

# General Purposes Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>2 November 2016</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>For General Release</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries by the Boundary Commission for England</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Chief of Staff</b>
<b>Financial Summary:</b>	<b>The cost of administering UK Parliamentary elections is met from the Government grant. Any cost applicable to making City Council representation at this review would need to be met from the appropriate Council budget.</b>
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## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Boundary Commission for England ('the Commission') is the independent public body that reviews all Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England every five years. The Commission is currently carrying out a review called for by Parliament aimed at reducing the number of MPs from 650 to 600 and published initial proposals on 13 September 2016. The Commission's initial consultation period ends on 5 December 2016. There is a secondary consultation period after this and if changes are made to the initial proposals the possibility of a further consultation period. A final report is then laid before Parliament.
- 1.2 The Commission must submit final reports on the reviews to Government in September 2018.
- 1.3 The review is based on the electorate numbers as at 1 December 2015. The Commission's task is twofold: to reduce the number of constituencies (in England, from 533 to 501. London will go down from having 73 MPs to 68 MPs ); and to make more equal the number of electors in each constituency ( with each one having between 71,031 and 78,507 electors– the only exception being the Isle of Wight) .

- 1.4 The Commission has stated that any proposed alternatives for areas that are disagreed with must meet the statutory rules set out in their report. An initial proposals report for London is attached as Appendix A.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee note the challenging and complex set of criteria being applied to this review.
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees that a representation be made to the Commission by the City Council.
- 2.3 That the Committee agrees that the representation made to the Commission by the City Council strongly supports the initial proposals

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The current parliamentary constituencies covering the City of Westminster are made up of the following City of Westminster wards- with 1 December 2015 electorates as shown :

### **Cities of London and Westminster- 58,071:**

The City of London-6158, Bryanston and Dorset Square-5300, Churchill-5498, Hyde Park-5386, Knightsbridge & Belgravia-3769, Marylebone High Street-4772, St James's-5952, Tachbrook-4942, Vincent Square-5967, Warwick-5491 and West End-4836 .

### **Westminster North-59,436:**

Abbey Road-5469, Bayswater-4920, Church Street-6332, Harrow Road-6440, Lancaster Gate-5140, Little Venice-5545, Maida Vale-5689, Queen's Park-7054, Regent's Park-6097 and Westbourne-6750 .

## **4. The Commission's initial proposals**

- 4.1 The initial proposals made by the Commission on 13 September 2016 are as follows:

That all Westminster wards are included in two constituencies

### **Cities of London and Westminster BC- 75,693**

City of London - 6,158

Bloomsbury- Camden- 5,016

Holborn and Covent Garden- Camden- 7,466

Bryanston and Dorset Square- WCC- 5,300

Churchill- WCC- 5,498

Hyde Park- WCC- 5,386

Knightsbridge and Belgravia- WCC- 3,769

Lancaster Gate-WCC- 5,140

Marylebone High Street- WCC- 4,772

St.James's- WCC-5,952  
Tachbrook- WCC- 4,942  
Vincent Square-WCC- 5,967  
Warwick- WCC-5,491  
West End- WCC- 4,836

**Queen's Park and Regent's Park BC- 72,664**

Kilburn-Brent- 9,522  
Queens Park- Brent- 8,846  
Abbey Road- WCC- 5,469  
Bayswater- WCC-4,920  
Church Street- WCC-6,332  
Harrow Road- WCC- 6,440  
Little Venice- WCC 5,545  
Maida Vale- WCC-5,689  
Queen's Park- WCC- 7,054  
Regent's Park- WCC 6,097  
Westbourne-WCC- 6,750

- 4.2. Section 41 of the Commission's initial proposals report for London reads as follows:

"In Westminster and the City of London, we noted that the combined electorate would not meet the electoral quota, so we therefore propose a Cities of London and Westminster constituency, which retains ten wards from the existing constituency and includes the Lancaster Gate ward from the existing Westminster North constituency, and the Camden borough wards of Bloomsbury ,and Holborn and Covent Garden, from the existing Holborn and St Pancras constituency. The electorate of the existing Westminster North constituency is currently below the electoral quota. To bring this constituency within range, we propose including the Brent borough wards of Queens Park and Kilburn from the existing Hampstead and Kilburn constituency. ( It should be noted that there is already a Queen's Park ward from Westminster in the existing constituency , making two in the proposed constituency.) To reflect the change we propose this constituency is called Queen's Park and Regent's Park."

**5. Consultation and Representation**

- 5.1 The Commission is trying to conduct as much of this review as is possible on the internet, using their website ([www.bce2018.org.uk](http://www.bce2018.org.uk)) as the primary source of information. The website allows persons to explore the map of the proposals and get further data, including the electorate sizes of every ward and polling district. Text or data files can also be uploaded by those persons.
- 5.2 The Commission still has a statutory requirement to make paper copies of its recommendations available to members of the public. The Commission has decided that there will only be one place of deposit per proposed constituency. The place of deposit chosen for the proposed constituency of

Cities of London and Westminster is the City of London Guildhall. The place of deposit chosen for the proposed constituency of Queen's Park and Regent's Park is in Brent. The review can also be followed on twitter [@BCE2018](#) or using #2018boundaryreview.

5.3 All members of the Council were advised of the proposals by a WIB item published on Friday 16 September. Information in respect of the review was placed on [www.westminster.gov.uk](http://www.westminster.gov.uk) web pages.

5.4 A public hearing took place in Westminster on 17-18 October at Central Hall Westminster at Storey's Gate. There were also four other London public hearings – in Bromley, Harrow, Kingston and Romford.

5.5 The content of a City Council representation must not be motivated by party political considerations.

## **6. Precedent**

6.1 See attached Appendix B which sets out what happened at the previous Commission review commenced in 2011 and which did not see the final proposals enacted.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 The cost of administering UK Parliamentary elections is met from the Government grant. Any cost applicable to making City Council representation at this review would need to be met from the appropriate budget.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 As set out in the report

## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1
- a) The initial proposals at this review maintain the historic link between the two Cities, of London and Westminster- at the previous review the initial proposals took away the link.
  - b) The initial proposals at this review present a better administrative delivery framework for officers than was the case at the previous review. The initial proposals at this review include Westminster wards in two parliamentary constituencies- at the previous review the final proposals had Westminster wards in three parliamentary constituencies.
  - c) The initial proposals at this review have Westminster's Returning Officer as the Returning Officer for both the Westminster wards constituencies- at the previous review Westminster's Returning Officer

was the Returning Officer in only one of the three Westminster wards final proposals constituencies.

- d) The initial proposals at this review will create less confusion for Westminster voters than was the case in respect of the previous review final proposals- there is marked similarity between what is currently in place and the initial proposals presented at this review.
- e) The initial proposals at this review preserve the boundaries of wards and do not require wards to be broken up by polling district before being inserted into a constituency.
- f) Accordingly given the framework of the review the Commission's initial proposals are supported.

#### Background Papers:

- 1. Appendix A. Commission's Report. Initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries in London.
- 2. Appendix B. The previous review commenced in 2011.

**If you have any questions about this report, or wish to inspect one of the background papers, please contact:  
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