

North Tyneside Council Report to Council Date: 24 November 2016

ITEM 9

Title: Review of
Parliamentary
Constituency Boundaries

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Cabinet Member(s): N Redfearn

Report from Service Area: Law and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vivienne Geary, Head of Law and Governance (Tel: (0191) 6435339)

Wards affected: All Wards

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is currently conducting a review of the boundaries of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England, and will report to Parliament on its recommendations for boundary changes in September 2018.

This report outlines the initial proposals of the BCE in relation to the North East, in particular to the two Parliamentary Constituencies located within the Borough of North Tyneside, and provides information about the process for consultation on those proposals.

At its meeting held on 14 November 2016, Cabinet expressed support for the BCE's proposals in relation to the North Tyneside and Tynemouth Parliamentary Constituencies, but also agreed that the views of full Council be sought before the Elected Mayor responds to the BCE on behalf of the Authority.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Council consider whether to support the initial proposals of the review of the Boundary Commission for England in relation to the North Tyneside and Tynemouth Parliamentary Constituencies.

1.3 Forward Plan:

It has not been practicable to give twenty eight days notice of this report. However, it is required to be considered without the twenty eight days notice being given to enable the Authority's response to be submitted to the BCE by the 5 December 2016 deadline.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report does not directly relate to any of the priorities in the 2016/19 Our North Tyneside Plan.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is an independent and impartial non-departmental public body which is responsible for reviewing Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England. THE BCE has the task of periodically reviewing the boundaries of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England.

1.5.2 The 2018 Review

The BCE is currently conducting a review on the basis of rules set by Parliament in 2011. Parliament has specified that the 2018 Review must reduce the number of constituencies, and therefore MPs, in the **United Kingdom**, to 600. This will result in a significant reduction in the number of constituencies in England from 533 to 501. Parliament has asked the BCE to consider where the boundaries of the new constituencies in England should be, ensuring that every new constituency, apart from two specified exceptions, has roughly the same number of electors; no fewer than 71,031 and no more than 78,507.

The North East has been allocated 25 constituencies – a reduction of four from the current number. The proposals leave three of the 29 existing constituencies unchanged. However, in other parts of the region more substantial change is required.

The current figure, as at the review date for North Tyneside Constituency, is 76,427 and for Tynemouth Constituency, 74,618. As these are both within the proposed electoral quota, no changes to the existing constituency boundaries have been proposed.

1.5.3 Statutory Procedure for consultation

The BCE is consulting on its initial proposals for a 12-week period, from 13 September 2016 to 5 December 2016. The 2018 Review is being carried out under a new procedure that relies on a combination of written and oral representations at public hearings. The previous practice of public inquiries was abolished in 2011 and replaced by shorter public hearings. These hearings are not inquiries, public meetings or debates, but are there to provide an opportunity both for the BCE to explain its initial proposals and for people to give their views on those proposals.

The public meetings in the North East are being held on

Newcastle - Royal Station Hotel, Neville Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 5DH,
Monday 14 – Tuesday 15 November.

Darlington – Mercure Darlington Kings Hotel, 9 – 12 Priestgate, Darlington, DL1 1NW,
Thursday 17 – Friday 18 November.

Views can be given to the Commission either in writing or in person (oral representations). However the Commission encourages everyone who wishes to

comment on the proposals in writing to do so through the interactive consultation website, at www.bce2018.org.uk

1.5.4 Secondary consultation period

As soon as possible after the initial 12-week consultation on the BCE's initial proposals, the BCE publishes on its website all of the representations that it has received for each region (including the records of the public hearings). Once the representations have been published there is a further statutory four-week period during which people can submit to the BCE written comments on those representations it received during the initial consultation period, for example challenging or supporting assertions made in a representation. There are no public hearings at this stage.

1.5.5 Development of revised proposals

The BCE staff and Assistant Commissioners consider all the written representations received and oral representations made at public hearings in the initial consultation period, and all the written representations made in the four-week secondary consultation period. They then write a joint report on each region for the Commissioners, summarising and considering the representations and recommending whether and, if so, how the initial proposals for that region should be revised in the light of those representations. The Commissioners then consider each report and determine whether and to what extent revisions should be made to their initial proposals.

The BCE then publishes a report for each region stating whether or not revisions have been made to the initial proposals for that region. Alongside these reports it publishes all the written representations received during the four-week secondary consultation period. If the proposals are revised, then the Act provides for a further period of eight weeks for written representations to be made to the BCE on the revised proposals for that region. There are no public hearings at this stage; nor is there a repeat of the four-week period for commenting on the representations of others.

1.5.6 Final recommendations and report

The BCE takes into consideration any written representations made in the eight-week consultation period about the revised proposals, and makes its final decisions about whether further modifications need to be made in light of those representations.

When the BCE has decided on its final recommendations for the whole of England, it then drafts and submits a formal written report to the Government. The report, which is also published, contains a description of the review in each region, a textual description of all the final recommendations, and a set of maps to illustrate the existing boundaries and those proposed by the final recommendations.

The submission of the formal final report concludes the review process. The procedure to implement new constituencies is the responsibility of the Government and Parliament.

1.6 **Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Council:

Option 1

Agree to the recommendation set out in 1.2.

Option 2

Not agree to the recommendation set out in 1.2.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

This will enable the views of the Authority to be submitted to the Boundary Commission for England by the 5 December 2016 deadline.

1.8 Appendices:

None.

1.9 Contact officers:

Joanne Macgregor, Law and Governance tel. (0191) 643 5350

Dave Brown, Law and Governance tel. (0191) 643 5358

Alison Campbell, Finance tel. (0191) 643 7038

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- Boundary Commission for England – Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries
<http://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2018-boundary-review-initial-proposals-launched/>
- Report to Cabinet on 14 November 2016 - 'Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries'

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial or other resource implications arising from this report.

2.2 Legal

The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended in 2011) requires the four Boundary Commissions for the UK to carry out a review of constituencies and to submit final reports to Parliament in September 2018.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Details of the consultation process for responding to the BCE's proposals are contained in the main body of the report. Full Council will be consulted on the proposals at its meeting on 24 November 2016 by virtue of this report.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equalities and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management implications directly arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy