

MINUTE EXTRACT

Cabinet Meeting24th June 2021

1. Title of Item/Report

2023 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet noted that the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) had been tasked to conduct a review of the parliamentary constituencies in England based on the updated rules in the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020. The BCE must complete the current review and make a formal report to the Speaker of the House of Commons before the 1 July 2023.

Parliamentary Boundaries reflected the area where the electorate vote for their MP, and the review will examine these areas and make proposals for a new set of boundaries. The Act requires there to be a fixed number of 650 constituencies.

The North East region had been allocated 27 constituencies (currently it had 29). The BCE's initial proposals aimed to wholly contain each of these constituencies in the North East region.

The BCE is also required by the Act to ensure that each proposed constituency had an electorate as at the 2 March 2020 that was no less than 95% and no more than 105% of the UK electoral quota. This quota had been calculated at 73,393. Accordingly, each constituency must have an electorate that was no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062.

Taking these requirements and other statutory factors into account, the BCE published its initial proposals for England, including the North East on the 8 June 2021 for an 8 week consultation period ending 2nd August 2021. Other statutory factors taken into consideration were:

- Special geographical considerations e.g. mountains lakes rivers;
- Local Government boundaries as they exist or were in prospect on 1 December 2020;
- Boundaries of existing constituencies;
- Any local ties;
- The inconveniences attendant on such changes.

The BCE was required to consider all written representations made to it during the consultation period and representations would be published alongside the initial proposals. The BCE would be encouraging all

interested parties to contribute views through their consultation website by the 2nd August 2021.

The results to date from consultation with elected members and political groups of the Council were summarised. Members present at the meeting representing wards within Thornaby affected significantly by the proposals, reiterated their objections contained within the report and spoke out against the BCE proposals which effectively sought to split wards within Thornaby into two different Parliamentary constituencies. Cabinet were advised that the comments submitted as part of the report were for noting and subsequent consideration by Council; and would then be forwarded to the BCE on the basis that they represented the views of political parties as indicated.

RECOMMENDED that:-

1. The report be noted;
2. Responses received to date on the initial proposals be noted and be submitted to Council for noting at its meeting on 14 July 2021;
3. Any additional responses received following this meeting of Cabinet be submitted to July Council for noting.