradgynlais community there and Ystalyfera all kind of identify together, the south of Powys, as you say, with the, with the Swansea Valley is one cohesive community but then that in turn, should link, in my view, with the rest of Powys.

SP: Okay, thank you.

AC1: Thank you.

TG: Brilliant, thank you very much.

AC1: The next speaker is Francesca O'Brien. I'm not sure if you were here at start, we'd ask you to give your name, your area of residence, not your address.

FO: It's Francesca O'Brien and it's Mumbles.

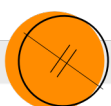
AC1: Your affiliation, if any.

FO: Conservatives.

AC1: Thank you, you've got 10 minutes and you'd have a warning when you're-

[Crosstalk 00:39:07]

FO: Thank you, I won't take up 10 minutes of your time, you'll be pleased to know I haven't got as hard job as Tom, so it's going to be straight to the point and very brief. So I'm Francesca, I'm speaking on two halves really, actually, as chair of Swansea and Gower Federation, Conservative Federation, but more importantly, as resident of Mumbles, as a Mum that lives there in the area with two young boys as well. Previously, Mumbles has been Mumbles Community Council, so it's made up of a few villages of Newtyn, Oystermouth, Westcross and Mayals, but under the previous boundary change, it actually split up that community, so the Community Council actually splits into two constituencies. So, touching upon what Tom mentioned, bringing Mayals into the community, because at the moment it is separated, I believe is much better for the Community Council, better for the residents as well, so they have a combined Member of Parliament, member of the Senedd, better sort of collaboration, as they do a fantastic job in Mumbles, there's a lot of infrastructure going in there, a lot of regeneration as well. So I think if it's better represented under one constituency, I feel I really do support that bringing Mayals back into the rest of the community, I haven't gone out and about over the last few years, I know I don't speak on behalf of all the residents in Mayals, however a number have noted why they have been separated and why that boundary line draws at them and they are represented elsewhere. So I really support this change



and welcome Mayals joining the one constituency so they are represented under one umbrella of Mumbles Community Council as well. And that's it, thank you.

AC1: Thank you, I'll just ask if there are any questions for clarification from the floor? From the panel?

SW: I've got one. Francesca, is there, have you got a position on the name of the constituency?

FO: Yes. So for myself it's, I'm, I'm on the, a chairperson for the-

SW: No, no. We're calling it, obviously the proposal at Swansea West and Gower.

FO: For Gower.

SW: Yeah. So would you, I know you're representing the Conservatives.

FO: Yes.

SW: In terms of, have, is your preference want the name to be changed as well?

FO: Yes, yes.

SW: To Gower and Swansea East? Swansea West.

FO: No, no, no. Not for Swansea West, mine is just for the Mayals, considering Mayals to be brought into the one constituency, not for the name change.

SW: Okay. Thank you.

AC1: Thank you. Thank you very much.

FO: Lovely, thank you.

[Pause 00:41:30 to 00:41:35]

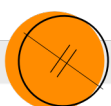
[Background discussions 00:41:35 to 00:41:55]

AC1: David Collins?

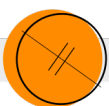
[Pause 00:41:56 to 00:42:03]

AC1: I think, Mr Collins, you were here, here earlier to hear the ground rules. Name, area of residence and affiliation, if any, and you've got 10 minutes with a two-minute warning.

DC: Diolch, bore da, Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Sant hapus. Good morning, everyone. Happy St David's day. I'm David Collins. I live in Llangyfelach and I'm speaking to you in a purely personal capacity. Thank you for inviting me to share my observations regarding your initial proposals for Swansea. They supplement my written submission, hard copies of which are available at the front and they're on the BCW



website. Obviously. I'm going to be a little bit different from most of the rest of your contributors today, I think, in that, in essence, what I'm going to suggest is that in order to be serious about the local identities, and the specific geographical considerations in an area such as Swansea, you really ought to seriously question one of your other conventions, not one set down in statute, but established over generations. and probably lastly, for convenience, I'm speaking about the entire Ward Convention. Now here in Swansea, we've got a concentration of very large wards of 10,000 plus electors that are clustered round, a sort of semi-circle coastline. And this feature alone severely limits the number of options that are consistent with rule two's statutory electoral requirement of constituency electorates falling in the range of 69,724 to 77,062. But in Swansea, there's also a further complication in that the boundaries on which the entire wards convention principle, however you wish to call it, have simultaneously changed in law and new wards have been formed, which will take effect for the council elections in May in two months' time. And one of which, Waterfront Ward will be split in half by your initial map, if no changes are made. Now this confluence of timings has no doubt been exacerbated by Covid and the pandemic and what have you, but as I say, if you proceed with them as they are outlined at present, it will have the practical effect of causing the Waterfront Ward to be split between two different MPs this election, and at any general election going forwards. I suggest to you that such an outcome would not be consistent with the intent behind the principle of keeping wards, insofar as possible, coterminous within one single seat. Now it's also the case that in the 2020 Act, Parliament attempted to anticipate the possibility of new wards being created. They inserted a brand-new clause which didn't exist before, it was clause six to amend Rule five of the rules of redistribution. And the effect of that was to insist that you must give consideration toward boundary changes that were definite on the commencement date, even if they had not come into force and elected councillors yet. Now, unfortunately, your commencement date was December 2020, Swansea's new boundaries weren't in statute law because the First Minister did not sign them into Welsh law until 2021. But they will, as I say, be operational in two months' time at the local elections, and we, they will be returning councillors and the previous wards will still exist in name, but they will be totally different in practice, in fact. Now, though, you don't have to apply it because of the timings, I do suggest the intent of Parliament might be allotted some sort of weight in the Commissioner's deliberations. And my reading of the revision to Rule five in the 2020 Act is that other things being equal, Parliament seems to feel that new electoral ward boundaries could be favoured over old ones. I'm suggesting that this provides an opportunity and a necessity really, to revisit the precedent underlying this whole ward assumption because in this situation, you've got to choose between either splitting up a defunct ward that will have ceased to exist by the time that your recommendations come into practice, or splitting up the new one. Something's got to give. If it's acceptable for Waterfront Ward to be split between constituencies, then why is this whole ward shibboleth sacrosanct in every other ward? Now, given the emphasis that post 2010 Parliament's have put on restricting the variation in the numbers of electors between seats, I think it's inevitable that other elements have to give in consequence. And I respectfully suggest, I respectfully, sorry, suggest to you that in such circumstances, a few modest, a bit of modest tinkering with the whole Ward Convention might be expedient and ought to be seriously considered. Now I've just said Convention, I said, shibboleth, didn't I? You, you, you could call it a tradition, you could call it custom and practice, whatever you want to call it, I've



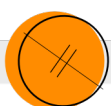
tried to give it fair consideration in my submission. It does come from the era when you did this sort of thing by paper and pencils. It might benefit from revision in view of not just the changes in the law, the post 2010 Acts, specifically the 2020 one, but also the cartographic and population data environment in which we operate in the 21st century is not the same as those in which your predecessors had to cope. Now, happily, once you take a step downwards from humongously, large Swansea wards, to individual polling districts, which are much more similar to the average ward size in most of the rest of Wales, it becomes possible to take a scalpel rather than the cleaver, to the job of carving up a compact, very dense urban area like Swansea, into the necessary electoral quota ranges. So what I've attempted to do with my counter proposal is demonstrate one way that a balanced exchange between Swansea Central and North as we're calling it, and that Neath and Swansea East constituency might better address a few of the specific local and geographical considerations in Swansea Central area. I've done a slight transfer of the electorate from the Neath seat into the Swansea Central seat, because Neath is a little bit closer to the ceiling under the original proposals than Swansea Central is. Now my proposal is only one of various options that are made possible by exchanging polling districts rather than entire wards. It's obviously for you guys to take decisions, sorry, for you ladies and gentlemen, to take decisions in principle on how you handle the question of new versus old ward boundaries, and exactly how you're going to refine the whole Ward Convention to reflect the situation that confronts you here. I want to help you to reach the soundest conclusions by reflecting on the utility of clinging on to the custom and practice of your predecessors in the era before Parliament impose statutory electric ranges and requirement to consider changes toward boundaries in circumstances that as I say, don't quite apply here because the dates don't quite line up, but which you may determine it would be quite rational and coherent with the wishes of Parliament to do anyway. Now as I say, I believe that sound principles will lead to sound conclusions and vice versa unsound principles may lead you to suboptimal conclusions. So I asked you to reflect on two specific questions. First one, is it really sensible to ignore imminent changes to wards, despite the fact that the 2020 Act has given you a clear green light to consider them? Second question, is the rigid operation of a whole ward's only policy optimal, let alone a suitable way to draw seats in a singular city like Swansea, in view of the restrictive number of whole ward options, the very, very limited number of whole ward options that you can find consistent with rule two. I wish yourselves and the Commissioners well with your deliberations on these points. I look forward to your conclusions. It only remains for me to thank you again for giving me the opportunity to address you today, to thank Shereen, Kerris and the staff of the Secretariat for their help and to address any points of course of questions or clarification.

[00:51:08]

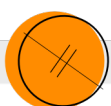
AC1: Thank you very much, are there any point on the floor first? From the panel? No. Thank you very much.

DC: Thank you.

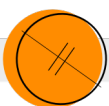
AC1: Next speaker is Catherine Richards. Can I ask you to, just to confirm your name and your area of residence, and any affiliation you might have.



- CR: Well, my name is Catherine Richards. I live in Alltwen I am a member of the Labour Party but I'm not speaking on behalf of the Labour Party this morning, I'm speaking as an individual person. Okay.
- AC1: An individual. Yes. You've got 10 minutes.
- CR: Right, okay.
- AC1: And my colleague at the front will tell you you've got two minutes left.
- CR: And they will, they will move the slides on for me will they, because I can, oh I can use this. I'll, on this, is it? Right, okay. Lovely. Thank you. So good morning, everyone. My name is Catherine Richards and I live in Alltwen which is in the Clydach Valley, which is not to be confused with Clydach Swansea. My presentation this morning opposes a proposed new boundary changes the constituency of Neath and these are my arguments. The boundaries to the new constituency of Brecon and Radnorshire as stated have been influenced by rivers, as can be seen from the above slide, the River Tawe flows through the Swansea Valley down, and the Alltwen and Rhos Wards, which are here, are on the East Neath side of the river in Clydach Valley. As can be seen from this slide, there are very few houses on the East Neath side of the river, apart from the Alltwen and the Gellinudd and Cilybebyll Wards. The River Clydach rises above Cilybebyll across the valley. Here you can see River Clydach there, the Valley therefore is called Clydach and not the Swansea Valley. Accessibility to the constituency office. Brecon and Radnorshire constituency is already a large rural constituency and my ward is not rural, but post-industrial in character. Alltwen is approximately four miles from Neath Town Centre, and I have always looked at Neath as a focus of my community. There is a regular bus service and cycle track to Neath where my current MP's constituency offices is based. All of my past MP's offices have been based in Neath, obviously the new MP will hold surgeries around her constituency, but in emergencies her office may need to be contacted and driven to. To access the MPs constituency office in Llandrindod Wells would mean a minimum of one and a half drive, hour's drive by car. It's 62 miles one way. As you can see from the map it's across the Brecon Beacons from Alltwen as can be seen from this slide which in winter can be daunting to the high altitude of the Beacons and inclement weather. And this was a slide which has taken 4 February from our farm showing the snow in the mountains. Other forms of transport take even longer and are expensive. A taxi fare one way is £104, but this can increase according to traffic conditions. Train travel takes a minimum of two hours 45 minutes, 77 miles from Neath to Llandrindod Wells, ticket prices can vary from 40 to £60 pounds. Bus travel is virtually impossible, and takes between four to five hours one way. The difficulty in accessibility will mean the poorer families, young adults, or elderly people might not possess a car, and therefore access to an MP and democracy will be drastically diminished. Constituency events in the proposed new constituency would be difficult to attend since a car journey of two hours, 72 Miles, would be required one way to attend an event in the northern most part of the constituency just, such as Knighton. In Neath, all constituency events can be accessed by a maximum of half an hour travel. Younger voters are encouraged to participate in these events, yet travelling greater distances to events would put younger people off politics. Many young voters do not possess cars, or cannot afford the fuel today to run them for long distance, especially in today's economic climate. Global warming, well,



global warming the distances involved in travelling across an enormous area of Wales, such as Brecon and Radnorshire constituency for meetings with the MP if needed, will lead to a greater increase in carbon emissions and global warming. I play an active part in church life in Alltwen which is in the parish of Cilybebyll and you can see the slide here, St John the Evangelist, Cilybebyll. This original mediaeval church belonged to Neath Abbey, and would be used by the Cistercian monks to sleep and pray overnight if they were unable to return to the Abbey. This slide shows Neath Abbey in modern times. The farm where I live is situated on the Cistercian way to Neath Abbey, and is 3.1 miles from the Abbey. Pilgrim's Walk is this way to Neath Abbey. Our farm was an Abbey farm in that it belonged to the Monastery at Neath Abbey. My parish Cilybebyll is at the furthestmost point of the Llandaff diocese and the demarcation is the Tawe river. St Peter's Church Pontardawe is within the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon. With the introduction of church ministry areas in March 2022, my ministry area team leader will be based in St Patrick's Church [inaudible 00:57:45] and Neath and my rural dean will be based in St John's Church Skewen Neath. With the introduction of the proposed new boundaries if their queries with my church, such as grant funding, the parishioners may need to visit the MP in Llandrindod Wells out of our diocese for support. My current MP regularly attends church services weekly in Neath, but the distances involved in covering the proposed new constituency, the MP in Llandrindod Wells will have vast distances to cover. In the past our MPs have attended our church's Christmas fayres and other events. And this provided a good opportunity for both the MP and the constituents of Neath to meet each other. The area in which I live was the cradle of the Industrial Revolution. It had coal mining and industry from earliest times. A colliery at [inaudible 00:58:43] was mentioned in 1772 and fuelled one of the first coal powered blast furnaces outside Coalbrookdale at Bryncoch Neath. On my farm there were five mines that we know of, probably more. With the demise of industry, a post-industrial society has evolved, contrast this with the rural agricultural economy of Brecon and Radnorshire dominated by farming and its allied businesses. I have been a member of Soroptimist International Neath for over 25 years and we meet as a club every two weeks on a Monday night in the Castle Hotel Neath, you can see a slide of the Castle Hotel. Soroptimist International was founded in 1921 and is a global volunteer movement with a network of around 72,000 club members in 121 countries. Soroptimist international advocates globally for women's rights and as club members we are asked to lobby regularly, our MP on matters pertaining to women. With several of the 14 members living out the new proposed constituency of Swansea East and Neath the close contact and relationship with our MP will be diminished. The, this slide shows the two blast furnaces at Neath Abbey ironworks site. I am a trustee of the Friends of Neath Abbey Iron Company and volunteer at the Neath Abbey ironworks site every Sunday afternoon. When applying for grants in the past, we have contacted the MP and she has supported our grant applications. She has visited the site readily to support us. This will be, now be more difficult since the Neath Abbey Ironworks site will be in Swansea East and Neath and I, as a trustee, will be resident in Brecon and Radnorshire constituency. The last slide shows Neath Castle which was the former centre of civic power for Neath and district. It has recently been made clear on Facebook under Local Neath Matters, that our current MP will only represent the constituents living in her constituency, so rather than travelling four miles to Neath, we'll have to travel to Llandrindod Wells to the constituency office, or depending on the urgency of the



matter, the next constituency surgery, which could be up to two and a half miles drive away. I hope that you take my views into consideration. Thank you.

AC1: Thank you very much. I should ask are there any points of clarification from the floor? Or from the panel? Thank you very much.

CR: Okay. Thank you very much [inaudible 01:01:28].

AC1: The next speaker is councillor Jamie Evans.

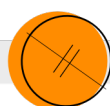
[Pause 01:01:37 to 01:01:45]

AC1: Mr Evans you, if you could give your name, your area of residence and any affiliation that you have. You've got 10 minutes and as you've seen with the previous speakers, you'll have a warning when you have two minutes left

JE: Diolch yn fawr.

AC1: Okay.

