

FOR PUBLICATION

CONSULTATION ON 2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

Meeting: EMPLOYMENT & GENERAL COMMITTEE

Date: 11 OCTOBER 2016

Report by: DEMOCRATIC AND ELECTORAL SERVICES
MANAGER

For publication Background papers for public reports-none

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform members of the committee of the initial proposals contained in the 2018 Boundary review for new parliamentary constituencies in England.
- 1.2 To invite comments from the Council in response to the consultation for submission to the Boundary Commission for England in so far as they affect Chesterfield Borough Council.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the initial proposals for a change to the parliamentary constituency boundaries as they affect Chesterfield Borough be noted and supported.

3.0 Background to the review

- 3.1 On 13 September 2016 the Boundary Commission for England published its initial proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries. This began a 12 week public consultation on the proposals ending 5 December 2016. During this time the Commission is inviting comments on the review. For the East Midlands Region there will also be 3 public hearings at which

people can give their views direct to an Assistant Commissioner. These hearings will be held on the following dates:

Derby	27-28 October 2016
Northampton	31 October-1 November 2016
Lincoln	3-4 November 2016

- 3.2 Consultation responses will all be published and there will follow a four week secondary consultation period likely to take place in Spring 2017 allowing people to comment on the consultation responses received during the initial consultation.
- 3.3 The Boundary Commission will then consider whether any change is required to the initial proposals and will publish revised proposals for consultation for a further period of 8 weeks. This is likely to be towards the end of 2017. Following this further consultation the Boundary Commission is required to make recommendations to the government for new boundaries in September 2018.
- 3.4 The new constituency boundaries are planned to take effect from the next parliamentary election in 2020.
- 3.5 The rules set out in legislation state that there will be 600 parliamentary constituencies covering the UK- a reduction of 50 from the current number. In England the number of constituencies will reduce from 533 to 501 and requires that every constituency – apart from 2 specified exceptions- must have an electorate that is no smaller than 71031 and no larger than 78507. Currently English constituencies range from 54232 to 105448.
- 3.6 As well as the primary rule as to the number of electors in a constituency the boundary Commission may also take into account:
- Special geographical considerations including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency,
 - Local government boundaries as they existed on 7 May 2015,
 - Boundaries of existing constituencies, and
 - Any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.

3.7 Further information relating to the East Midlands and Derbyshire area can be found at www.bce2018.org.uk

4.0 **Proposals**

4.1 The initial proposals retain just over 15% of the existing constituencies in the East Midlands. The remainder are new constituencies. For Derbyshire the proposals see a reduction in constituencies from 11 to 10. Attached at Appendix A is a breakdown of the new constituencies for Derbyshire, including wards and electorates.

4.2 The proposals are based on the electorate figures for local authorities and the office for national statistics at December 2015.

4.3 The existing Chesterfield constituency excludes the two borough wards of Barrow Hill and New Whittington and Lowgates and Woodthorpe. Both these wards currently form part of the NEDDC constituency.

4.4 The Commission's report states that although the existing Chesterfield constituency did not need to be changed with an electorate of 71,297, it proposes the inclusion of the Chesterfield borough ward of Barrow Hill and New Whittington within the Chesterfield constituency. This will mean greater coterminosity between the borough council administrative area and the Chesterfield constituency.

4.5 The NEDDC constituency disappears under the initial proposals and the wards represented by it are reallocated between a new constituency of Alfreton and Clay Cross, a reconfigured Bolsover and Dronfield constituency and the Derbyshire Dales constituency. As indicated in paragraph 4.4 the Chesterfield borough council ward of Barrow Hill and New Whittington is given over to the Chesterfield constituency.

4.6 Bolsover constituency requires additional electors to meet the electoral threshold and is therefore significantly reconfigured in the proposals. The Commission proposes that a new Bolsover and Dronfield constituency extend across the county to the north of Chesterfield borough with the inclusion of 12 wards from the existing NEDDC constituency, including the town of Dronfield. This will also take in the current NEDDC constituency ward of Lowgates and Woodthorpe.

4.7 It also proposed that 8 wards in the west and south of the existing Bolsover constituency are included in a newly created Alfreton and Clay Cross constituency. This constituency will also contain 5 wards from the existing NEDDC constituency and 7 wards from the existing Amber Valley constituency containing the towns of Alfreton and Ripley.

4.8 In order to address the low electorate in Derbyshire Dales constituency 5 wards in the east from the NEDDC constituency will be included to meet those requirements.

5.0 **Comments**

5.1 The proposal to leave Chesterfield constituency largely unchanged and to extend the constituency to include an additional Chesterfield borough council ward better represents the administrative area of the borough and is to be welcomed.

5.2 It is recognised that a constituency which covers the whole of the Chesterfield borough is not permissible under the constituency review rules due to the size of such a constituency. The proposal to move Lowgates and Woodthorpe ward into the newly created Bolsover and Dronfield constituency seems to be the most practical solution given the constraints of the review and represents minimum impact on boundaries and existing constituency relationships.

6.0 **Recommendations**

6.1 That the initial proposals for a change to the parliamentary constituency boundaries as they affect Chesterfield Borough be noted and supported.

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
Sandra Essex	345806 sandra.essex@chesterfield.gov.uk
Appendices to the report	
Appendix A	INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDING WARDS AND ELECTORATES