

Meeting of the Cabinet – 13th November, 2012

Report of the Chief Executive

Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries

Purpose

1. To consider the revised proposals of the Boundary Commission for England with regard to the boundaries of Parliamentary constituencies.

Background

2. Under the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 the Boundary Commission is obliged to review constituency boundaries. Under the legislation the number of constituencies within the United Kingdom reduces from 650 to 600. In England the number falls from 533 to 502.
3. The statutory rules state that every constituency in England (apart from the Isle of Wight) must have an electorate of between 72,810 and 80,473 i.e. 5% either side of the **electoral quota of 76,641**. In determining the boundaries the Commission may also take into account:-
 - (a) Special geographic considerations including the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency.
 - (b) Local Government boundaries as they existed on 6th May 2010.
 - (c) Boundaries of existing constituencies, and
 - (d) Any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.
4. However, none of the factors set out in paragraph 3 (a) – (d) above overrides the necessity to achieve an electorate in every constituency that is within the range allowed.
5. The revised proposals were issued on the 16th October 2012 and a copy has been placed in the Members' Room. The proposals have also been on formal public deposit in our main libraries.

6. The Commission is consulting upon the revised proposals for 8 weeks ending on 10th December 2012. The Boundary Commission's main focus during this final consultation is on those constituencies where the initial proposals have been revised. The proposals for two of the Dudley constituencies have been revised. The tables below show the current constituencies, the initial proposals and the revised proposals.
7. The Commission will then consider its final recommendations to the Government during 2013 with Parliament making the final decision.

Current Constituencies

8. The following table shows the composition of the current Dudley constituencies including the two which are cross boundary.

Table 1

Dudley North Constituency

BOROUGH WARD	ELECTORATE
Castle and Priory	10692
Gornal	10580
Sedgley	9850
St James's	10019
St Thomas's	10163
Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	10410
Total	61714

Dudley South Constituency

BOROUGH WARD	ELECTORATE
Brierley Hill	10105
Brockmoor and Pensnett	9771
Kingswinford North and Wall Heath	10259
Kingswinford South	10423
Netherton, Woodside & St. Andrews	10636
Wordsley	10114
TOTAL	61308

Halesowen and Rowley Regis Constituency

BOROUGH	ELECTORATE
Belle Vale	10227
Halesowen North	9573
Halesowen South	10008
Hayley Green and Cradley South	9419
Blackheath*	9276
Cradley Heath and Old Hill*	9989
Rowley*	9164
TOTAL	67656

* Wards situated in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Stourbridge Constituency

BOROUGH WARD	ELECTORATE
Amblecote	10465
Cradley and Wollescote	9953
Lye and Stourbridge North	9597
Norton	9743
Pedmore and Stourbridge East	10008
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	10311
Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	10148
TOTAL	70225

Wolverhampton South East Constituency

BOROUGH WARD	ELECTORATE
Coseley East**	9657
TOTAL	9657

** Relinquished to Wolverhampton City Council

9. The initial proposals of the Commission originally published on 13th September 2011 are set out in Table 2 below:-

Table 2

Dudley East and Oldbury Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATE
Castle and Priory	10,692
Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews	10,636
St James's	10,019
St Thomas's	10,163
Greets Green and Lyng*	7,702
Oldbury*	9,218
Tipton Green*	9,738
Tividale*	9,226
TOTAL	77,394

* Wards situated in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Dudley South and Rowley Regis Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATE
Amblecote	10,465
Brierley Hill	10,105
Lye and Stourbridge North	9,597
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	10,311
Wordsley	10,114
Blackheath*	9,276
Cradley Heath and Old Hill*	9,989
Rowley*	9,164
TOTAL	79,021

* Wards situated in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

Dudley West Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATE
Brockmoor and Pensnett	9,771
Coseley East	9,657
Gornal	10,580
Kingswinford North and Wall Heath	10,259
Kingswinford South	10,423
Sedgley	9,850
Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	10,410
Spring Vale*	8,735
TOTAL	79,685

* Ward situated in Wolverhampton City Council

Halesowen and Stourbridge Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATES
Belle Vale	10,227
Cradley and Wollescote	9,953
Halesowen North	9,573
Halesowen South	10,008
Hayley Green and Cradley South	9,419
Norton	9,743
Pedmore and Stourbridge East	10,008
Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	10,148
TOTAL	79,079

10. The revised proposals of the Commission published on 16th October 2012 are set out in Table 3 below:-

Table 3

Dudley East and Oldbury Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATE
Castle and Priors	10,692
Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews	10,636
St James's	10,019
St Thomas's	10,163
Greets Green and Lyng*	7,702
Oldbury*	9,218
Tipton Green*	9,738
Tividale*	9,226
TOTAL	77,394

* Wards situated in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Dudley West Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATE
Brockmoor and Pensnett	9,771
Coseley East	9,657
Gornal	10,580
Kingswinford North and Wall Heath	10,259
Kingswinford South	10,423
Sedgley	9,850
Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	10,410
Spring Vale*	8,735
TOTAL	79,685

* Ward situated in Wolverhampton City Council

Halesowen and Rowley Regis Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATES
Belle Vale	10,227
Halesowen North	9,573
Halesowen South	10,008
Hayley Green and Cradley South	9,419
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	10,311
Blackheath*	9,276
Cradley Heath and Old Hill*	9,989
Rowley*	9,164
TOTAL	77,967

* Wards situated in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

Stourbridge and Dudley Constituency

BOROUGH WARDS	ELECTORATE
Amblecote	10,465
Brierley Hill	10,105
Cradley and Wollescote	9,953
Lye and Stourbridge North	9,597
Norton	9,743
Pedmore and Stourbridge East	10,008
Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	10,148
Wordsley	10,114
TOTAL	80,133

11. Stourbridge and Dudley Constituency would be the only constituency entirely within the Borough. The revised proposals for Dudley East and Oldbury and Dudley West Constituencies remain unchanged from the initial proposals. Halesowen and Rowley Regis is similar to the current Halesowen & Rowley Regis Constituency but with the addition of Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood
12. The revised proposals clearly achieve the primary objective of falling within 5% of the electoral quota of 76,641 referred to in paragraph 3 above, but they pay scant regard to the factors referred to in paragraph 3 (a) – (d) above. On the plus side all of our constituency boundaries remain within the Black Country and, unlike other parts of the country, do not cross into neighbouring counties.

13. Individual political parties will presumably respond to the revised proposals. If the council wishes to make its own submission, I propose that Cabinet authorise me, in consultation with the Leader and Councillor Les Jones, to examine any viable counter-proposal for submission to the Boundary Commission for England.

Finance

14. Any cost incurred during this process will be met from existing budgets.

Legal

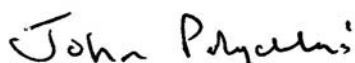
15. The review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries is governed by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011.

Equality Impact

16. It is not considered that the review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries will have any particular impact on equality issues but any alternative proposals put forward by the Council will be consistent with our policies on equality and diversity.

Recommendation

17. It is recommended that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Councillor Les Jones, be authorised to examine any viable alternative proposal for Parliamentary constituency boundaries within the borough and, make an appropriate submission to the Boundary Commission for England.



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Chief Executive.

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List of Background papers:

Initial Proposals issued by Boundary Commission for England.
Revised Proposal issued by Boundary Commission for England.