JE: My name is Councillor Jamie Evans, I'm a member of Plaid Cymru, I work for Plaid Vymru, I'm a Plaid Cymru Councillor in Neath, I'm here instead of Sioned Williams, member of the Senedd who couldn't make it due to plenary, but I'm speaking in a personal capacity. Yn gyntaf, hoffwn i ddweud Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Sant i chi gyd. Happy St David's Day to you all. Diolch yn fawr i'r comisiynwyr a pawb sydd wedi respond to the Commission, apologies my, I'm not fluent in Welsh, but I always have to start so we ensure that the Welsh language is living. I'm going to speak today mainly about two or three constituencies proposed by the Boundary Commission, Neath and Swansea East, Brecon and Radnorshire and Monmouthshire. First of all, obviously, thank you for the hard work that has gone in to these proposals. However, the proposal to put Cwmtawe and Alltwen as we just heard, which is in Clydach into Brecon and Radnorshire makes very little sense at all. The only areas that Cwmtawe will have links to within that constituency really are Ystradgynlais and Abercraf. It has no links really to places like Presteigne, Knighton, which are right on the English border. There's very little linguistic, cultural, historic links between the areas, Cwmtawe is a largely Welsh speaking area. It's a, within Neath Port Talbot it's, it's a site of linguistic importance. We have areas like Cwmllynfell, Pontrhydyfen and Ystylafera and which are over 50 to 60% Welsh speaking. You will struggle to find that in more anglicised areas of Powys, especially southern Powys. The current borders also disregard local factors, Trebanos and Clydach for example, as Steve Phillips will know, there's very little difference between the two areas and Clydach is in Swansea County, Trebanos is in Neath, the boundary between the two which is a grass verge with houses in Clydach on one side, houses in Trebanos on another side, one paying significantly more council tax but we won't get into that now. That's a matter for this afternoon at Neath Talbot's budget. The, we in Plaid Cymru believe that the natural solution to the lack of population in Brecon and Radnor would be to move Abergavenny in to the proposed constituency. There are much closer links between Abergavenny and places like Crickhowell, Brecon, you've got places like Sugarloaf Mountain, which is a very popular area of the Brecon Beacons. People associate Abergavenny with that part of the world rather than, you know, I've never met anyone that



would consider Ystalyfera a part of the Brecon Beacons, for example, or a particularly rural area. I'd also like to touch on the proposed constituency of Neath and Swansea, so Swansea East and Neath. Again, this constituency makes very little sense. The only thing that makes sense to me as a former resident of Skewen for 17 years is Neath and Skewen finally being back together as opposed to Skewen being in Aberafan. There, there are very few links between Neath, Llansamlet, Bonymaen, they, they don't exist, people may commute to Swansea for work from Neath, but that would be in the Swansea West seat, I believe, I haven't looked too greatly into Swansea West and Gower. But yeah, the links just don't exist between Neath and Swansea East. This is why Plaid Cymru is proposing a Neath and Aberafan seat. There is tension again, again as people in this room will know between Neath and Port Talbot, however, these towns do have very close links, people easily and readily commute between the two towns for work, I went to school Port Talbot, despite being a resident of Neath, there, there's excellent transport links between the two towns, the valleys are fairly similar in terms of demographics, albeit the Neath, the Neath Valley being a lot larger in terms of population, they are quite similar in terms of the people that live there, and they are both quite deprived areas unfortunately. But that means that people share similar experiences there. It's not quite mirrored in the Swansea and Amman valleys which we're proposing would move to the [inaudible 01:07:45] and Tawe seat, which are more Welsh speaking than the Neath and Afan Valleys, more Welsh identifying than the Neath and Afan Valleys as well. It makes sense for them to be in a constituency with places such as Pontardawe, Alltwen, Rhos and Pontarddulais, Gowerton and even Pontarddulais and Gowerton have closer links to areas like Cwmtawe and places like Ystalyfera than they do to Swansea City Centre, and Ystalyfera, Pontardawe, Trebanos certainly have more in common with, with Pontarddulais and Gowerton than they do Rhayader or Knighton. I'd like to finish off by saying that if the UK Government want to reduce the number of MPs in Wales, let's go the whole hog, reduce it by 40 and declare independence. Diolch yn fawr.

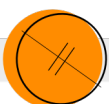
AC1: Thank you. Are there any questions clarification from the floor? Panel? Thank you very much.

JE: Diolch yn fawr.

[Pause 01:09:01 to 01:09:11]

AC1: The next speaker is not currently present, so can we invite Councillor Lyndon Jones to speak at this point? Councillor Jones, if you could just give your name, your area of residence and your affiliation, if any, and you've got 10 minutes, and you'll be given an eight minutes warning, if I can call it that.

LJ: Yes. Yeah, great. Thanks. Thank you. Lyndon Jones, I'm a councillor in Swansea, leader of the Conservative group on, on the council. I would, I'm here today to support the proposals for the Swansea West and Gower constituency and would like to make the following points. Your proposals mean that the constituency is wholly within the city and county of Swansea. It is very good, it has very good communication and transport links, and we, we believe make for a very coherent constituency. We particularly support the proposal to reconnect the community of Mumbles. Currently, Newton, Oystermouth and Westcross wards are part of the

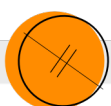


Mumbles Community Council area and are in the Gower Parliamentary constituency. But Mayles, whilst being part of the Mumbles Community Council is in the Swansea West constituency. This is an anomaly and splits the important and iconic community of Mumbles. It also means it is represented by two MPs and two different Senedd members. Under your proposals, the community of Mumbles will be united in one constituency, which is long overdue. Pupils living in Westcross either go to Bishop Gore, or, in Sketty, or Bishopston Comprehensive school, while pupils in Mayals go to Bishopston Comprehensive School, which is another reason why Sketty and Mayals are a natural fit for the proposed Swansea West and Gower constituency. Including Dunvant, [inaudible 01:11:20], Sketty and Cockett in the new Gower and Swansea West constituency makes sense, because they are communities in their own right, but they also skirt Town Hill, Uplands and Castle, which are communities that look to the city centre and therefore provide a natural boundary for the new proposed constituency. From a policing point of view, Sketty, Killay are joined up with Mumbles, Mayals and Gower as one unit. Indeed, councillors from those areas now meet up on an ongoing basis as we did with, with the police as we did the other day. Residents in, in Gower, Three Crosses, Dunvant and upper Killay use Killay and Sketty shopping centres to do their shopping. Residents in Waunarlwydd, which is part of the Cockett Ward look to, towards Gowerton for shopping, that is, so should be included in the, in the new constituency. However, one change we would suggest is to call the new constituency Gower and Swansea West and not Swansea West and Gower. The Gower part of the constituency makes up the largest part of the new constituency, Gower 58.4% as opposed to Swansea West having 41.6%. Gower is also the first area of natural, the area of natural beauty and deserves to be given precedent. And finally, could I make one comment about the Brecon and Radnor constituency where I worked for many years? I heard earlier about the Ystradgynlais area and, and Brecon and north of that constituency. And Ystradgynlais as we know, is at the top end at the Swansea Valley. The main newspaper there is the Evening Post, the Swansea Evening Post. There has also been discussion over many years when there have been talk of boundary changes to move Ystradgynlais out of Brecon and Radnor and that was always firmly rejected by local people in Ystradgynlais, therefore the inclusion of Ystalyfera and the top end of the Swansea Valley into the new constituency would fit well. And indeed when you get to Ystradgynlais, to Ystalyfera, you literally go down one road, and you get a signpost and you move from one, quite seamlessly, to the other, and I would therefore support your proposals. Thanks very much.

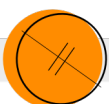
[01:13:52]

AC1: Check, are there any questions of clarification for Councillor Jones? No, thank you very much. Great, thank you. The next speaker is Geraint Davies MP. We just need the podium to be cleaned and then we have got, we'd ask you to give your name, where you, the area in which you live, your affiliation to any group and you've got a 10-minute slot, lady in the front will give you an indication you've got two minutes left. Thank you.

GD: Right, okay, bore da. I'm Geraint Davies, I live in Swansea West, Mayals, I'm a Labour Party MP, so I'll be supporting the listed Labour Party proposal, and Happy St David's Day. Hold on, does this work? They are, obviously these are the proposal you've proposed in a nutshell Swansea West constituency is chopped in half,



Swansea West is, in essence, an urban footprint, and half of it goes into the, your proposed Swansea West and Gower constituency, in particular, Sketty and Mayals running along the coast and indeed, Cockett and other parts. In terms of the Swansea North, what happens it's, just my [inaudible 01:15:13] Swansea West, again the second half of the urban footprint goes to the West. And then you take four rural constituencies, communities from Gower and sort of stick them on top of half the urban footprint. That's what the, your proposal is. And in terms of your criteria for evaluating different proposals, it's worth pointing out that you do cut the urban footprint in half and you put half of this sort of rural community on top, four rural communities and indeed, the, the current constituency as a natural boundary of the River Tawe. And then, in essence, the seat runs westwards along the coast, Castle up then scales, Sketty, Mayals, and then it runs, of course, into the Mumbles. And therefore, it's my contention that in particular, the Sketty, Uplands, sort of seamless continuity should continue. I'm proposing that, in various proposals that that does happen, and one of them that we add on St Thomas and and Bonymaen to continue the sort of coast, coastal trajectory. In terms of local ties, again, I'm talking about the Boundary Commission proposal for a moment, as I said, Mayals is, in essence part of Sketty. And there's integration obviously, in terms of work and shopping and transport routes, the university itself, their campus is in Sketty. The student population is largely in Uplands and Castles, so it would be very strange to split those in two. And indeed the, the various, the biggest minority community is the Muslim community, and they've got various mosques in Swansea West, in particular is Sketty, Uplands and Castle. And there's concern in that community about splitting Sketty from Uplands and Castle and indeed and other minority communities in particular, the Chinese community and the African community. Therefore, you know, certainly splitting Sketty from Uplands and Castle would cause confusion. And similarly on the north, we've got the areas that have been sort of put in the, sort of rural and semi-rural communities of Pontarddulais, Mawr, Llandyfelach, Aberdare, sort of, a more, you know, associated with, you know, with Gower basically, Gorseinon, Loughor and the like, so again, that's not very good match. And naturally, obviously that you know, implies various levels of inconvenience for communities, integrating, working and living and experiencing leisure together in natural communities. So, I've got a proposal here that you, I think you've might have seen earlier today, where, which basically says we should have a Gower and Swansea North and Swansea Central seat, in essence. So basically, the idea is to repatriate the northern four wards that Pontarddulais, Pontardawe, Llandyfelach and Mawr back into the Gower, and to repatriate Sketty and Mayals back towards Uplands, Castle and Town Hill and to add on Bonymaen and St Thomas there along the, along the coast. And that would, without going through all the numbers, the numbers are there for you to view but basically, that would create two seats, Swansea North and Gower, 74,653 and a new Swansea Central, obviously we call, be called Swansea Central because the northern bit is repatriated to the Gower, of 75,560. There's a second, following on, I put in, I should say this original proposal, but there has been a lot of conversation in the communities about an alternative way of solving the same problem. And that may, you know, the intrinsic problem of course, is dividing Uplands and Sketty. So the other way of doing this is to, to, to honour the natural boundary that's currently existing of the River Tawe, and to have a seat the basic runs along the coast seamlessly, you know, Castle, Town Hill, Uplands, Sketty, Mayles, in fact, Mumbles, because obviously Mayles and Mumbles are part of the same Mumbles Community Council, all the way to the, to the Gower Peninsula,



and then to, instead of moving those northern wards which are linked to Kingsbridge and Cockett and Penyrheol which has been said by others, you know, Gorseinon is linked to Pontarddulais and the like, actually move those communities up to the north to create a new, northern seat. So this proposal is another way of solving the same problem. You basically end up with a sort of rural and semi-rural Swansea North seat, then you have a Swansea West and the Gower seat, which is more in keeping with the previous constituency boundaries. And I think, yeah, and my sort of feeling talking to the community, since I put in my first proposals, is that their preference is for this because they, you know, they feel, you know, as it were, more sympathy moving westwards, if I can put it that way. So I think I'll leave it there. Those are two ways of solving the problem identified, and I'd be happy with either of them.

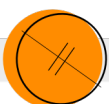
- AC1: Thank you very much. Are there any questions from the floor? Yes, Mr Phillips?
- SP: Just want to double check under both of these proposals, or options, the Llansamlet ward would remain in Swansea East in the, yes?
- GD: That's correct. Yeah.
- SP: Okay.
- GD: And finally, I didn't mention, but that all the numbers are here, and just so we're clear the, the new Swansea West and Gower seat would have 76,071 votes and new Swansea North would have 75,342, so it is in compliance and both proposals are completely self-contained within the, the footprint without having any, you know, perturbations, without an impact on any other surrounding seats. So we're just moving round.
- SP: Thank you.
- AC1: Thank you very much.
- GD: That okay? Okay, thank you so much.

[Pause 01:21:29 to 01:21:36]

- AC1: We are slightly ahead of schedule, next speaker is 10 to 10, Alun Cairns, do you want to speak early? I think, Mr Cairns, you've been present when I've asked you give you a name, your area of residence and your affiliation and you know about the 10-minute time limit with a two-minute warning, if I can call it that, towards the end. Thank you.
- AC2: I do and thank you very much, thank you for the work in, in which you've done in in the hearings up to now and in the preparations and like everywhere else, I wish everyone else a Dydd Gŵyl Dewi hapus. Mae'n bleser cael bod yma, a diolch yn fawr am eich amser a'ch gwaith. I want to focus on, my name is, I'm, my name is Alun Cairns, as you've, as you've rightly pointed out, I'm the Member of Parliament for the Vale of Glamorgan constituency. So, I want to talk specifically about the Vale of Glamorgan constituency and about the case for retaining the constituency as is, because it meets the, the criteria set out in the legislation and in the guidance



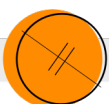
and the, in the Dinas Powys, I will support the broad proposals with the exception of retaining Dinas Powys within the proposed, within the proposed Vale of Glamorgan constituency. So as I've said the Vale of Glamorgan constituency meets the criteria that is set out in guidance and legislation. I want to make the point that there is no need for changes to the Vale constituency, changes would bring about unnecessary complications and confusion. So current arrangements meet the relevant community factors, geographical issues natural community ties, as well as local government boundary requirements. So moving away from the current arrangements when I don't believe that there is a need would lead to unnecessary inconvenience to residents in Dinas Powys. So by way of context, there was no consideration that Dinas Powys should be part of Cardiff South and Penarth constituency during the review that led to the boundaries that were confirmed ahead of the 2010 general election. Furthermore, I would add that the Boundary Commission recommended that the integrity of the Vale of Glamorgan constituency be retained for the proposals ahead of the 2015 general, General Election, which weren't affected by the Statutory Instruments at the time. So the point I'm making is the trend of retaining the Vale of Glamorgan constituency, as is. So this underlines the needless, the, underlines the importance of needless change where the numbers of 76,811 fall within the parameters as the constituency currently stands. The proposed changes would bring about unnecessary confusion, when a change isn't necessary, particularly when both constituencies will continue to retain the same names. Now this is something I think is important that Cardiff South and Penarth and the Vale of Glamorgan retain their names, but clearly, because it builds on the long history of each constituency, but clearly, changes between them would add confusion to local residents. So a key factor to the argument in the, in why Dinas Powys should be retained in the Vale of Glamorgan is because of its rural makeup. It's made up of several hamlets as well as the village of Dinas Powys itself. Now in demonstrating this, I want to highlight that it contains an ancient woodland of European significance, that's Cwm George, Caste Hill Woods, [inaudible 01:25:13] Wood and Case Hill Meadows. The Woodland Trust themselves recognise that they are of European significance. The reason I draw this to your attention is that being rural means that Dinas Powys doesn't fit with a city constituency. Now, although Penarth falls within the Vale of Glamorgan local authority area, Penarth as a town looks to, looks to Cardiff. It's an urban settlement that naturally forms the extension of Cardiff. So, I would also highlight that part of the role of a Member of Parliament is to build relationships between organisations within the constituency, and Dinas Powys' rural status is significant in this, so passing on best practice, for example, between similar communities across the rural Vale is something that I, and many other Members of Parliament before me will rightly take pride in. So like-minded, community and like-minded voluntary groups also continue to build networks across similar constituencies and if you with the, with the greatest of respect, if you give me an opportunity to highlight it. Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern is a charity aimed at supporting local residents from isolation. Now, it is closely tied to Green Links, is a rural transportation system which is run by the Vale of Glamorgan local authority, the, because the local authority has an obligation to work, to concern themselves with the isolation across the whole of the rural community. So the MP passes on best practice. So let me highlight another example from just last Friday. Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern run, also run a dementia café. It was that first one back after lockdown just last weekend and as I chatted to members present, it became obvious that there were common challenges and factors to similar initiatives



