

FOR PUBLICATION

CONSULTATION ON 2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

Meeting: EMPLOYMENT & GENERAL COMMITTEE

Date: 4 DECEMBER 2017

Report by: 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 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 and revised 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 invited comments on the review. For the East

Midlands Region there were 3 public hearings at which people gave their views direct to an Assistant Commissioner.

3.2 The Boundary Commission then considered whether any change was required to the initial proposals.

3.3 The new constituency boundaries are planned to take effect from the next parliamentary election following their acceptance.

3.4 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 71,031 and no larger than 78,507. Currently English constituencies range from 54,232 to 105,448.

3.5 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.

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

4.0 **Initial Proposals**

4.1 The initial proposals retained just over 15% of the existing constituencies in the East Midlands. The remainder are new constituencies. For Derbyshire the proposals saw a reduction in constituencies from 11 to 10.

4.2 The proposals were 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 & New Whittington and Lowgates &

Woodthorpe. Both these wards currently form part of the North East Derbyshire 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 & New Whittington within the Chesterfield constituency. This will mean greater coterminosity between the borough council administrative area and the Chesterfield constituency.
- 4.5 The North East Derbyshire constituency disappeared under the initial proposals and the wards represented by it were reallocated between a new proposed 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 & New Whittington was to be given over to the Chesterfield constituency.
- 4.6 Bolsover constituency requires additional electors to meet the electoral threshold and was therefore significantly reconfigured in the proposals. The Commission proposed 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 North East Derbyshire constituency, including the town of Dronfield. This would also take in the current North East Derbyshire constituency ward of Lowgates & Woodthorpe.
- 4.7 It was proposed that 8 wards in the west and south of the existing Bolsover constituency be included in a newly created Alfreton and Clay Cross constituency. This constituency would also contain 5 wards from the existing North East Derbyshire 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 North East Derbyshire constituency would be included to meet those requirements.

5.0 **Revised/Current Proposals**

- 5.1 Given the broad level of support for the proposed Erewash and Chesterfield constituencies the assistant commissioners recommended that the initial proposals be retained.

5.2 The assistant commissioners considered comments on other Derbyshire constituencies and agreed to revise the constituencies of North East Derbyshire, Bolsover, Derbyshire Dales and Amber Valley. However the Borough ward of Lowgates & Woodthorpe would still move to the revised Bolsover ward.

5.3 **Comments**

5.4 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.

5.5 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 & Woodthorpe ward into the Bolsover constituency seems to be the most practical solution given the constraints of the review and represents minimum impact on boundaries and existing constituency relationships.

5.6 The Local Government Boundary Commission is now consulting on the revised proposals for an eight-week period, from 17 October 2017 to 11 December 2017. Everyone is encouraged to use this final opportunity to contribute to the design of the new constituencies.

6.0 **Recommendations**

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

Document information

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Appendices to the report	
Appendix A	SECONDARY PROPOSALS FOR CONSTITUENCIES INCLUDING WARDS AND ELECTORATES