

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 20 NOVEMBER 2012
title: 2013 BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY
CONSTITUENCIES, REVISED PROPOSALS
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: DEBBIE NUTTALL, SOLICITOR

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members about the Boundary Commission for England's ("**BCE**") revised proposals in their 2013 review of Parliamentary Constituencies in England.
- 1.2 To seek Members' views on the Council's response to the consultation on these proposals.
- 1.3 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities
 - Community Objectives – as below.
 - Corporate Priorities –to sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley
 - Other Considerations – as below.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On Tuesday 13 September the **BCE** published its initial proposals on its 2013 review of parliamentary constituencies. The Committee considered a report on these proposals at its meeting on 27 September 2011.
- 2.2 The BCE's Guide to the 2013 Review explained the parameters of its review. These were summarised in the September 2011 Report to Committee and are also available on the BCE's website.
- 2.3 The BCE's initial proposals, if implemented, would have substantially changed the Parliamentary constituency that is now the Ribble Valley.
- 2.4 The Council's Chief Executive wrote to the BCE with the Council's comments on these initial proposals. His letter (with URN 014331), together with other responses to the consultation, is available on the BCE's website at:
<http://consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/have-your-say-ip/>.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The BCE published its revised proposals on 16 October 2012. It is consulting on these proposals until 10 December 2012.
- 3.2 Information on the proposals is available from the BCE's website:
<http://consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/whats-proposed/north-west/>. Hard copy documents are also available for review at the Council offices. These include an A0 size map.
- 3.3 A copy of the BCE's two-page "Revised proposals summary" for the North West region is included at Appendix 1 to this report for your ease of reference.

3.4 The BCE's "Revised Proposals Report" for the North West explains why the Initial Proposals for the Ribble Valley have been rejected (paragraphs AC330 to AC337):

"... our recommendations for east Lancashire enable us to address certain of the adverse effects of the initial proposal for the Ribble Valley constituency....

Many spoke of the very close ties between Chipping and other wards in the valley... Instead of being included in a Ribble Valley constituency, the initial proposals would see these wards included in the proposed Lancaster constituency. This would mean that the number of local authorities that an MP would have to deal with in such a constituency would rise to four.

While we accept that this is not an insurmountable problem, having regard to the criterion of local government boundaries, we consider that such a number should be avoided if at all possible.

Second, there is a considerable body of public opinion that opposes the removal of these wards from a Ribble Valley-based constituency....

Another issue that contributes to our overall rejection of this initial proposal is the live issue surrounding the proposed inclusion of the City of Preston ward of Fishwick in the Ribble Valley constituency... all the political parties, and many individuals, unanimously oppose this course of action... we agree with them...

Therefore, having regard to the geographical issues that are relevant to the proposed constituency (especially the barriers between certain wards and the city of Lancaster, as well as between Fishwick and the rest of the valley), local ties, and local government boundaries, we recommend that the initial proposals for Ribble Valley be rejected."

3.5 With regard to the Revised Proposals, the report explains (paragraph AC 324):

"...we would recommend that the western Hyndburn Borough wards of Overton and Netherton (the so-called "Great Harwood" wards, which, under the initial proposals, would be in the Burnley South and Accrington constituency) and Rishton ... be joined with the Ribble Valley."

3.6 Paragraph AC319 explains:

"...we recommend that the Pendle Borough wards of Craven, Coates, and Earby (part of the initial proposal for a Ribble valley constituency) should remain together with all the other wards from Pendle Borough."

3.7 The current constituencies, including the current Ribble Valley County Constituency can be seen at: <http://www.election-maps.co.uk/index.jsp>. As councillors will see from the maps, the Revised Proposals more closely follow the local government boundaries.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – this is a BCE review.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – as above.
- Political – political parties may wish to respond separately to the consultation.

- Reputation – the Council may wish to respond now on behalf of its residents.
- Equality & Diversity – not directly relevant.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Note the revised proposals for the Ribble Valley Constituency.

5.2 Formulate a response on behalf of this Council.

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DEBBIE NUTTALL
SOLICITOR

BACKGROUND PAPERS: File Buff 66

REF: DebbieNuttall/P&F/201112

For further information please ask for Debbie Nuttall, extension 4403

North West

Revised proposals

Who we are and what we do

The Boundary Commission for England is an independent and impartial non-departmental public body, which is responsible for reviewing Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England.

2013 Review

We have the task of periodically reviewing the boundaries of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England. We are currently conducting a review on the basis of new rules laid down by Parliament. These rules involve a significant reduction in the number of constituencies in England (from 533 to 502), resulting in the number of constituencies in the North West reducing by seven, to 68. The rules also require that every constituency - apart from two specified exceptions - must have an electorate that is no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473.

Revised proposals

Following the publication of our initial proposals in September 2011, and two extensive consultation exercises, we have now published our revised proposals. Information about the proposed constituencies is now available on our website or in hard copy at a local place of deposit near you.

What are the revised proposals for the North West?

We have revised 45 of the 68 constituencies we proposed in September 2011. After careful consideration, we have decided not to make any revisions to the boundaries of the remaining 23 constituencies. In some instances, however, we have revised our proposed names for these constituencies.

Under our revised proposals, 14 constituencies in

the North West would remain the same as they are under the existing arrangements.

summary

As it was not always possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties, our initial proposals grouped some local authority areas into sub-regions. It was also necessary to propose some constituencies that cross county or unitary authority boundaries. In the North West, it was further necessary to propose two constituencies that crossed our sub-regions.

While we have retained the same sub-regions as the basis of our revised proposals, as shown in the table below, we have revised the location and composition of one of the cross-sub-region boundary constituencies.

Sub-region	Existing allocation	Allocation under our revised proposals
Cheshire and the Wirral	15	13
Merseyside (less the Wirral)	11	10
Greater Manchester*	27	26
Lancashire	16	14
Cumbria	6	5

* includes constituencies with areas in both Cheshire and Lancashire

Following careful consideration, we have produced a revised proposal for a cross-county boundary constituency between Greater Manchester and Lancashire. Our revised proposal links wards from the north of Bolton with those from Darwen and the surrounding area. We have not revised our cross-county boundary constituency between Greater Manchester and Cheshire - Hazel Grove and Poynton.

We have made substantial revisions to our initial proposals for Cumbria, Manchester, Merseyside, and eastern Lancashire in order to better reflect existing constituency arrangements and local government boundaries.

We have revised our initial proposals for Cheshire in order to avoid the inclusion of detached wards in the Mersey Banks constituency, and better reflect existing constituency arrangements elsewhere in the sub-region.

After careful consideration, we have not revised our initial proposals for the constituencies in and around Blackpool, Chester, Congleton, Crewe, Macclesfield, and Morecambe.

How to have your say

We are consulting on our revised proposals for an eight-week period, from 16 October 2012 to 10 December 2012. We encourage everyone to use this final opportunity to contribute to the design of the new constituencies - the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be before we make

recommendations to the Government.

We ask everyone wishing to contribute to the design of the new constituencies to first look at the revised proposals report, and accompanying maps, before responding to us.

You can find more details of how to respond on our website, or you can write to us direct or email northwest@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk. You can also find more details about the rest of the review on our website.

Boundary Commission
for England 35 Great
Smith Street London
SW1P 3BQ

Tel: 020 7276 1102

Email: information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk

Website:

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