focussed on dementia in Cowbridge, and in Llantwit Major where they are Dementia Friendly towns. And they similarly have outlying hamlets and villages that, that they need to introduce specific measures in order to support local residents. So the point I'm making is that the Member of Parliament can highlight best practices and challenges, bring, seek to bring about legislative change, if necessary, in supporting communities and in building up capacity across those rural areas. On a separate note, some authorities established regeneration schemes aimed specifically at rural areas. Now in Vale of Glamorgan, there's a long history of the initiative called Creative Rural Communities. It's just one example. It's a rural community regeneration scheme aimed to support social infrastructure, hard infrastructure, as well as businesses and those living throughout the area. Now, any MP whose focus is on a city or on urban settlement, wouldn't necessarily be able to provide the same degree of support to the local authority, or specifically to Dinas Powys in this example, because their attention would rightly be on their, the large, the main makeup of the constituency. And an example from Whitehall that, that is likely, I think, to gain greater traction as time develops is the levelling up grant scheme. It's where the Member of Parliament working with the local authority makes an application to Whitehall for significant funding support. But in order to do so and in order to make a credible case, communities have to be brought together. I'm concerned that a regeneration scheme in Cardiff would mean that Dinas Powys is left outside of the thrust of any potential application. As a community and a population, Dinas Powys looks to Barry for its retail business and public services. Hospitals, dentists out of hours care, for example, is all provided from, from, from Barry. A Member of Parliament representing Barry can have the opportunity to identify any shortfall in provision that relates to Dinas Powys, and let me please highlight an example. Some time ago, the out of hours, there were complaints about the out of hours care provided by the, from the hospital in Barry. And the trend was only identified because several individuals had contacted me, from Barry as well as surrounding areas who all depended on Barry, which led to further investigation and identified that the service had been closed for the majority of time over a period of months. Naturally, that was challenging in health provision, which has thankfully been overcome. But a Member of Parliament whose focus is Cardiff but also includes Dinas Powys, would not have been able to identify the trend and would have not have been able to pursue the case in order to champion the need for additional clinical support that was needed in the out of hours care. So, furthermore, I want to underline that I'm conscious of the, the time, I could go further into supporting and cultural links, to sport and cultural links, for example, the football clubs, the rugby clubs, the Dinas Powys, sorry, the, the Vale of Glamorgan music festivals, all of these include Dinas Powys as a key part of it, because it looks to Barry as a, as its central Civic Centre. So bringing all of these together, the physical geography considerations, the local government boundaries, existing constituency boundaries, local ties that will be broken and inconveniences that would flow, I strongly believe that Dinas Powys' place can be retained within the Vale of Glamorgan, and should do so in order to ensure continuity and support across rural communities. Thank you.

[01:32:00]

AC1: Thank you very much. Are there any questions from the floor? Any questions from the panel? No. Thank you very much, Mr Cairns.



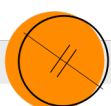
AC2: Thank you.

AC1: I propose to take a five-minute break at this point and then we'll resume with Mr Smith at five to 10. Thank you.

[Break]

AC1: Thank you, we'll make a start again, it's just about 10 o'clock, o we'll call Robert Smith forward, please. I think Mr Smith, you, you were present when we outlined we'd ask you to give your name, where you, the area in which you live, your affiliation, if any. I'll remind you, you've got 10 minutes with a two-minute warning from the lady in front of you.

RS: Diolch yn fawr, gadeirydd. Robert Smith, Swansea Road, Gorseinon. Councillor, Labour Councillor on the City and County of Swansea. Can I thank the Commission for the draft proposals and for producing a third set of proposals in, I think it's less than 10 years, all working to a different set of criteria and different quota? I've come to support the Labour Party counter proposal as the effect Swansea West and Gower, which would involve the inclusion of Sketty along with Mayles in a seat that also contains the centre of Swansea, and the inclusion of Pontarddulais, Mawr, Penllergaer and Llandyfelach in a constituency of it based on the remaining areas of Gower. This would create compact urban constituency in one part of Swansea and another comprising of the outlying areas. Gorseinon, Loughor, Penllergaer, Pontarddulais, Llandyfelach and Mawr have historically formed the core of the Gower constituency in the various iterations since it was formed in the 1880s. All were included in the Borough of Lliw Valley prior to 1996, and almost all those areas from part of the previous [inaudible 01:34:16] District Council, and if you go back even further to the Swansea rural district and the Llandyfelach rural district, some 100 years ago. All our small towns or villages with their own identity with a shared culture as industrial villages, which have evolved over the years. There are strong public transport links between each of the communities I mentioned, and none of them, as we've heard earlier, can be characterised as part of the main Swansea conurbation. Furthermore, I would argue that Gorseinon and Loughor have no community interests with the Sketty area and there are no public transport links between them. Sketty is at the core of the Swansea Bay conurbation, flowing seamlessly into the Uplands and then into to the centre of Swansea. Were Sketty to remain within a Swansea, a constituency based with, within Swansea centre, the centre of Swansea, all of the universities accommodation and the vast majority of students studying at the university would be in one constituency linking naturally with Uplands and Castle, and of course, this trend is likely to be consolidated further when the university moves from [inaudible 01:35:40] from Hendrefoilan altogether. In addition, there is a discernible boundary between Killay and Sketty at the [inaudible 01:35:49]. And all of the areas of Swansea served by a community council, and I think I'm right in saying this, but all of the areas where the Community Council would be in the Gower constituency, were Sketty to be, sorry, were Penllergaer and Pontarddulais and Mawr to be included with Gower rather than, rather than another constituency. I note from this morning's discussions and what's being put on the website, both of the proposals mentioned by Geraint Davies MP, together with the proposals from the Welsh Liberal Democrats, those from Plaid Cymru and I think others, they all produce, propose very different arrangements from the draft proposals, and some of them differ substantially from



each other. However, one thing that is common to all of these counter proposals is that Sketty is included with the same constituency as Uplands, while Pontarddulais and Penllergaer are included in the same constituency as Gorseinon and Loughor in all of the counter proposals that I've seen. On this issue, at least therefore, it appears that there is strong consensus about the, within the counter proposals, and on that basis and for the reasons that I've argued above, I would argue, strongly urge the Commission to revise their proposals on the lines I've suggested. Thank you.

AC1: Thank you, could you just stay there for a moment please? Are there any points of clarification from the floor? Or the panel? No, thank you very much.

SW: Yes.

AC1: Oh, sorry, there is one.

UNKNOWN: You mentioned the other proposals, including my second proposal, and forgive me, would you agree that would be a coherent proposal as well, in keeping the Mumbles Community Council together, and that Mumbles-

[Crosstalk 01:37:40]

RS: Absolutely. You know, there are various iterations to this, but I think the central point that I've argued in terms of Sketty and, and the Uplands and looking toward the city of, the centre of Swansea, whereas the links between Gorseinon, Loughor, Penllergaer and Pontarddulais, that's, that's the central argument, and I think that stands whichever iteration you go for.

UNKNOWN: Right, thank you.

AC1: Thank you very much. Thank you. Yeah, I'm now going to ask Councillor Penny Matthews to...

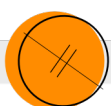
[Pause 01:38:12 to 01:38:28]

AC1: Councillor Matthews, I'm not sure you heard at the start of the day, but we'd ask you to give your name, your basic area of residence, your affiliation, if any, are you speaking as an individual, you've got 10 minutes to make your representations, there's a two-minute warning you'll have, and as you can see, there could be questions of clarification at the end.

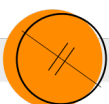
PM: Thank you.

AC1: Thank you.

PM: Firstly, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning, I'm actually taking the place of another councillor who was unable to come so please bear with me because my notes are very few and very scattered, so, we'll, we'll start with the, under the proposals outlined within the Commission report, the community is scheduled to be part of the new Neath Swansea East constituency, I'm writing to object to the proposal to place Llansamlet in this new community, constituency, I



beg your pardon. I object for the following reasons. Llansamlet is an integral part of Swansea and has been since 1918. Llansamlet is also the first junction that you come off the M4 and you enter straight into Swansea, if you come off any before, you're going to Neath. The construction of a new seat is a result purely of a mathematical formula and takes no account the history, community, traditions, or the poor transport links between Llansamlet and Neath. Llansamlet forms part of the wider community of Swansea. It forms the commercial heart of the current Swansea East seat, and you'll hear more probably from our current MP. Swansea East Enterprise Park falls entirely within the Llansamlet area, and over 10,000 people work in the Enterprise Park. Llansamlet hosts part of the big DVLA development, the Land Registry, the UK pension centre and three major call centres, including one for the HSBC bank. And it's a base for the Admiral insurance. It would be simply wrong to transfer the commercial centre and the heartbeat of Swansea to a commercial centre that's an integral part of the local economy, to a new seat that it has nothing in common with. Llansamlet is a coherent community within the parish boundary of Llansamlet Church. It should remain in one local government ward within the Swansea base seat. The Commission should not entertain any thoughts or proposal of splitting the ward and placing the residential part of Llansamlet in the new Parliamentary seat, while retaining the Enterprise Park in the Swansea, in Swansea based and focussed seat. If Llansamlet was to be part of Neath and the Swansea seat, most people, and consequently the focus of the seat would be Neath, with Swansea being tagged on. We would be a small part of a much larger entity, and feel that the area would suffer from being a small part of an area which it has never been part of. People feel a part of the local community, which has many voluntary sector groups who support the community. Again, they form part of the wider Swansea voluntary sector and have no association with Neath. Llansamlet's history is as part of the industrial history of Swansea, based in the heavy metalworking industries which characterise the lower Swansea Valley. Regeneration of the lower Swansea Valley led to the creation of the first enterprise park in the UK in the early 1980s. Llansamlet or Swansea [inaudible 01:42:37] referred to in the submission, the name gives the game away. The area has never been linked or associated with Neath. Transport links between Llansamlet and Neath are poor, which a significant part of the Birchgrove area and Llansamlet having no direct transport links to Neath at all, since the direct bus was withdrawn in 2018. It would make seeing the MP very difficult because they would be based in Neath, in the town centre, as they are now. Sports clubs within Swansea, sorry, within Llansamlet either play parts in Swansea competitions, or play in Swansea-based competitions. None play in any Neath-based competition, the sporting and cultural focus of Llansamlet is clearly oriented towards Swansea. There are a few other things I'd like to bring your attention to while I've got the opportunity. As I've told you, junction 44 is the first exit off the M4 that direct, leads directly into Swansea, thus making Llansamlet the actual boundary, the communities and [inaudible 01:43:56], sorry, I've lost my thread. The gateway to Swansea. Boundary changes is no more, it's not about people and communities, it's about massaging the figures to suit a log rhythm. This is what, as the local councillor for Llansamlet, I find very hard to understand. The [inaudible 01:44:19] and religious links through the churches from Swansea East to Swansea, Llansamlet links are wholly with Swansea East, no connections with Neath. Educational links to the Welsh school takes obviously, Swansea children. The River has, for centuries, been the dividing and separating the communities. Llansamlet, as I've told you, houses the biggest enterprise park in the country. The DVLA and other some main



employers, the Royal Mail has their main sorting office in Llansamlet. Tesco and Asda have their premium stores in the ward, Swansea's main banking hub is on the Enterprise Zone. The Fendrod Lake and [inaudible 01:45:07] are both in the Llansamlet, big draws for local people. A huge number of car dealers are based on the Enterprise Zone, and Llansamlet to, to round up, is the gateway to Swansea, and something that we'd like you to focus on when making any deliberations. Thank you.

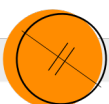
AC1: Thank you. Are there any points of clarification from the floor? Or from the panel? Thank you very much.

[Pause 01:45:34 to 01:45:42]

AC1: The, the next speaker is Alec Williams. Mr Williams, if you come forward, you've got 10 minutes to address us. We'll tell you when you got two minutes left. If you just could identify yourself by your name, basically the area where you live and if you're speaking in an individual capacity or as part of any affinity group.

AW: Yes, lovely. Thanks. So I am a member of the Conservative association. I live in Gowerton. I've spent some of my life living in Brynmill and Uplands. But I'd been in, brought up in, brought up in Dunvont so, you know, I spent a lot since, so I was born in Brynaman lived in the area since 75, so been there quite a while. So, you know, looking at the proposals, you know, I always felt that the Gower constituency was a little bit wrong if you like, because of the, some of the areas it encompassed, Clydach and so on, didn't really feel like the Gower. I see that the current proposals bring Gowerton and Waunarlwydd together, which I certainly feel is sensible. You know, I went to school with a lot of people of Waunarlwydd we interact a lot, us lot in Gowerton and Waunarlwydd, I think it's sensible that we all vote together. I see there's a natural division almost, between Waunarlwydd and Cockett because there's fields and so on in between the area. So even though Cockett is brought into the Gower constituency, which is not necessarily a bad thing, there's certainly a very, very strong case, I think, for having Waunarlwydd in the Gower constituency. I also see that Mayals, Sketty, Killay and so on have been brought into the Gower constituency. I mean, how on earth those areas ever were not in the Gower constituency, you know, I really can't figure because they're naturally part of Gower, the people that feel like they're part of Gower. And, you know, there's a very cohesive community in those areas that relate strongly with Gower, the Gower Peninsula and the area, and the whole area. So I, you know, I think that's a, you know, a good thing. I also see that the divided line alongside the constituency runs, you know, sort of, in between Brynmill and Sketty. Again, sensible because having lived in Brynmill it's never really, that area has never really felt like Gower's, it felt metropolitan. And I think that linking that area to the city centre, as opposed to Gower is good so I think the dividing line there is in the right place. So broadly speaking, you know, I think that the Gower constituency is an improvement on the old, old model. And that's it. That's all I've, all my observations.

AC1: Thank you, I'll just check if there are any points of clarification from the floor or from the panel? No, thank you very much, Mr Williams. Slightly ahead of time, Lynne Joyce, you probably heard the last... I don't want to call them instructions necessarily but advice I gave to the previous speaker. If you give your name,



basically, where you live, the area in which you live, any affiliation that you have, or if you're speaking as an individual. And you got get 10 minutes with a two-minute warning towards the end of it. Thank you.

LJ: Good morning. My name is Lynne Joyce and I'm a resident in the Sketty area of Swansea and as a resident of Sketty in Swansea, I support the Boundary Commission's proposals in relation to Swansea West and Gower. For me, the close proximity of, between the Dunvant, Killay and Sketty communities has created shared links in regard to the local shopping areas, the Comprehensive School catchment area and the public transport links. I myself travel frequently between these areas for work and leisure and it seems natural that they should all remain grouped together in, in that area. I believe the common interest between neighbours should be maintained and I think it gives all members of the public then, a better, with their representative, gives them better representation from their, their representatives when these communities are close together. That's, that's all I have to say, but I'm in support of the proposals. Thank you.

AC1: I'll just check if there are any points of clarification from the floor or from the panel? No, thank you very much. Then again, slightly ahead of time, Paxton Hood-Williams? So you're due for 10:40, would be I invite you to speak now if you want to.

PHW: Pardon?

AC1: You're due for 10:40 but we'd invite you to speak now if you want to.

PHW: [Inaudible 01:50:57]

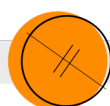
[Laughter].

AC1: Again, if you give your name, your basic area of residence and your affiliation, if any.

PHW: Yes, of course.

AC1: And you've got a 10-minute, with a two-minute warning at the end.

