

COUNCIL

29 NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT OF MANAGEMENT AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT MANAGER

A.3 2018 Parliamentary Constituencies Boundary Review

(Report prepared by Karen Neath)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To agree a response to the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) consultation on proposed new Parliamentary Constituency boundaries.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In February 2016, the BCE announced the start of a review of the Parliamentary constituencies in England. Following a decision by Parliament to reduce the number of constituencies in the UK to 600 from 650, and to ensure that the number of electors in each constituency is more equal, the BCE has been asked to make independent recommendations about where the boundaries of English constituencies should be. In doing so, the BCE have to ensure that every new constituency has roughly the same number of electors: no fewer than 71,031 and no more than 78,507. While proposing a set of boundaries which are fairer and more equal, the Commission will also try to reflect geographic factors and local ties. The Commission will also look at the boundaries of existing constituencies and local government patterns in redrawing the map of parliamentary constituency boundaries across England.
- The BCE must report to Parliament in 2018 and, if agreed by Parliament, the new constituencies will be in use at the next scheduled General Election in 2020.
- On 13 September the BCE published its initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituencies. The publication marks the start of 12 weeks of consultation, during which the Commission is seeking responses to help shape the proposed new constituency boundaries. Under these proposals, only 68 of the existing 533 English constituencies remain unchanged.
- The consultation is available from the Boundary Commission website at the following link <http://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2018-review/>

It closes on **5 December 2016**. There will be a further two rounds of consultation in 2017. Following the conclusion of all three consultation periods, the BCE will look at all the evidence received and make final recommendations to Parliament in September 2018.

- The local government boundaries that the BCE will have regard to, are those that existed on 7 May 2015. It will not generally take into account any changes to boundaries coming into effect after that date. However, in the limited circumstances where the BCE has to consider whether it should divide a ward in order to meet the statutory electorate range, the BCE would be prepared to take into account as appropriate any new ward boundaries introduced after 7 May 2015.

- So far as Tendring is concerned the BCE propose a Harwich and Clacton County Constituency (electorate 77,007) wholly within the Tendring District and a North East Essex County Constituency (electorate 77,674) comprising ten wards within the Tendring District and thirteen wards of the Borough of Colchester.

The two constituencies proposed will comprise the following wards:-

Harwich and Clacton County Constituency – Twenty five wards of the District of Tendring:- Alton Park, Beaumont and Thorpe, Bockings Elm, Burrsville, Frinton, Great and Little Oakley, Hamford, Harwich East Central, Harwich East, Harwich West Central, Harwich West, Haven, Holland and Kirby, Homelands, Little Clacton and Weeley, Peter Bruff, Pier, Ramsey and Parkeston, Rush Green, St Bartholomews, St James, St Johns, St Marys, St Pauls and Walton.

North East Essex County Constituency - Thirteen wards of the Borough of Colchester:- Birch and Wintree, Copford and West Stanway, Dedham and Langham, Fordham and Stour, Great Tey, Marks Tey, Pyefleet, Stanway, Tiptree, West Bergholt and Eight Ash Green, West Mersea, Wivenhoe Cross and Wivenhoe Quay.

Ten wards of the District of Tendring:- Alresford, Ardleigh and Little Bromley, Bradfield, Wrabness and Wix, Brightlingsea, Golf Green, Great Bentley, Lawford, Manningtree, Mistley, Little Bentley and Tendring, St Osyth and Point Clear and Thorrington, Frating, Elmstead and Great Bromley.

- The changes from the current Parliamentary constituencies are as follows:-

Great and Little Oakley, Harwich East, Harwich East Central, Harwich West, Harwich West Central and Ramsey and Parkeston move into the constituency which sits wholly in Tendring.

Golf Green and St Osyth and Point Clear move into the constituency that covers both Tendring and Colchester.

- The commentary from the BCE consultation document in relation to the above proposals is as follows:-

“At present the Harwich and North Essex constituency surrounds the Colchester constituency at its north-west, north, east and south sides, taking in the port of Harwich to the east. We propose to modify this arrangement by pairing Harwich with Clacton-on-Sea in a Harwich and Clacton constituency. In addition, we propose a North East Essex constituency that completely surrounds the Colchester constituency. Our proposed North East Essex constituency comprises 13 wards from the Borough of Colchester and ten wards from the District of Tendring. As a result, the villages of Point Clear, St. Osyth, Seawick and Jaywick are no longer included in a constituency with Clacton. The entirety of our proposed Harwich and Clacton constituency falls within the District of Tendring.”

- It is proposed that, in response to the consultation, comment should be made on the placing of Golf Green in the North East Essex Constituency. It is considered that the ward of Golf Green better sits within the Harwich and Clacton County Constituency as that encompasses the coastal strip from Harwich all the way down to Clacton and that coastal communities have their own particular character and issues which require a coherent and unified approach. It is considered that the

needs of the community within the Golf Green Ward will best be served by this ward sitting in the Harwich and Clacton County Constituency with the other local coastal communities in Tendring.

RECOMMENDATION

- a) That a response is submitted to the Boundary Commission for England on the consultation on 2018 Parliamentary Boundaries that this Council considers that the ward of Golf Green should sit within the proposed Harwich and Clacton County Constituency for the reasons set out in the report;
- b) that Members determine whether they have any other comments to make in response to the consultation.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The Council is responding to the consultation as part of its Community Leadership role.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

There are no financial implications

Risk

The consultation is undertaken to allow comments to be made which should mitigate the risk of communities being placed in Parliamentary Constituencies which do not best serve their needs.

LEGAL

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is required by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 to review the parliamentary constituencies in England every 5 years.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are none.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

There are no background papers.

APPENDICES

There are no appendices.