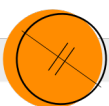
PHW: Just need to sort it out and then we'll take it from there. First of all, my name is Paxton Hood-Williams, I am a councillor at Swansea City Council, a Conservative city councillor, representing Fairwood Ward, which is effectively [inaudible 01:51:24] and Threecrosses and outlying areas around there. And effectively, I've lived in that area all my life, [inaudible 01:51:31] apart from about five years when I lived in the Uplands. So basically, I've lived in that area for my life. So I got a lot of experience and knowledge of the area in that sense, I guess, and certainly looking at the proposals that have come forward here in terms of what is being proposed in terms of the seat of Swansea West and Gower, well, I'll say something about the name later on, but that's another matter, but I would say something about that. Very small. But I think it's a natural join together in that sense. I appreciate the necessity of why we have to go through these boundary changes because of the number of voters etc. you know, the figures on that better, far better than I do and you understand that, I'm sure most people here will understand that in terms of



fairness, that's what you need to do to equalise numbers. And these proposals have been coming forward for some time, or the potential for these proposals coming forward, have been there for some time. In terms of what is being proposed, and in terms of the connections between Swansea West and Gower as it is now, I think basically, from my point of view, where I live in Fairwood Threecrosses, and Upper [inaudible 01:52:42] it's, it's natural to travel through the Swansea West areas of Killay and Sketty to get into town, into Swansea, also for local shopping in Killay and an awful lot of that is done, so it is very much part of the community in that sense and a very close community in terms of people living together and working together in, in those areas. People will travel through Gowerton when they want to go to some of the bigger supermarkets, and they are available and those routes are through there as well. So it is some fitting in that sense, I think very well. Furthermore, when we're travelling east, as they say, specifically into Swansea to shop, it will be going through the areas of Killay in Sketty, and through into town from there. One of the things I think that this does, this proposal, it, it is, it either reinforces or reinforced by the fact when you look at the policing, policing setup in the area, in particular, then it very much matches the way the police have put their area together. The, basically, whilst the inspector is based in Town Hill, that is split into two areas of Town Hill, and his responsibilities are split into two areas. One of which really, basically is all of the Gower Peninsula, Sketty, Killay through down to Mumbles and all that area, which is one specific area, which basic, is what you're proposing to do in terms of bringing in these wards into this, into this constituency. And that's the sociological view that they have in terms of policing the communities, and looking at them in that respect, that these are a community in their own right, which worked together and are policed out of the same station. And this, the base for that station is in Sketty itself and that's the only police station that's left in the area in West from there, in fact. So in that sense, it does tie in very well in that respect. So it, whether that's reinforcing your arguments, because I am supporting your arguments, obviously, or whether these, your arguments are supporting them, I'm not quite sure, but one of the two, but either way it works. And that seems to be a logical way the police represent, recognise the sociological nature of the area, and how it combines and comes together. Certainly, as has been said previously, I lived for five years in the Uplands and it says totally different from the areas west of it, there's no doubt about that. But it makes sense to me to draw the boundaries exactly as you have drawn them, and I think it would be very, I think it would be a very sensible move going forward. Bearing in mind that you have to have these decisions made in terms of the numbers of constituents per, per constituency at any point in time. So in that sense, as I say, I think it's totally sensible in terms of what you're doing. The one change, I would suggest, in terms of what I touched on earlier, was instead of calling Swansea West and Gower, I would much prefer to see it called Gower and Swansea West, but that's because I'm a Gower boy, and born and bred in Gower, I'm sure that's the reason why, but I think it makes more sense in many ways because Gower as a constituency was there and Swansea West is more of a morphos area rather than Gower in the, in that sense in the Peninsula. So on that basis, that's the only real change I would look, like, like to see in that sense, but otherwise, I would fully support your proposals in this respect. So if anybody's got any questions for me, I'd be happy to try to answer them.

AC1:

Thank you, I'll just check if there are any points of clarification, there's one from the floor?



UNKNOWN: Yes, [inaudible 01:57:01] Gower and Swansea West does sound?

PHW: Yeah, Gower and Swansea West certainly does sound a better way to put the name of the constituency. And it, it makes it, whilst it's still part of Swansea, it makes it seem more, more distinct from the other Swansea communities, which also will obviously end up starting with the word Swansea. So I think it probably is a better, nicer way to round to title the constituency.

AC1: Thank you. Was there further clarification?

RS: On the question of police districts, Paxton, do you want me to stand up?

PHW: I can hear you fine.

RS: Oh, there we are, you mentioned the Sketty Gower police district?

PHW: Yep.

RS: But that, can I just clarify that doesn't include Gorseinon, which would also be in the constituency, which is Gorseinon and Loughor linked with the Penlan and Gorseinon police district?

PHW: Yes. But you will understand, Robert, better than I do, probably, is that when you look at the Cockett, the inspector who is based in Town Hill, he's got two basic areas. One is the Sketty area, and the west there, and the other is the north east, which is based around Gorseinon going out towards Loughor and that area as well. So there are two separate areas.

RS: Yeah.

PHW: Okay?

RS: That's, that's the point.

PHW: Pardon? They are two separate, just for you, just for you to understand as well, I think, in that sense. So that's why I think it's sensible or there's nothing incompatible in what is being discussed here in terms of what, in terms of the way the police have set up their organisation as well.

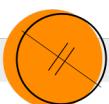
AC1: Mr Phillips?

SP: Yeah, just a, on this naming issue, and this sort of subdivision if you like between Swansea West and the Gower, just so I'm absolutely clear, I mean, I would say Fairwood is part of the Gower.

PHW: Yes.

SP: I would say Sketty is part of Swansea West.

PHW: Yes.



SP: You could make an argument either way for Dunvant or Killay.

PHW: I think you probably could, I'm not going to argue that in that sense, I just think it's more sensible, because as I say, I am a, I am a Gower lad at the end of the day. And certainly Threecrosses and Upper Killay were within the Gower RDC area, all right? And, specifically, so, yes, definitely, very definitely part of Gower with the border being the Clyde River effectively, I guess. You know? But, all right, it's a moot point whether it's Swansea West or Gower but my preference would be Gower and Swansea West.

SP: Okay.

PHW: I don't think it's worth really arguing too much over it in that sense.

SP: No, fine. I think it's more a point for us but we, and I should have asked a question earlier really, but this 58/42 split between the Gower and Swansea West, I think we need to find out where that particular boundary is drawn. Because there may be people who think it's 42/58, I don't know. But that's a helpful answer, thank you.

PHW: All right. I hope that helps some. I don't know. Anyway, thank you very much.

AC1: Thank you very much.

PHW: Okay. Ta.

SW: We don't have any more speakers-

[Crosstalk 02:00:12]

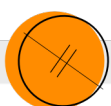
AC1: There is now a break, in the numbers, people we have got listed until one o'clock but what we propose to do is to adjourn at this point until one o'clock unless any other people turn up in the meantime, to make representations, in which case the assistant commissioners will all be on site to hear those representations. But unless anybody does turn up in the meantime, there's an hour break until one o'clock. Thank you.

[Break]

AC1: Thank you, if I could resume the hearing, we indicated that we would be on the side to hear any speakers that turned up, and we have one, Emma Turner? If you'd come forward to the lectern, please, I can tell you just what we need to, just go through some preliminary points when you get there. Just give your name and the area which you live in, and then any affiliation that you have, or if you're speaking as an individual or not. And you have a 10-minute slot.

ET: Yes.

AC1: And towards the end of the 10 minutes, after eight minutes, in fact, you'll be told of the remaining time you've got.



ET: Thank you.

AC1: There might be some questions of clarification for you at the end, but we now invite you to give your representations to us.

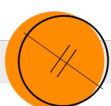
ET: Thank you.

AC1: Thank you.

ET: So my name is Emma, Emma Turner, and I live in Bridgend in Ewenny, which is part of the Vale of Glamorgan. I'm here as an individual, however, much of what I'm want to say is in relation to my job as solicitor, and I run a small legal practice in the Vale of Glamorgan and I represent mostly parents with children with special educational needs and disabilities. I also do some work for local authorities and schools in England and Wales. But as I said, my practice is based in the Vale of Glamorgan.

AC1: Thank you.

ET: So, in the consultation period, I, I read many of the documents that were, that were published. And I think my, the first comment I would say is in relation to the numbers and the parameters, the Vale of Glamorgan, I understand, is 76,811 which is, which is within the parameters that, that is required. And therefore my, my first observation is this seems to be a change that is unnecessary on the figures and my view is that the changes that are proposed, would, are really for the benefit of neighbouring constituencies not for the, for the Vale of Glamorgan. Most of my concerns are in relation to the families who I represent, and the way that the changes would make a difference to their lives. Most of my clients have children who have special educational needs and disabilities, so they access education, social care, community support groups, and by the community's support groups, I would mean more formal support groups such as National Autistic Society, but also other support groups such as gyms that, that have sessions for children with special educational needs, parents support groups that are very informal, which may just be coffee sessions, taking children who have special educational needs to have coffee trips with parents in an environment where they, that they are comfortable. My concern, particularly in relation to Dinas Powys being brought into the Cardiff area is about the accessibility for families who always and always have done, looked to Barry for the support that they have. So at the moment, families who are involved in education and social care, see Barry as their central point of contact for all of the support and administration for their daily functions for their child. If Dinas Powys, for example, were to move into the Cardiff area, families now have two areas of administration, so the the, the, the services that they are used to getting will still, my understanding is, will still come from Barry, but if they want to make representations and see, for example, their Member of Parliament, they're going to have to go to the Cardiff area to access the Member of Parliament to talk about administration that's in the Vale of Glamorgan, in Barry. And that's where I see the disconnect. And I think it's going to be very difficult for people who, let's face it, on a day-to-day basis have to overcome many challenges with organisation, family issues, getting children to school, that they have, they, they're having enough challenges without having the question of where is my focal point for making



complaints or making representations? Do they go to the old area as they know it? Or do they have to make representations in Cardiff, on issues that are administered in Barry? So that's really a general point. But there are many issues that, that come up in my area of work, again, relating to schools and children, for example, Dinas Powys and other areas of the Vale are really quite rural. And rural areas come with specific challenges that maybe other areas don't have. So one example would be school transport. The sort of issues that come up really regularly is where does a, where does a school bus stop? Is a child able to walk in a rural lane? Any distance to a bus stop? Is it lit? Are there pavements? Those sorts of rural questions come up all the time. Rural areas have rural issues that I feel Cardiff won't necessarily have, and therefore, I think Dinas Powys particularly sits far better in the rural Vale than it would in Cardiff. And that's just one example of some of the, the issues that, that come up that that I, that I think are specific rural questions that would, that, that really fit better in the in the rural Vale for administration in Barry.

[Pause 02:08:22 to 02:08:34]

ET: To my knowledge previously, there were no considerations about Dinas Powys being moved into the Cardiff South and Penarth constituency, which really begs the question again, why is it now being pushed in that direction? Again, I think it's to suit neighbouring constituencies rather than the Vale of Glamorgan, which, which I think is wrong. I feel really strongly that in areas such as Dinas Powys, looks to the local areas for community support, it doesn't look to Penarth or Cardiff. I mean living, living in Ewenny where I do you, Ewenny is considered a rural village in the Vale, as is Dinas Powys. And it's, it's a very different community to Cardiff and community support groups, socialising, amenities, everything is, is very rural, and it's certainly not Cardiff South and Penarth. I think probably my time is nearly up, so those, if you have any questions, but those are the, the main points that I wanted to make.

AC1: Are there any questions or clarification? Yeah, Mr Phillips has got a question for you.

SP: It's a point of clarification really. You mentioned the, the line of work that your practice is engaged in.

ET: Yes.

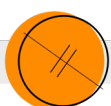
SP: Of course, regardless of the outcome or the final outcome of this process, I can't quite see the link between Parliamentary constituency boundaries and the services that you're talking about for two reasons. Firstly, they are provided by local authorities essentially.

ET: And they're devolved. Yes.

SP: And they're devolved.

ET: Yes. Yes.

SP: So I suppose my point is, could you give me some sort of idea of, of the proportion of cases that would require the intervention of an elected representative given that



I would imagine because they are devolved, initially, the first point of call will be the Senedd member, not the Member of Parliament. And, and secondly, we're not proposing, as I say, regardless of the final outcome, that doesn't impact on local authority boundaries, or the provision of the services by those local authorities.

ET: No.

[Crosstalk 02:11:22]

ET: That's a very valid point, but I think your question suggests, or really relies on there being a good understanding amongst families.

SP: Okay.

ET: Of where they go for specific areas of their life. So it doesn't always follow that people realise that an education matter is their local assembly members' business and not their Member of Parliament's business. And the same with care. So I find quite often, that somebody will, will, will, first, their first port of call will be their Member of Parliament. And then their Member of Parliament might say, this is a devolved matter, you need to speak to your assembly member, or even your local councillor. But I don't think, I don't think in many, many areas, there's that, still, that understanding that the devolved issues are for your assembly member.

SP: Fair point. Thank you.

ET: The... So, so just going on from that point, I, I do think it's confusing when, when you have to grapple with the boundaries and first of all, the line of authority of who, who has authority over certain areas. And it would be the case, wouldn't it, that if you had your, if, for example, you had your MP, who is Cardiff South and Penarth, and you're living in Dinas Powys, for example, if you had an issue about your school transport, or your social care, or your school admission appeal, you would have to go across the new border, perhaps to bring, to, to start off a complaint with your Member of Parliament in Cardiff, who would then send it back to your assembly member across the border to another area, who would be dealing with the local authority in, in the the Vale, it's just a disconnect. It's just not very cohesive, is it?

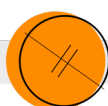
SP: No, no, I quite agree. That's a helpful clarification, I suppose what I was driving at was we've heard a lot about Dinas Powys this morning and in, and in the, the representations but it's more a question of well, take Penarth, for example.

ET: Yes.

SP: That's not part of the Vale of Glamorgan constituency, but it is part of the local authority area.

ET: Yes. And it-

SP: So I take, I take the point, that's helpful clarification.



ET: And, and from a personal point of view in a different context, where I live, I have the similar thing about doctors' surgeries and, and which hospitals to go to for different services. And I, I think I'm pretty competent in finding my way around the system. But there are times when I'm pushed from one surgery to another or one, one doctor, one medical department to another, I know that's a different point, but I am often ping ponged like this, and I feel that I, I'm competent to sort myself out where there are going to be a lot of people with a lot of challenges who really have to get, to find their way through this maze.

SP: Thank you.

AC1: Thank you very much.

ET: Okay, thank you.

[Pause 02:14:49 to 02:15:08]

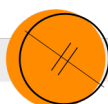
AC1: Thank you. So we will, we will adjourn again until one o'clock unless somebody else turns up that wishes to, to give representations in the meantime.

[Break]

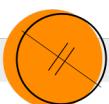
AC1: Good afternoon. Welcome to Swansea. My name is Andrew Clemen and I'm an assistant Commissioner to the Boundary Commission for Wales and I'll be chairing this afternoon's public hearing. The panel is made up of my fellow assistant Commissioner Steven Phillips, as well as Shereen Williams, who is the secretary to the Commission. We have some speakers starting with Mr Mike Carroll, Mike O'Carroll, sorry, for this afternoon. Can I just indicate that any speaker would have 10 minutes to address the panel, the panel would invite the speakers to give their name, the broad area of their residence and their affiliation, if any, to any group, or if they're speaking as an individual contributor. You're helping, you'll have help with timing from my colleague in the front row, will hold up a piece of paper with two minutes left telling you you've got that much time left of your 10-minute slot. So if I could ask for Mr Mike O'Carroll to come up to the podium, please?

[Pause 02:16:30 to 02:16:42]

MO: Good afternoon. My name is Mike O'Carroll, I live in the Sandfields area in Castle ward in Swansea, and I was the Welsh Liberal Democratic candidate in the 2017 and 2019 Westminster Parliamentary elections for the Swansea West constituency. I'd like to start by thanking the Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and the supporting staff for their important work. I appreciate it's, it's not an easy task that they have given the allowable quota variations and the large reduction in Welsh representation at the current review. The Commission's task is particularly difficult in Swansea, which is a local authority area represents 2.5 quotas. I think that the Commission's proposals for two full constituencies West of the Tawe, acknowledging the geographic boundary created by the Tawe River is indeed the most sensible arrangement and the best of a relatively poor set of options there. Accordingly, my comments this afternoon relate to the two proposed seats in Swansea that are west of the Tawe, named in the initial proposals as Swansea Central and North and Swansea West and Gower. Like many



of the written respondents, I feel that the proposed configuration between those two seats is currently suboptimal, and therefore, I'm speaking in support of proposals submitted in written evidence by the Welsh Liberal Democrats and supported, as far as I'm aware, independently by several other of those who provided written responses to the initial proposals. That is, to move Upper Loughor, Lower Loughor, Gorseinon, Kingsbridge, Penyrheol and Cockett wards, from Swansea West and Gower into what would become a Swansea North constituency, and to move Uplands Castle and Town Hill wards in the other direction. Both constituencies would remain within the allowable quota variation, and no other constituencies would be affected. My concerns with the Commission's initial proposals, and my support for this counter proposal are based on the statutory considerations of local government boundaries and local ties. First, as a great many of the written submissions have stated, the boundary between Sketty and Uplands wards, which would fall into separate constituencies on the initial proposals is not a natural one and divides local community ties. There is a large secondary school Bishop Gore, close to the boundary which has its catchment across both areas, and the Swansea University campus is in Sketty but has most of the students living in Uplands. Many of the houses in Uplands have Sketty postcodes, etc. This is also true at the other end of Sketty, where it goes into the wards of woods of Killay North and Killay South, which is why I disagree with those submissions that have sought to put a constituency boundary between Sketty and Killay. Again, there's a large secondary school, Olchfa, right on the, the ward boundary between Sketty and Killay South, and there is significant university accommodation still in Killay North Ward, as well as communities of faith spread right across the area. Similarly, in its previous 2018 review, which was never implemented, the Commission accepted that the wards of Cockett and Cwmbwrla are naturally linked to the Gendros Estate and should be in the same constituency, whereas the initial proposals in this review, run the constituency boundary down the middle of, of Gendros. In truth, the natural divides on the west side of Swansea, along two axes, two radial axes, one along the A4118, known variously as Water Road, Sketty Road and Gower Road, which goes from the city centre in Castle Ward, through Uplands, Sketty, Killay, Fairwood, Penlan and Gower, and second, the A483, which goes from Cwmbwrla through Cockett, and then splits with one arm going on to Penllergaer, and another arm going to Kingsbridge in Loughor, which, in turn, serve Gorseinon, Penyrheol and Pontarddulais. The counterproposals that I'm speaking to, or that I'm speaking in support of, base constituencies on these two radial arms, rather than the more arbitrary and cross community, community, cross community constituencies contained in the initial proposal. And finally, to emphasise that point, it's worth noting that in the initially proposed century, Swansea Central and North constituency, the drive from one end of it to the other, i.e., from Castle ward in the south to Pontarddulais in the northwest, the most natural route would involve driving through numerous wards in what would be the Swansea West and Gower constituency for several miles, and it seems to me that if you can't easily drive from one end of the constituency to the other, without crossing the boundaries, then it probably isn't constructed along natural lines that, that support local community ties. So I therefore urge the, the Commission to consider the counter proposal found in written submissions 9957, 9959, 9967 and 9992, all of which make the same case, albeit in different ways. Thank you.



AC1: Thank you, Mr O'Carroll, any point of clarification from anyone on the floor? Or the panel? No. Mr O'Carroll, thank you very much for coming today. Then we'd call upon Mr Riaz Hassan, please.

[Pause 02:22:24 to 02:22:36]

AC1: So again, Mr Hassan, if you could just identify your name, the area of your residence, not the actual address, if you have any affiliation that you've declared, or if you're an individual, that's equally fine. You've got 10 minutes and the lady in front of you will tell you when you've got, you've passed eight minutes.

RH: Thank you very much, chairs. Thank you very much, panel members. Thank you, thank you very much, everyone, for giving me the opportunities to present my proposal. My name is Riaz Hassan, professionally, I'm a community cohesion coordinator, but it's important to note that I'm not here to represent the Welsh Government or Swansea Council, I'm here in my capacity as a member of the Muslim communities, and then a resident of the Sketty ward in Swansea. One of my colleague, Dr Mahaboob Basha, he works for Swansea University, he's a leading member of the Muslim community. He's a governor of the Parkland in Olchfa Secondary school. He was supposed to be here to jointly present this presentation, but he's away from the country, so I'm kind of presenting that in, in, in, on his behalf as well. There was a presentation, will I be able to show that or?

AC1: It says that we've got it in writing.

SW: Yeah, we've got it in writing.

RH: Yep.

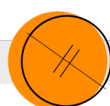
[Crosstalk 02:24:02]

SW: Can we pause the live stream for a second please? Is that okay?

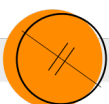
AC1: The live stream is back on now, I think.

SW: Yeah.

RH: Shall I start? Okay, thanks. Thanks very much. So my, my counter proposal is, it's for a new Swansea West and Gower constituency, which will consist of 76,071 voters, and a new north Swansea constituency, which will consist of 75,342 voters. The reason I'm saying that in how that will kind of look more cohesive in terms of the voter numbers, if we add Uplands to 10,834 wards, Castle, 10,312 votes, and Town Hill 5,592 votes, that will give us a total of 26,738 voters to the Boundary Commission of Wales proposed Swansea West and Gower constituency. And what I'm saying here is that if we remove Penyrheol 4,621, Lower Loughor, 1,795, Upper Loughor, 2,146, Gorseinon 3,340, Kingsbridge, 3,506 and Cockett, 10,473, that will give us a total of 25,881 voters from the Boundary Commission of Wales proposed Swansea West and Gower constituency, which will equal the, the kind of, the, the number we were looking at both, both constituencies. In terms of the boundaries, how it will look like, and I think if you see the, kind of the boundary classification, even geographically it looks kind of more cohesive in terms of the, in terms of the



number. And this is how kind of, you see a Town Hill, Uplands and Sketty, if we include that into the, the Swansea West area and then if you see, the Swansea North, the one I'm suggesting, if you take Cockett, Kingsbridge and Penyrheol, that will kind of give us a really good in terms of even, visible boundaries. So, again, I kind of just want to go into a bit of more details in terms of geographic cohesion. So, what does that mean? It will continue to use the River Tawe in the coastline as a natural boundary for the divide Swansea West and the Gower, running along the coast from west of the river Tawe, through Castle, Town Hill Uplands, through Sketty, Mumbles, Mayals, to the Gower Peninsula. Again, it will kind of, we will respect the existing boundaries. So that mean keeping Dunvont, Killay South and Killay North, as well as Mayals, that including Mumbles, and Sketty join with Uplands, Town Hill and Castle, to the River Tawe, and embraces the Gower Peninsula whilst creating a more coherent North Swansea seat. Again, it will reinforce the, the local ties that mean the communities, the work, the leisure in services, which is existing within the area, in all key area including our two universities, students' accommodation, [inaudible 02:27:56] and hospitals, the council and services, key regeneration development such as the city centre maximising convenience, nicely together in one constituency. And then kind of seeing how we can reinforce the, the local ties in a way that it's, it looks more cohesive, if it's become part of the, the same constituents here I, rather we are kind of taking some parts of the, the constituencies, which is proposed by the Boundary Commission of Wales' current proposal. Again, in terms of other consideration, because I'm putting this after discussion with members of the Muslim communities in Swansea. So if you see, retain the Muslim community cohesion Sketty, Uplands and Castle wards are heavily populated by the Swansea Muslim communities, but the central mosque, the Shia mosque in the new proposed Islamic Community Centre, which will be in Sketty. Geographically, that will bring more, more cohesion to the one I'm proposing, the Swansea West and Gower constituency. Again, the Muslim community is until now, represented by one Member of Parliament and member of the, member of the Senedd. And again, that is a key consideration when we, when we taking the community cohesion elements on board. Other minority community cohesion, again, if you see those key wards, currently, these are the wards which are heavily populated by other minority groups, in particular, the Chinese community, the African origins, the Arab communities, and it would be detrimental to the community coherence if they were divided into two different constituencies. Again, in terms of democratic, democratic coherence, more closely aligned with the, with the Senedd constituency representation, and again, few, a few points I want to make, I want to make the which is really, really important. We need to ensure that the Mumbles Community Council, my friend and colleague, Mark is there representing Mumbles, but the Community Council that includes both Mayals and Mumbles to remain in, in the, in the constituency. Again, minority communities would prefer to be in one constituency. So what does that mean in practice? Combine Uplands with Sketty, Mayals, and again, most of the people they look to the west, more than the, the east of the River Tawe, and I think that is something we need to keep in mind. The third point, you know, I want to make is that our North Swansea proposal will ensure that the rural and semi-rural communities which are linked, remain linked like Pontarddulais and Gorseinon the boundary, the Wales, the Boundary Commission proposal, they kind of, you know, dividing that, but what I'm proposing is that, if we have the Swansea West and Gower, and the north Swansea counter proposal accepted, then there will be that cohesion between the, the rural and the

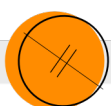


semi-rural areas. And again, the final two points I want to make is that the Swansea east and west, people who live in Swansea, they are already aware there is a divide. Again, in terms of community cohesion issues, if we look the, the hate crime cases, in terms of the far-right concentration in those area, and that's why when I'm saying is that most of the communities, they're looking more towards the west rather than the east, that is something needs to be taken, taken on board. And again, one key aspect, and that is my last point, last point is, is the trust, trust, specifically within the, not just within the Muslim communities, but particularly in the majority of the minority community is the, is the key. And the example I would give here is that what happens recently, specifically in Afghanistan, I was approached by the established Afghani community here in Swansea, and they wanted to present their views and concerns to the Member of Parliament and it was, it was good in a way that Geraint, he was representing the, the Swansea West, so I've arranged a meeting for him, and it was much more easier for him to be aware of, kind of, you know, the cases, he knew most of the community, the community knew him and that played a very, very key role. So again, if there is one Member of Parliament, it's much more easier for the communities to go and share their, their concern with, with that one MP. And again, it's very much geographically, as I said, very much linked to the member of the Senedd as well. So those are some key consideration I would ask the, the panel to to consider, you know, when they, they're making the final decision. Thank you very much again.

AC1: Thank you very much. Are there any questions or clarification from the floor? Mr Phillips?

SP: Yeah, I've got two, two issues of clarification. First, I think I know the answer to this, but these proposals do not impact at all on this proposed Swansea East and Neath constituency? There are no, the, the map that you put up does not cross that particular boundary? Okay. And just to elaborate a little bit on my second point, I understand what you say about a particular community or students or, or interest groups finding it easier to deal with one MP, but is that a, in your mind, a significant, well it clearly is a significant factor, but I, I don't think I quite follow how essential it is, if you see what I mean? Perhaps-

RH: I think if, if I just elaborate a bit further on that. The recent example is that, what happens, I think it's kind of the rules and regulation we have within our current system. So what usually the Member of Parliament or the member of the Senedd will deal with issues if you are one of their constituents. So say for instance, you live in one constituency, but you having issues in another constituency, when you go to that Member of Parliament or member of the Senedd, what they would say and specifically when you send an email to them say, 'Are you a constituent of my area? If you're not then you need to go back to the member of your constituency, Member of Parliament'. And the reason I'm saying, I'm saying that specifically within the, the Muslim community and mostly the minority community is that if one Member of Parliament, they kind of go and speak to the Muslim communities while the issues will be there, and again, we need to be thinking the global issues and its impact on our local community, so Afghanistan was a good example I've given some of the issues which happened in London, where we saw the impact community cohesion impact here locally. And when one of the MP was raising the issues and discussion within the, the mosque, again, the issue is, if there are issues which brought to the Member of Parliament or member of Senedd attention, if



that individual is not from his or her constituency, again, they will be referred back to you know, go and speak to the other person. And a lot of time, the local people kind of, you know, they think that they're not being listened to. So again, the issues of the trust is very, very, very, very key, and in specifically when it's come to member of the minority communities, certain Members of Parliament, I'm not saying the, kind of the existing member, it takes time for them to build that trust and confidence. And when they go to that area, people do start trusting them more than, than anyone else. And again, you know, that is, that is a reality, that is the case, which is a very key consideration. Again, you know, Shereen used to be a community cohesion coordinator, I'm sure, you know, she will know, you know, it better that building trust and confidence takes time within the, within the communities. And I believe, you know, that needs to be taken, taken on board.

SP: Okay, thank you.

AC1: Thank you very much.

RH: Thank you. Yes.

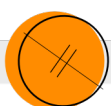
[Pause 02:37:13 to 02:37:24]

AC1: And I'm going to call forward Councillor Liz Aldworth.

[Pause 02:37:26 to 02:37:53]

AC1: So if you could give your name and your area that you live in, and also any affiliation you might have, or whether you're an individual contributor. And again, you've got 10 minutes, and you've got a, you got a warning at eight minutes, your, that your time is approaching it end. Okay? Thank you very much.

EMA: Yeah, I'm Elizabeth Myra Aldworth, I am speaking personally this morning, but I am an elected councillor of Caerphilly County Borough and I am an elected member of the Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen Community Council, as well. I wish to submit to the Boundary Commission my personal view on the future possibility of a change to the Caerphilly constituency. Thank you. So I go back to 1991 when I was first elected to run the Valley District Council, and at, on the same day, also to the Community Council of Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen. It was a bit overwhelming becoming a member of two authorities on the same day and I'm still a serving councillor all these years later. I've been mayor of the borough of Caerphilly, which was an absolute proud moment for myself and my family, in fact, and was able to see the work of the area in question, and go outside the area to represent the borough, which was my great pleasure. Caerphilly has been twinned with Germany for many, many years, probably now, maybe 70 years, and it's been my pleasure to visit our twin town there, Ludwigsburg. Ludwigsburg is about 20 minutes from Stuttgart, and Stuttgart is twinned with Cardiff, so these all contribute to the love of where I'm from, Caerphilly. And that's why I'm speaking today. My husband and myself were both born at the Caerphilly District Miners' Hospital. Hospital paid for by South Wales Miners' Federation, local pit workers paying a levy to create a cottage hospital to treat injured and sick coal miners and then it became a community hospital where my own daughter was born, and my great, and my grandson, whose now 17. We owe a debt to those Rhymney Valley contributions.



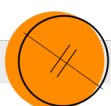
I actually grew up in Senghenydd, my parents, both from the Valley from the Aber Valley, we lived in a council house and we were very happy, and Caerphilly Urban District Council in those days. My further education took me to Cardiff, travelling from Senghenydd by bus, then train, and then bus into the city. So different from the village of Senghenydd, love the shopping and had a great social life too. But didn't ever venture to Newport for any reason until my teenage years. My uncle actually received employment at the new Llanwern Steelworks. My aunt, my uncle and my cousins moved from [inaudible 02:41:32] to Cwmbran in the 1960s. We visited them by bus to Caerphilly, then to Newport and then another bus to [inaudible 02:41:43], didn't ever visit Newport though. Upon my marriage I settled in Trethomas, that was some 47 years ago. The [inaudible 02:41:56] colliery was the heart of the village, and in Trethomas there was the British [inaudible 02:42:02] and coal distillation works, a coking plant. Fortunately, between these two villages, there were lots of shop where you could buy footwear, house furnishings, fruit and veg, butchers and bakery. Our visits to the nearest big town was to Caerphilly, which was only 10 minutes away. Again by bus. We frequented Caerphilly, trips to the indoor markets and the castle cinema, and obviously Caerphilly Castle, we went there too. Today, the focus for a young people who enjoy fashion is to head for Cardiff, afraid that Newport just doesn't compare with the vast array of stores in our capital city. My granddaughter and her friends in [inaudible 02:43:01] head for Cardiff on a very regular basis. The clothes, the places to eat, they love it. The age group, they're 15, 16 year olds, they've already made the decision, Cardiff is the city for them. The big name bands, the solo singers have shows in Cardiff, the Principality state, Stadium is the place my son-in-laws head to watch the Welsh game, rugby. My husband and grandsons have watched Cardiff City live matches, and I'm not suggesting the Newport county are any less of a great team. And hopefully they will win on Saturday when they play Bristol Rovers. Branding of Caerphilly, the Castle logo is a bonus to many businesses and services. The change of constituency will cause an economic downturn to many, corporate image is important these days and Caerphilly is part of a place shaping plan for our borough council. To alter the constituency boundary could lead to an identity crisis for some firms with Caerphilly part of their company name. Please, please accept our member of, our Member of Parliament, Wayne David's counter proposal which has great support amongst the voting public of Caerphilly, as evidenced in his submission. It would be nice, it would be a, such a historical shame to link Caerphilly with Newport West, and I ask for careful thought and consideration before making such a decision, Commissioners. Thank you very much.

AC1: I'll just check if any points of clarification from the floor? Or from the panel? No, there aren't. Thank you very much, Councillor. And our next speaker is Wayne David MP.

[Pause 02:45:25 to 02:45:36]

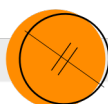
AC1: It's okay, Mr David, if you just can give your name on the record. The area that you live in, your affiliation and whether you're speaking on your own behalf or part of the group, and you've got 10 minutes, with a warning at eight minutes that you got.

WD: Thank you very much indeed.

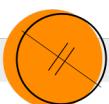


AC1: Thank you.

WD: Well, my name is Wayne David, I'm the Member of Parliament for Caerphilly. And I'm speaking here as the Member of Parliament with 21 years representation of the Caerphilly constituency behind me. I'm asking today for people to think again about the initial proposals from the Boundary Commission as it relates to Caerphilly and Newport West, and to give careful consideration to my counter proposal, which Councillor Aldworth has just referred to. One thing I'd like to make clear at the start, I'm not speaking here from a position of vested interest. I've decided to retire at the next general election, because I'll be 65, or maybe 66, at that election. So I have absolutely no vested interest whatsoever in what the Boundary Commission decide are the appropriate boundaries. I'm speaking here as someone who knows my constituency like a back of my hand. I've represented it for 21 years. I've lived in it all that time. I know the people as my close friends. In fact, I initially lived in Caerphilly, met the woman who's my wife in Caerphilly, and we now live in Bedwas, so I reckon I'm well placed to, to understand what the people of the, the community of which I'm part feel in their lives. I would emphasise, too, that it's not simply my view as an elected member, I can confidently say it is the view of every single borough councillor representing the southern half of the constituency. That's in the Aber Valley, Caerphilly town and Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen. Irrespective of party, all have the same view, but the counter proposal which I've put forward, being far from perfect, is nevertheless prevalent, a preferential to the suggestion which the Boundary Commission have made. And I would cite, for example, in support of that contention the views of Jamie Pritchard, who was a Labour Councillor in the Morgan Jones Ward of Caerphilly, and he is the deputy leader of the Borough Council, writing in a personal capacity, he's supporting what I have submitted and his submission will be in a bundle of documentations which I'll leave with you after I've spoken. Could I also say, if he's speaking from the Labour perspective, from a Plaid Cymru perspective, you heard in, in Cardiff from Lindsay Whittle, who is a long-standing Plaid Cymru Councillor in Caerphilly and it is Lindsay Whittle's view as well. In addition to the Member of Parliament, it's a view of the Assembly Member, Hefin David as well, and the borough councillors, as I mentioned, but also significantly, it's a view too, of the Community Councils, which represent the area. I have letters from the Caerphilly Town Council, which is the largest community council in the area, and also from Penreol [inaudible 02:49:11] Community Councils. I say Penreol of course, it should be pronounced in Welsh, Penyrheol but everybody calls it Penreol. And the Community Council there actually conducted a survey of the people living in the area, about what they thought and they came to the conclusion unanimously, that they had concerns, real concerns, if not outright opposition to what has been initially proposed by the Boundary Commission. And you will hear in a moment from the, the chair of the Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen Community Council about what his community council thinks and what he believes as well. Now, I'm conscious that there were a, a few individuals at the last hearing in Cardiff, who spoke in favour of the proposal, and they were drawn from the local Conservative Party. But I would objectively and respectfully say, that the Conservative Party is a very, very small minority voice inside Caerphilly. They hold no seats at the borough level, they hold no seats at a community council level, in any of the Community Council areas in the area, and they obviously have got nowhere in contesting the Senedd seat and also the Parliamentary seat as well. One can only surmise what their motivation is for supporting the proposal, it is not



what's clearly a reflection of the views of the community. But I would also suggest too, that it's not simply local politicians at whatever level are concerned about the situation, it is also the view of a wide number of organisations within the Caerphilly area. And I cite, for example, the Caerphilly Miner's Centre for the community. The secretary made a presentation in the Cardiff hearing. The Senghenydd Rugby Club in the Aber Valley, Bedwas workers hall committee. Even the congregation of St Helens Roman Catholic Church in Caerphilly have signed a petition, which I'll present to you later against this proposal. In addition, we have the Aber Valley male voice choir, who've also, to a man, signed a petition which will be presented to you later and we have the Caerphilly male voice choir. Those are just some of the organisations what indicative, I would suggest, of the strength of feeling in the community. Indeed, if I may, I would like to quote from a letter which has been written to me by the chairman of Caerphilly male voice choir. John Morgan says, and I quote him exactly, and I will present you the letter, 'Comparing us to an area like Newport or Cardiff is madness when we have different social aspects and requirements, and especially community. I welcome the opportunity to explain one-to-one my reasons for writing and why we must retain political stability and our area. I am sure other charitable organisations locally, will also be perplexed'. That is what he's written. Now that letter from him is also important because it highlights how a Member of Parliament can best fulfil his or her job. Now, in my extensive experience of 21 years, there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that representation is best if the communities which are represented have some kind of natural affinity to each other. This enables an MP, myself in this case, to express a single view on behalf of the constituency, as well as responding to individual constituent's concerns. Now, throughout my 21 years, I've held regular advice surgeries in all parts of my constituency. I've taken up literally 10s of 1,000s of cases, and I've always maintained a constituency office. The purpose of this office has been primarily to help give support to constituents and the value of my office, my presence in the constituency as part of the community is highlighted, highlighted once again by John Morgan in the letter I will give to you later. Could I say that I focus on Caerphilly town, because this is at the heart of the conundrum to which the legislation has placed us in. There is no perfect scenario and the status quo is clearly not an option, but I have put forward a counter proposal which has received very significant support. At the centre of my counter proposal is a maintenance of the Lower Rhymney Valley, for Caerphilly basin and its immediate hinterland to the north. As you will see from my counter proposal, I then extend the new Caerphilly constituency to include the communities around Blackwood and Pontllanfraith, areas with which Caerphilly has a strong relationship. The other half of my counter proposal is to link the wards with the Boundary Commission has identified in Newport west to the city's immediate hinterland. The demarcation of the area is therefore north, south rather than the east, west, and this follows the natural geography as well as the historical, cultural and contemporary linkages which are firmly in place. Can I say finally? Well as a former opposition spokesperson in Parliament on boundary changes, I understand full well the stipulations which the Boundary Commission is legally obliged to follow. I would like to emphasise therefore, that my counter proposal meets the criteria of the Parliament Constituencies Act 1996, as amended, and there's no knock-on effect to any other constituencies. In other words, what I'm proposing, in essence, is a reworking of the constituency boundaries between the proposed Newport West and Caerphilly, and [inaudible 02:55:48] constituencies, and I would respectfully suggest that this counter proposal to reduce three constituencies to two is far more

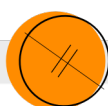


likely to receive public acceptance than that which has been initially proposed by the Boundary Commission. Thank you.

AC1: Are there any questions for clarification from the floor? Mr Phillips?

SP: Thank you for that. I've got two points of clarification. The first is, during the initial consultation, we received a number of representations about the exclusion of the ward of Nelson, and its incorporation into Merthyr and Aberdare I think it was, I notice your proposal does not include the ward of Nelson, perhaps you could explain a little bit more about that omission, so to speak, if it is an omission. Second point really was, you know, I've no doubt, we heard representations in the last public hearing, and we've had numerous written representations supporting what you said, but one area where it does not seem to be support for it is Islwyn, we've had representations from that part of the world basically supporting the initial proposals. So I wonder what dialogue there has been with your counterparts and, and others on, on that side of Caerphilly county borough?

WD: So, to answer your first point first, with regard to Nelson. I'd say two things. The first point is that I'm very keen. But my concern, and the support of the community is there for a redrawing of boundaries, [inaudible 02:57:42] within inside three constituencies. Once Nelson is included, it has a knock-on effect elsewhere, inevitably. And that opens up what some people might describe as current wounds. And the second point I make is this, Nelson, I've represented it to the best of my ability for the last 21 years, is slightly out on the limb in terms of the, the geography of the Caerphilly constituency. I'm sure people in Nelson would say that themselves. And their affinity really is, is slightly closer to the communities to their north, places like to Treharris and [inaudible 02:58:25] and that's why I've, I've made no attempt really, although I've given it careful consideration, to include Nelson in any formulations I've put forward. The second point I make is with regard to the, the Islwyn constituency. I think it's fair to say that no proposal can ever be perfect. The legislation is carefully drawn, the options available are quite limited to us all, we have to abide by the, by the Act and the Islwyn constituency, although the proposal put forward is in many ways acceptable, its knock-on effect for Caerphilly is disastrous. And I therefore think that it makes a great deal of sense therefore, to recognise as I've said, about the areas, the towns and villages in the central part of the existing Caerphilly constituency, like Ystrad Mynach, like Hengoed, like Tir-y-Berth, you know, have strong links to a sizable part of the Binder Valley Belt, which it's called sometimes, places like Blackwood and Pontllanfraith. And if those communities are linked to, it makes the constituency viable and desirable in my view, and the remaining parts of the Islwyn constituency, they look naturally I think, rather than to places like [inaudible 003:00:00], who most of them haven't heard of, look naturally towards Newport, and that applies historically, in terms of the development of the coal industry, but it also applies to people's community of interest in places like Newbridge and Crymlyn, they look south towards Newport. And you might say, well, what about communities like Argoed, it's a heck of a long way from Argoed, right down to Newport, and there is. But it's a heck of a long way also from Senghenydd down to, to Newport and [inaudible 03:00:34], so there's nothing perfect in anything that we've put forward but I can reasonably say, I can honestly say, that I really think that the proposal which I put forward is worthy of very, very careful consideration, and I believe it would be broadly acceptable to people in Islwyn and to people in Caerphilly.



SP: Thank you.

AC1: Thank you, Mr David.

WD: Thank you. Before I leave, can I leave the, the ledgers and the petition? I've...

SW: Can you pass it? I'll have it, I'll take it if that's all right? We'll process this and get the acknowledgement sent out to you, if that's all right?

[Background discussions 03:01:15].

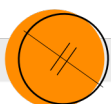
AC1: Thank you.

WD: Thank you very much.

AC1: The next speaker is Councillor Chris Morgan.

[Pause 03:01:24 to 03:01:39]

CM: Thank you Commissioners. I'm Councillor Chris Morgan. I'm chairman of the Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen Community Council. I'm here to speak on behalf of my MP Mr Wayne David's proposals for alternatives to the boundary changes. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for allowing me to speak this afternoon. I speaking on behalf of the communities of Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen as chair of the Community Council. Over the past few months, I have spoken to my constituents, neighbours about the proposed changes to our Parliamentary constituency and I constantly hear the same questions. What have we got to do with Newport? Newport's a city, it's got nothing in common with us. I'm not going to Newport to see my MP. They can't do that. This isn't democratic. Okay. My village is my community and I will talk as if they're one. It has different demographics, sorry, I'll start again. My, my village, my community, they're base at the lower end of the Caerphilly basin. We're a collection of former mine villages that look to the valleys with a town like Caerphilly at its heart. Newport is a port city, which has different demographics and issues. There are nine miles of open countryside between Newport and my area. No railway links, nor any planned, the Metro has let us down. No safe cycle route to Newport, nor any planned. Poor road links via the A468, which is a busy bottleneck that [inaudible 03:03:17] every day, and we got unreliable public transport links. My area has no affinity to Newport. Some would say we're Valley folk, simple as. I fully support and endorse the counter proposal put forward today as a common sense and link the communities well. If we take the two proposals separately, one, the proposed Caerphilly constituency links the towns and villages along the lines of the old Rhymney tram road and the Brecon and Merthyr railway that brought prosperity, sorry, I'm drying up, that brought prosperity to those villages, the links to the Aber Valley, Senghenydd and Cardiff via Caerphilly, the railway link to route, to Newport for us was removed in 1955. That would give you a total of 75,092 electors. The second proposal for Newport West and Newbridge constituency would be well supported in that area. It naturally flows along the lines of the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal to Newport. These towns and villages brought prosperity to Newport during the Industrial Revolution via the canal. And later the railways. It's these towns that



have their natural affinity to Newport, not my towns and villages, I'm sorry to say. These proposals make a lot more sense to me. Why we going west to east when the natural flow of the valleys and its communities are north to south? My worry about the initial proposal is perceived failure of democracy that will occur in those communities who have not participated in this debate, nor taken interest. You cannot change the history of the Valley communities, nor the way that people were brought up, but you can embrace it. I would urge the Commission to take another look. Please consider the credible alternatives put forward today and the words of our retiring MP. He still cares, and so do the rest of us. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

AC1: Thank you. Are there any points of clarification? No, thank you. Cheers, Councillor Morgan.

[Pause 03:05:24 to 03:05:34]

AC1: The next speaker is due at two o'clock, Miss Wallow, do you want to start with a bit earlier? Thank you. You got a presentation from you, do you want to put it up on the screen or is it?

JW: I emailed it.

SW: We've got it here.

AC1: Miss Wallow, just while it's being put up on the screen, if you just, I've, obviously identify yourself, say where you're from and if you are affiliates of any group or speaking as an individual.

JW: Hi, my name is [Joanne Wallow?03:06:06], I am from Moriston, I'm the chair of the Swansea East Branch of Plaid Cymru, although today I'm representing myself as a private citizen rather than the party, as the party has made its own proposals to the Boundary Commission, which differ significantly from the proposals I would like to suggest today.

AC1: Which party was it sorry?

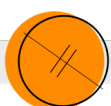
JW: Plaid Cymru.

AC1: Plaid Cymru. And again, you've got 10 minutes and you'll be told when you got two minutes left. Okay?

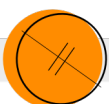
JW: Oki doke.

AC1: Thank you.

JW: So, the first thing I'd like to say is that I think the majority of the proposals regarding the northern, central and western parts of Wales are very good, and I think they are fine as is, but some changes to the north. I think the Dwyfor-Meirionnydd constituency should be renamed as the new Dwyfor-Meirionnydd includes a majority of Arfon so I don't think that it's fair that people living in Caernarfon and Llanrug and places like that wouldn't be represented in the new name of the



constituency. And the ward of Pentir which, as it's been proposed as part of Dwyfor-Meirionnydd I think it would make more sense to move it into Aberconwy. Because anybody who's been to Pentir will understand that it feels more like a part of the city of Bangor than a part of Caernarfon or Y Felinheli, and another, I think there's a handful of constituencies in the north of the country, which it would make sense to re-evaluate the name slightly. One being the Clwyd constituency as the majority of the River Clwyd actually falls outside of the constituency, I think a better name might be Colwyn and Denbigh or something to that effect. And the name Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr, I believe to be quite long, so it might be appropriate to use the Welsh name, Maldwyn as that's already quite commonly used name in the area. With regards to the west of Wales, I think the boundary between Ceredigion Preseli and mid and south Pems should be revised slightly to preserve the Welsh speaking wards of Maenclochog by moving it into Ceredigion Preseli while moving the English-speaking wards of Solva and St Davids into Mid and South Pems. And I think it makes sense to rename Mid and South Pems to just Pembroke, because the name is quite unwieldy. And there's other constituencies in Wales where the shire parts of the constituency name has been dropped, such as Monmouth and Brecon and Radnor. And I would like to propose the Llanelli constituency be extended in a different way to the way that the Commission has proposed already, by extending it in the north eastern direction towards Ammanford, so the constituency remains predominantly urban in nature, and it doesn't include any rural areas, which I think would be more at home as part of the Carmarthen constituency. And, and again, I think some of the names should be revised, as I've said already, I think Brecon and Radnor should be Brecon, Radnor and Cwmtawe to recognise the nearly 20,000 people who won't be living in Breconshire or Radnorshire, but will live in the constituency. And I think at Swansea East and Neath should become Neath and Swansea East, as Neath makes up the larger part of the constituency. With regards to the southeast, I think the boundary between Aberafan, Porthcawl and Bridgend should be moved slightly with Cefn Cribwr being merged, put into Aberafan Porthcawl and Cefn Glas and being put into Bridgend so the boundary is more of a straight line and it makes more sense. Also, I think, as the Aberafan constituency has existed longer than the town of Port Talbot, it might be long overdue that the name Port Talbot is reflected in the name of the new constituency. So here's a map of my proposed changes to the southeast of the country, as I think this is the part of Wales which needs the biggest rethinking. I think, I read the comments made during the public consultation period and I know Andrew RT Davies, leader of the Welsh Conservatives said it makes sense to retain the Vale of Glamorgan as it is, as it's the only constituency in Wales to actually meet the current requirements put forward by the Boundary Commission. And then, I kept Cardiff South and Penarth as it is as well, just removing the ward of Llanrumney and putting it into a new Cardiff North, while Cardiff Central has been remade into wards, which I think better reflect the central part of the city, and, well, as you can see, I've kept Caerphilly as a lot of people were angry about Caerphilly being gotten rid of, and I've instead merged Islwyn into Newport West, as I think it makes more sense than Caerphilly and Newport West, as the gentleman who spoke before me said, and I think a new name for Pontypridd should be Pontypridd and Mountain Ash as the town of Mountain Ash is pretty much as big as Pontypridd itself, it makes sense for it to be included in the name of any such constituency. And I propose the new name for the extended Blaenau Gwent to be Blaenau Gwent and Bedwellty, as Bedwellty was the borough which includes Blackwood and Pontllanfraith, which I've suggested adding into



Blaenau Gwent. So thank you for taking your time to consider my representations and it's been an honour to play my part in the democratic process on our national holiday of all days. So thank you for your time.

AC1: Thank you. Are there points of clarification from the floor? Or from the panel?

SP: Yes. Sorry, one question. Well, two questions, actually. Are you speaking on behalf of Plaid Cymru?

JW: No.

SP: You're not, okay.

JW: I'm speaking as a private citizen today.

SP: Fine. That answers my question in the sense that Plaid Cymru have put forward a different proposition in relation to the Llanelli constituencies, so that remains the party's official position?

JW: Yes. To be honest, I think the proposals to the Llanelli constituency made by Plaid Cymru don't make as much sense as it would cross the Tywi river. And my proposal is to recreate the Llanelli constituency as it was back in the 1970s when it did include Ammanford.

SP: Okay, fine, that's a helpful clarification. Thank you.

JW: Thank you.

SW: Can I ask a question for clarification? Just, you know, you wrote there [inaudible 03:12:58] and Cardiff, just to confirm, you would just rejig Newport West and Islwyn Caerphilly and then support Monmouthshire as our proposals and Newport East as per the Commission's proposals?

JW: Well, Newport East, sorry, I'll go back onto the slide so you can see the map. Newport East would include Betws and St Julian's and I can't remember the name of the other ward, I'm afraid, but it would also include Mill's ward from Monmouth, just as it, otherwise it wouldn't be large enough to meet the, the, the quota. And well, as you can see, the new Cardiff West I proposed is more or less, it's very similar to that proposed by the Commission, although it includes Talbot Green and Llantrisant. Nantgarw in, in this situation remains part of the Rhondda Cynon Taf rather than being merged into Cardiff North.

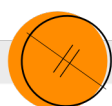
SW: Yeah.

JW: Thanks.

AC1: Thank you very much.

JW: Thank you.

[Background discussions 03:14:03]



[Pause 03:14:17 to 03:14:40]

AC1: We are slightly ahead of schedule, Mr Allender? Do you want to speak early? If you come to the lectern, please, thank you. Mr Allender, if you could just confirm your name, the area that you're from and if you've got any affiliation, please state it, or if you're speaking as an individual.

RA: Sorry, I didn't quite get that?

AC1: If you could give your name and the area that you're from and if you're speaking as an individual or part of an organisation.

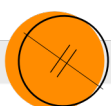
RA: Right.

AC1: You've got 10 minutes and my colleague will tell you when you got two minutes left. Okay?

RA: Okay.

AC1: Thank you.

RA: Yes, my name is Robert Allender and I live in Llansamlet ward and I'm going to speak on the, the difficulties of getting from the other part of Llansamlet ward towards Neath, or any part of Llansamlet ward to, towards Neath. Llansamlet and Birchgrove and the other areas [inaudible 03:15:46] are, are Swansea looking, they're Swansea facing, the buses go from the Llansamlet area are four per hour, buses to Neath would require you to actually go to Swansea to get a bus to come back to Neath. There is no actual, no, no actual link that would link those, those areas of Llansamlet to, to the Neath area. As I say, Llansamlet and Birchgrove and Glais look towards Swansea with the shopping and the other particular things. And it's, you know, it would seem strange, that part of the, of the ward which is, which is a larger ward, I am not actually a councillor, I, I am a Labour Party member, but I'm not actually a councillor. I'm just an ordinary voter of those particular concerns. But it does feel that that part of the ward has been broken up although it's, it works well for the council hearings, because obviously, the four councils have come from [inaudible 03:17:12] it would street seem strange at although the council would be Swansea based, half of the, the ward would go to an area where they do not have a connection, or do not have a, an actual affinity. I feel you know, just saying to half of Llansamlet ward that we don't want you anymore, cheerio, you've got to go to Neath, whereas where they, where the thing, they don't go shopping in Neath. They, if they want something from [inaudible 03:17:49] or any other civic amenity, they would go to, towards Swansea. And I do feel that they, you know, the people that I know, in Dulais and Birchgrove feel the same way, that they feel more akin to Swansea than they would to Neath. So to them, it seems strange that Neath is, is being proposed as an area because there are actually no links at the moment. If you, if you don't have a car, and many people don't, or are unable to drive, you are stuck. If you want to go to, go to visit a, I presume that the, the member who would actually be, who would gain the most votes in that area will probably base their, their main office in Neath, whereas, you know, that would be strange for people in



Dulais and Birchgrove thinking, well, we've got to go somewhere where we can't go, if they're unable to drive. So that's, that is my, my submission.

AC1: Thank you very much.

[Crosstalk 03:19:01]

AC1: Are there any questions for clarification? No, thank you very much.

[Background discussions 03:19:09]

AC1: We've come to the end of our list of speakers for the moment. It's just after two o'clock, the next speaker is due to be here at five o'clock, so we're going to propose to adjourn till five o'clock unless anyone comes in, in the meantime in which case we reconvene to hear their representations. So for the moment, the meeting is adjourned to five o'clock. Thank you.

[Break]

AC1: Good afternoon, prynhawn da. Welcome to Swansea. My name is Andrew Cledes and I'm Assistant Commissioner to the Boundary Commission for Wales. I'll be chairing this part of today's hearing. The panel for today is made up of myself and my federal Assistant Commissioner Steven Phillips, as well as Shereen Williams, the secretary to the Commissioner. We have some speakers for this evening, starting with Councillor Tina Williams, who's listed for five o'clock. I would invite Councillor Williams to come to the podium in a moment. We would ask the, any speaker to give their name, the area in which they live, not the, not their actual address, but the area, and what affiliation, if any, they have, or are they speaking as an individual before us today. You've got 10 minutes per address and my colleague who will be in front of you when you speak, will warn you when you got two minutes left. We are keeping it to 10 minutes because that creates a sense of fairness to all the speakers we've had. This is the third of three days so far so I will ask Councillor Williams to speak next then.

TW: My name is Tina Williams. I'm the Vice Chair of the CLP and RC Town, a Councillor for RCT. The 2020 Boundary Act was a political move during the pandemic, adding to the levelling down of Wales. Following 12 years of austerity, the impact of Brexit, the Covid pandemic, and now the cost of living, it would cost, it could be at no worse time to expect the electorate to be engaged in the political manipulation of Parliament constituency, not forgetting the floods and the poverty, which people continue to face. The Act did not divide the Cynon Valley, so why has the Commissioner criteria to protect a north to south direction for other valleys, not been used for the Cynon Valley? The BCW initial proposal will take the Cannon back, Cynon Valley back 100 years, after nearly 40 years of successful local government development, community ties and a vast inward investment towards the economy and culture development of the Valley. A question I've been asked several times in Rhondda Cynon Taff is what is it going to be called? I'm a councillor for Aberaman South. How can we put two wards together, Aberaman South and Aberaman North, which will be known as Aberaman, at the same time, you're asking the same people to be split up in two halves. Cwmaman and Aberdare with Merthyr, and Abercwmboi and Aberaman with Ponty. People can't understand,



and I can't understand how we can do this. I help people on a daily basis with poverty, mental health, who have been left behind by the education system. I helped someone not so long ago, his mother passed away and he had no money to bury her. I found help for him. We found out he hasn't been claiming any money in his own right, he had no bank account, he didn't think he was entitled to anything. So for seven years, he didn't claim a penny. He didn't know where to turn, and this issue will be increasing. These people need to continuous access to that MP and what will happen to our MS? The Labour Party will elect a candidate, wherever we finish up, but that is no guarantee that the electorate from Cynon Valley will support them, because of all of the unacceptable confusion, your proposal will affect all the areas of the Valley, creating a disconnect, disconnect between voters and new MPs, who are likely to play prioritise Merthyr and Ponty, leaving Aberdare, Mountain Ash and other communities isolated. Splitting of the Cynon Valley from east to west across the middle shows of lack of knowledge of how the valley functions and is one of the crudest proposals during any boundary change to date. The Cynon Valley councillors work closely together across the valley and your initial proposal will make our work even more difficult to coordinate the needs of those living across the divide you are trying to create. I am here today to ask the Commissioner to think again about how the people and I work with as a councillor are going to cope in the future and that your initial proposal is abandoned.

AC1: Thank you very much. I just need to ask the floor there, are there any questions by way of clarification for the councillor? No, there's none from the floor, Mr Phillips has a question.

SP: It's more of a, an observation and a request for clarification than anything else. We've received a number of written objections to the proposal that you've outlined today. My reading of them though, was that they were far more representations from the two Aberaman wards than they were from Mountain Ash. I accept entirely that in the same valley, the Cynon Valley, but there seems to be less opposition from the Mountain Ash wards compared to Aberaman, is that a fair summary or am I misreading or giving undue weight, or insufficient weight to what I've read?

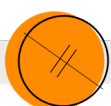
DP: Can anybody answer that, panel?

AC1: You'll be able to speak, you're speaking, I think, next, aren't you? Yeah.

TW: I'm not, I'm not... I don't think so. I think there's perhaps not enough information out there for people. I mean I'm lucky, probably the area I'm working, I'm, I'm sort of doing that and I work the job that I do besides counselling, I am available to more people.

SP: Okay.

TW: But I'm, I'm wondering if there is not a spot probably in Mountain Ash or some of the other areas, I think with Covid you know, I should have gone to some places that I couldn't go to, you can't pass the pen around. Everybody should be it was hand gel, I work in pharmacy as well. So you know, to do the rules properly and ask older people have they got a pen and can you sign it? It just knocks the, the whole thing a bit, so I think, yeah, I've been quite lucky you know, around that area. But



you mean, if there's not a base in Mountain Ash, then I think that's probably, lots of people that I've spoken to haven't got a clue, they don't even know what's going on.

SP: Okay, that's helpful. Thank you.

TW: All right? All right, thank you very much.

AC1: Yes, thank you very much. The next speaker-

[Crosstalk 03:27:52]

SW: -move it out of the way. Yeah.

[Background discussions 03:27:55]

AC1: Next speaker is yes, Dinah Pye.

DP: Not that I need a microphone.

SW: It needs to be picked up for the live stream.

AC1: It's recorded.

SW: Yes.

DP: All right.

[Pause 03:28:17 to 03:28:34]

AC1: Thank you.

DP: I'd rather not be here on such a sad day.

AC1: Can I just ask you, before you present it, just to identify yourself formally.

DP: Yeah.

AC1: The area which you come from.

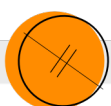
DP: I'm a resident of Cynon Valley. My name is Dinah Pye-

AC1: And any affiliation-

[Crosstalk 03:28:49]

DP: I'm a retired educationer, and I'm the Policy Officer for the Cynon Valley Labour Party.

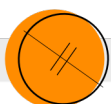
AC1: Thank you. You've probably heard me say you've got 10 minutes overall, and my colleague there will tell you if you got two minutes left. Okay? Thank you.



DP: I speak very quickly, so you're all right. [Laughter].

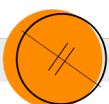
AC1: Thank you.

DP: Okay. It's a shame really, that we're having to come here as a party, as a Labour Party, but to answer the question that you put to Councillor Williams, the problem is Covid. And we've tried desperately to get the press involved and people all over just do not know what is happening and don't understand what's happening. So there are certain areas where more work has been done than others and that will continue till the third consultation. I'd like to start with a quote from The Guardian on 8 September 2022, 'Proposals for a huge shake up of the UK Parliamentary map in Wales have provoked criticism for threatening to break up tight knit Valley communities in the South', South Wales. 'The former MP Peter Hain added 'The proposals are an anti-labour, anti-values charter, and communities in each of these valleys have different histories, different identities, including on the English language. By their very nature, valley communities It is all linked and don't easily connect with neighbouring valleys'. In 2012, I and my colleagues, one of them who's joined me today, came before this Commission at a Cardiff public hearing with these very comments when you attempted split the Cynon Valley three ways. After an intensive campaign, public campaign then, we put a strong case to keep the majority of the Cynon Valley parliamentary constituency together. Surprisingly, the Commission then recognised that Mountain Ash had close links with Aberdare. Followed, following the attempt to move part of the valley to Merthyr Tydfil. The outcome was the electorate of Cynon Valley went through months of time wasting as the boundary changes were withdrawn. The 2018 Review related to the 2016 Parliamentary Voting System and Constituency Act, at least you complied with your own criteria at that time, resulting in your final proposition of the formation of, and at this point, I always say wait for it, the Cynon Valley Pontypridd, Cwm Cynon and Pontypridd constituency. With an electorate of 78,000 plus five. Once again, the Westminster Government was in turmoil and the people of Cynon Valley were again put through a time-wasting period before the changes were abandoned. The equalisation of all constituencies across the UK, many with multiple differences, and based on the Boundary Commission's minimum and maximum figures is totally impossible to administer. Populations are not static and with the migration between wards, the Cynon Valley will become, under your initial proposal, a place where do I belong? Disrupted families and cultural ties. An unforgivable impact on business, as well as total inflexibility for any growth in the new housing market. I am speaking today on the document that you've been given, which has been worked on for six months, called Cynon Valley Parliamentary Constituency Counter Proposal for 2023 Boundaries, where we have put the case for alternatives to your initial proposal. In your 2023 initial proposal, local ties, local government and Senedd boundaries, as well as the geographical settings for the Cynon Valley have not been taken into consideration at all. And splitting the Valley East to West will have a major impact on all aspects include, involving the electorate. It is obvious that equalising Cynon Valley, surrounded by mountains and a major river course, is limited and we wish to improve on your proposal and maintain the most important aspect of the valley, which is the cohesion of our established communities. The attached document counter proposals contains two counter proposals that are being presented as a more acceptable way forward. In our view, that is. Counter proposal a, which we call Ponty Cynon is in line with your 2018 final



proposal, there you go, with a total 77,690. This proposal would adhere to your 2023 criteria, protect the electorate within the local government and Senedd boundaries, and maintain a north to south direction with multiple transport facilities. This proposal would also open up the development of the economy on an equal basis. Counter proposal two, and you've got the figures for both proposals as laid down in the document, this attempts to oppose your initial proposal due to the lack of local ties and culture between the two valleys. It has less than adequate transport facilities, and, sorry, I forgot to say that we're calling it Aberdare Merthyr and not Merthyr Aberdare. It has less than adequate transport facilities and apart from your attempt to reverse the development of the Queen of the Valleys to an add on to Merthyr Tydfil, there are fears that the economy in the north of the Cynon Valley will be compromised to a lesser status than the present situation. There is total objection to your insensitivity, insensitive splitting of the valley with Cwmbach and Aberaman split between two constituencies. This counter proposal, counter proposal B with a total of 74,912 is therefore, based on your initial proposal, which we'll grant you, with the Aber, with the addition of Aberaman North and South and Mountain Ash East and West. The only way this counter proposal will work is if the successful MEP in the next general election has a dual based office, one in Merthyr, and one in Aberdare, and that Merthyr Council therefore improves the bus connection facilities. The latter comments will have an unwelcome call on investment, and create a dysfunctional administration system for RCT councillors, and Welsh Senedd represent, representatives. Following the publication of the second consultation, the electorate, if Covid is contained, will be invited to engage in public meetings in order to decide on which proposal they'd refer, prefer, yours, or one of, or one of ours. It is hoped that if your public consultation is to mean anything, we trust that the Commission will take our strong response onboard. Even in the present climate, we have had a fantastic support from businesses, MP, MS, all RCT councillors and the general public. They do, some of them, know about it. And they're not in a position, sometimes, to come on board in the circumstances of poverty, cost of living and Covid, to write to you to object. In the end, this is not a game of chess, it is about people's lives, their heritage, and their families. Due to the Covid, our petition has been limited. We had nearly 3,000 signatures in 2012. Unfortunately, it is not the climate to go out with a petition and people are really not in a position to respond to boundary changes at the moment. A public campaign will be launched before the third consultation to create more awareness, if we can only get more awareness in to the valley and people's lives, then I think you will find the people of Cynon Valley wish to remain as they are. This is not a good time to come here today because democracy is in question. That's my subtotal, sub, sub script. The parting shot that democracy, I haven't got a tank on my drive and I haven't got 40 lorries heading for Cynon Valley, but democracy is important. And it's democracy of cohesion in people's lives that matters most to us. Thank you.

- AC1: Thank you. Just ask the floor are there any points of clarification that you want to raise? Nope.
- SW: Dinah, can I just?
- DP: Yep.
- SW: Clarify your counter proposal A?



DP: Yep.

SW: The number you've provided of 77,690?

DP: Yep.

SW: Actually goes beyond, it's 105%.

DP: Yes. Yes.

SW: So when, what would you propose being taken out from that to make sure that it's in the EQ should we consider that's an option?

DP: Well, if you give us a little bit more time till October, October, we'll have another look at it. But I mean, it is just as I said earlier, impossible with mountains and rivers, no flexibility, should we sit down and cut wards in half? We don't, we've done the best we can. We think that we've given you two counter proposals that you can look at, and, and perhaps come back to us, and help us to keep our communities together. But we will be looking at this between now and, and the publication of the second consultation. In, in order to perhaps, change those figures, but that's what we're proposing today.

SW: Can I just clarify, this is a second consultation.

DP: Oh, when you publish the second consultation, we go into the third consultation.

SW: Following the completion of the second consultation.

DP: Yes.

SW: My Assistant Commissioners will draft a recommendations report.

DP: Yes.

SW: And then our Commissioners will then publish a revised proposals.

DP: I'm aware of that.

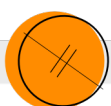
SW: We're hoping to publish it in October.

DP: Yes.

SW: So that's sort of the timescales that-

[Crosstalk 03:41:36]

DP: But then we can given another written consultation once that's published, and that's what I'm saying between now and your publications, we will have another written script to come to you as part, after that publication has taken place.



SW: Great, thank you.

DP: I, I have got that right, that we can submit something in writing. Yes?

SW: Yes. On the revised proposals, yeah.

DP: Yes.

SW: Yeah.

DP: Over to you, best of luck. [Laughter].

AC1: Thank you.

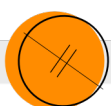
[Pause 03:42:11 to 03:42:39]

AC1: So, if I could invite Professors Gerald Holtham to come to the podium, please.

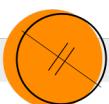
[Pause 03:42:42 to 03:42:49]

AC1: I think you were, you were here, Professor, when I was outlining the ground rules?

GH: Yes, indeed. Thank you. I'm Gerald Holtham, I'm visiting professor, regional economics at Cardiff Metropolitan University, and a native of Aberaman actually, but, though I'm, my home is now in Penarth. I'd, I'd like to start by sympathising with the Commissioners, I think who've been given an almost impossible task, a variation, but we understand the constraints, the variation in constituency size of 10% is pretty well unique among Western democracies. I was looking at constituencies in France, I could find constituencies that were different by a factor of 100, there's a constituency in [French place 03:43:39] which is 100 times Belfour. So you know, 10% is, is very difficult, but that's the legislation so we understand the difficulties that you're under. And if you're not allowed to carve up wards, then it becomes even more difficult to you, you, you really are trying to play a jigsaw game. And that is bound to lead to some violence to geography and to community. We understand that. But I think in the Cynon Valley we're seeing some of the greatest violence that's being proposed, Aberdare is, you know, is still the 12th largest town in Wales, if you take proper towns, not just strips of urban, urban settlement. And it's always been an important town, it's birthplace of the Welsh choral tradition, and site of the first model in Stretford, you'd think that with a land of 32 constituencies, the 12th largest town would be able to have its own constituency, but you know, it appears not. We understand that, we understand the difficulties you're under and that it probably has to be attached to some other settlement, some other town, odd as that is, but it's not necessary we don't think, dismember it, which is what's happening at the moment. Not only is it being tacked on somewhere else, it's actually being, it's being cannibalised, and there are two suggestions for rectifying that situation. I'm going to talk mainly about the smaller one, but there is a more, a more radical one which, which Dinah has already, has already referred to. I think you've already understood the main issue is the two Aberaman wards are intrinsically part of Aberdare. Most of Aberaman North is 15-minute walk from the town centre. The whole area is not more than a mile or two from the town centre. Everybody shops in Aberdare, nobody goes to Pontypridd,



nobody goes to the doctor in Pontypridd, all the local services are, are based on Aberdare. Residents of Cwmbach which is to remain in the Aberdare Merthyr constituency will shop in the same Asda as people in Aberaman and they both support or members of the Cwmbach male voice choir. So it's, it is, it is a schism across a community. The grounds of both the Aberdare Rugby Football Club and the Aberdare Town Association Football Club are in fact in Aberaman South. So. And I always think that Alun Lewis was Britain's greatest World War Two poet was born in Cwmaman, but all the biographies refers to him as coming from Aberdare. There is, they are the same place. So taking the two districts of Aberaman out of the constituency and attaching it to Pontypridd is something that local residents that I've spoken to, well the adjective they used most about it was crazy. It will make people feel disenfranchised because they will not expect the Pontypridd MP to have the same interest in their affairs as an Aberdare MP and it will weaken their attachment to their Parliamentary constituency. And I think there's a real risk it will reduce their attachment to the electoral system as a whole. So restoring Aberaman to the Aberdare and Merthyr constituency would transfer some 7,000 electors, and half that number could be compensated by transferring Nelson to Pontypridd. Nelson is not in the Merthyr Vale, has no particular affinity with Merthyr and is six miles from Pontypridd. So this is a very obvious switch, which I don't think would offend anybody. That would leave Merthyr and Aberdare well within the prescribed limits, but it would leave Pontypridd slightly subscale, and there are a number of possible solutions. One of them would, would be to restore Taff's Well to Pontypridd, but I understand that will involve issues with Cardiff North. The other simpler solution would be to transfer Treharris, wholly or in part, to, to Pontypridd, rather than to Merthyr. Again, Treharris is right at the bottom of the Merthyr Vale, spills over in towards the Rhymney has no great affinity with Merthyr, it is actually nearer, physically, to Pontypridd, and people increasingly these days look south for services and shopping and whatnot, so I don't think that would cause any great problem. Now, if you do it, if you move on to Pontypridd, Treharris into Pontypridd, you will take Merthyr Aberdare down to the bottom limit of the, of the, of the allowed, of the allowed diversion, it will be 69,000-odd. So it will be up the 5%. But some, somewhere has to be the smallest constituency, so I don't think that's fatal. If you are worried about that, then the obvious thing to do is a division of Treharris, which is a big ward, it's 5,000 people, some of it is in Merthyr Vale, some of it is not. So I, again, I think it would be quite possible to divide it and then you could balance the two constituencies, Pontypridd and Merthyr Aberdare perfectly, and, but I think any of those solutions are better than, than, than taking Aberaman out of Aberdare. All of them, they will have downsides but none of them are as quite as, quite as savage as the Aberaman proposal. So I think they're all preferable to cannibalising Aberdare. Now, as Dinah has already said, many Cynon Valley residents do regret the severing of the town of Aberdare and Mountain Ash. Which share the Valley and have always been together. And there is a preference, I think, in the Valley, for the alternative which links it to the Pontypridd constituency rather than with Merthyr. It has, that has three large advantages. It results in the constituency that reflect, respects local authority boundaries. It would be within RCT. It preserves the community of the Cynon Valley, and its linear shape follows the transport links and geography of the region. Now, of course, it does add 20,000 electors to Pontypridd, as far as the Pontypridd constituents are concerned, I think that's fairly easily rectified. For example, you've got Rhondda ward which would naturally go into the Rhondda and, and you've got Llantrisant and Talbot Green which are rather outlying areas anyway, which had no



natural affinity to Pontypridd, and could easily go into the Vale of Glamorgan, and none of those moves would breach any constituency limits, because those, both the Vale and the Rhondda are quite smaller constituencies. And it would necessary to transfer all or part of another of the southern wards to join Taff's Well in Cardiff North. So as far as setting up a adequately sized Pontypridd, Pontcynon, so the constituency is concerned, it's relatively easily done. But, and I think that's a clear improvement on what is currently proposed. But you know, we can't disguise the difficulty that that leaves you in, which is what the heck to do with Merthyr. The Merthyr constituency then, would be well under size and I think, to solve that, it would be necessary to restore the link with the Rhymney Valley and that would require quite extensive shuffling of wards in Gwent, so I can imagine your hearts sinking at the thought of this, but, but nevertheless, doing this would restore the north, south orientation of the constituencies in, in the central valleys area, and it would respect geography and transport links. And, and it would help to preserve, not entirely, but it would help to preserve the alignment with local authority boundaries. So although there are issues to be resolved, I do hope it is something which the which the Commissioners will at least consider. But in summary, I'd say it would be highly desirable to maintain the integrity of the Cynon Valley in a north, south constituency within the RCT. But in any case, whichever way you go, I think it's essential that the Commission does not dismember Aberdare itself and that the whole town, including Aberaman wards remain within the same constituency.

AC1: Thank you very much. Are there any questions by way of clarification from the floor? Mr Phillips?

SP: Thanks. Just a point of clarification, really. I may have misunderstood this, but I think I'm hearing two different things. There's a clear affinity between Aberaman and Aberdare. So are we saying that the priority is to have the Cynon Valley or as much of it as possible in the same constituency? And what's on the table at the moment is Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare? Or are we saying that there is a preference in the Valley as you just said yourself, to go south towards Pontypridd?

GH: I think both of those statements are true. I think there is a preference to go south towards Pontypridd.

SP: But ultimately, we've got to choose.

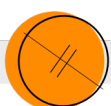
GH: Well, I mean, the point is, we, I haven't done all of the work required in Gwent [Laughter], to get you-

SP: Okay.

GH: To get you a completely consistent model. And I'm aware that we can sort Pontypridd out but whether, what we do with Merthyr is something we haven't actually...

SP: Okay.

GH: Yet done the work on. So I think that is, I'm a little difiniant[?3.53.51] about saying you should do this, that, the other, because, you know, I can't back that up. But yeah, if it's possible, I think it would be preferable, preferable for the valley to be



looking south to Pontypridd. But I think if the Valley has to be split, the current split is particularly brutal. You, you mustn't take Aberaman out of Aberdare.

SP: Okay, thank you.

AC1: Thank you very much.

[Pause 03:54:16 to 03:54:24]

AC1: The next speaker is Katherine Whitehead.

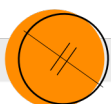
[Pause 03:54:27 to 03:54:36]

AC1: I'm not sure you were here earlier, Mrs Whitehead, when I was saying you've got... If you just give us your name, where, the area which you come from, not your actual address, any affiliation you have, or whether you speak as an individual. And you've got 10 minutes to speak. The lady sitting on your left will show you when you've got two minutes left.

KW: Thank you.

AC1: Thank you.

KW: My name is Katherine Whitehead and I'm speaking on behalf of Preseli Pembrokeshire Labour Party, as its secretary. I actually live in Pembrokeshire. I actually live in Moyle Grove, which is not far from Cardigan as it happens. We've consulted our members and we'd like to propose that the St Davids, Solva and Letterston wards are moved into the Mid and South Pembrokeshire constituency and that Maenclochog ward moves into the Ceredigion Preseli constituency. And basically that's because there are real problems with the proposed Ceredigion Preseli constituency. And I'll take the geographical considerations first. The proposed constituency is long and narrow. It's 84 miles long, and actually a two-and-a-half-hour journey time, in our opinion, end to end. This means a constituency with a size and a shape that does not allow constituents to meet readily, and it also makes life very difficult for representatives. I want to say that while it is true that there is what is classified as an A road, down the West Coast, this is actually a very slow road. It really isn't a fast way of getting from Aberystwyth to St David's and very few people will actually be doing that very often. There are a number of pinch points in it where the road doesn't allow traffic in both directions, which isn't very usual for an A road. For instance, in Fishguard Lower Town, there's a sharp bend to the left and one to the right and space for only one lane of traffic. The journey times really are very slow. And the terrain is also different. And the different terrain across the two counties gives the local populations different needs and interests, physical geography of the Preseli Hills up in Crymych across and down to Newport does give, does mean there are shared characteristics with the Uplands of Ceredigion but the Lowlands of the St Davids Peninsula are not the same landscape. St Davids Peninsula is not in Preseli. Reverting to the name, proposed name. The St Davids Peninsula landscape has more in common with the rest of the proposed Mid and South Pembrokeshire constituency. And if you think about the coastline, Pembrokeshire North Coast, North Fishguard is, points northwards towards Cardigan Bay, like Ceredigion does,



but if you look down to St Davids and Solva, they're actually on St Brides Bay, which points due west across, out across the Atlantic. It's actually quite a different location. So those are the considerations for those three wards. Letterston really is outskirts of Haverford West which is part of Mid and South Pembrokeshire. And then coming to the Maenclochog ward, which is included in the proposals in Mid and South Pembrokeshire, the rest of the Preseli Hills are included in Ceredigion Preseli, so why exclude this part of the Preseli Hills? It actually also cuts off part of the National Park to do that because actually the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park takes the Preseli Hills into its, into its orbit going inland at that point. And that seems to me, quite clumsy. And finally, if you put Maenclochog in with Ceredigion Preseli, you, you both help by making the constituency less long, and it's also less narrow, at that point at least. Then on another question, the question of local ties, the wards of St Davids, Solva and Letterston all orient towards Haverford West, which, and not towards Cardigan. Haverford West is where anybody in any of those wards would go to shop. Well, Maenclochog has a much closer link up with Crymych and with Cardigan. Just to say that I know the Pembrokeshire elections office has also drawn attention to these problems with the size and the linear, elongated nature of the proposed Ceredigion Preseli constituency and its effect on local ties. And also that the, I noticed that there quite a few submissions from members of the public in favour of including Maenclochog with Ceredigion Preseli, and they're also quite a few in favour of including the wards and St Davids Peninsula in Mid and South Pembrokeshire, what we're proposing here, revise this constituency boundary in line with your constraint and not affecting the two Carmarthenshire constituencies which actually, you know, if that constraint were removed, you could think of other things, but this is the best that we can see in line with that constraint. And that it does actually keep the number of voters in the two constituencies within the quired, required range. So that's what I've got to say. [Laughter].

AC1: Thank you very much. Any points of clarification from anyone in the room? Or the panel?

SP: No.

AC1: Thank you very much for coming today.

UNKNOWN: [Inaudible 04:01:25].

AC1: Not this lady.

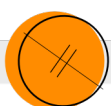
UNKNOWN: Okay.

AC1: Thank you very much. We've not got another speaker listed until 10 past six, so we're going to adjourn these, the, this meeting until 10 past six, when we will resume. Thank you.

KW: Thank you for your time.

AC1: Thank you.

[Break]



AC1: Good evening. This is a public hearing for the Boundary Commission for Wales. My name is Andrew Clemes. I'm an Assistant Commissioner. The panel consists of my fellow Assistant Commissioner Steven Phillips, as well as Shereen Williams, who is secretary to the Boundary Commission in Wales. We have a speaker for 20 past six, Mr Deluc, who's turned up, do you mind going a few minutes early?

JD: Yeah, that's fine.

AC1: Just to explain, you've got a 10-minute slot for the podium, and I'll explain to you when you get there, if you could just give your, your name, the area you live generally, not, not the address and whether you speak as an individual or part of any organisation. The lady on your left there will tell you how to go two minutes left.

JD: Okay.

AC1: Okay? So when you're ready to make a start, thank you.

JD: Okay. So I'm Jacob Deluc. A resident of Swansea West currently, city centre. And I'm speaking as an individual, so I won't be long, I'm sure you've had a long day today. I support the Commission's proposal for the boundary changes in Swansea. In Swansea West and Gower, Sketty, Cockett and Kingsbridge have natural land borders between the wards to the West in the city centre of Swansea. I wouldn't say any of the residents, many of the residents in Swansea do class themselves as city centre residents. More to the West. All my friends in Sketty travel to Mumbles for their everyday shopping with the community of Derwen Fawr being a stone's throw away from Mumbles Road, well down Mumbles Road from Mumbles High Street. Regarding Swansea Central and North wards, Castle and Uplands wards a very densely populated, right, right next to each other in the heart of the city centre with no natural separation between the two. In the Castle ward, the community of [inaudible 04:04:17] has very close links with Town Hill with many community outreach projects in Town Hill, also encompassing [inaudible 04:04:24]. [inaudible 04:04:27] community also doesn't have any pubs and the closest pub is on Neath Road in [inaudible 04:04:34] in the Landor ward. And these communities intertwine on daily basis. So therefore, I support the community, Commission's proposal within the boundary changes. And the end.

AC1: Thank you very much. Any questions?

JD: Yeah, any questions?

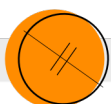
AC1: There are no questions or clarifications needed? Thank you for coming.

JD: Great, thank you for listening.

AC1: Thank you very much.

[Pause 04:05:02 to 04:05:21]

SW: Next speaker Will Thomas has cancelled, and Denise Thomas hasn't turned up, so...



[Crosstalk 04:05:25]

SW: Will Thomas isn't coming, he's cancelled.

AC1: He hasn't come?

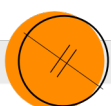
SW: He's cancelled. He's actually-

AC1: He has cancelled, yes.

SW: Yes, [inaudible 04:05:31]

AC1: The, the position is for the purposes of the livestream that the 10 past six speaker hasn't appeared and the half past six speaker has now formally cancelled, so we are going to adjourn again on the same basis before that if somebody turns up, we'd obviously hear, invite them in, but at the moment the, the public hearing is adjourned.

[Transcript ends at 04:05:52]





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Boundary Commission
for Wales

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