

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

23 November 2022

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 THE PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES BOUNDARY REVIEW

To note the final proposals for the Parliamentary Constituencies Boundary review issued by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) and invite Members to consider the proposals and any Council response to the consultation.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) launched the review of Parliamentary Constituencies across the UK to create a more equal number of electors in each constituency, in January 2021. The initial proposals were published on 8 June 2021 which started an 8-week public consultation that concludes on 2 August 2021. Members agreed at Council on 13 July 2021, that “The General Purposes Committee be invited to consider the proposals and delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to thereafter submit the Council’s response to the Boundary Commission”.

1.1.2 The Council did submit a response, which raised a number of points which can be summarised as

- Concern raised over the proposed split of some areas between Chatham & Aylesford Constituency and the new Maidstone & Malling Constituency
- Larkfield, which is part of the East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council is separated from the rest of the Parish and included in the Chatham & Aylesford Constituency, with the rest of the Parish in the Maidstone & Malling Constituency.
- Aylesford is also split between the Chatham & Aylesford Constituency and Maidstone & Malling Constituency

- Some of Rochester is being placed in the Chatham & Aylesford constituency, the concern is the physical barrier of the M2 that will be cutting the Constituency in half.
- Concern over the spread of the Tonbridge Constituency into villages at the north of the area such as Hartley and New Ash Green, that have more in common with Dartford and Gravesham than with Tonbridge.

1.1.3 The final proposals were issued on 8th November 2022 and starts a final public consultation period, which closes on 5th December 2022. Members will note that these proposals are no different to those presented for the first stage consultation

1.1.4 After the close of this consultation, the Commission will analyse the responses and form its final recommendations. These will be submitted to Parliament by 1 July 2023.

1.1.5 The document at **Annex 1** is the Commission's Guide to the review.

1.2 Proposals

1.2.1 The proposals and maps for the nine English regions have been published on the BCE website. The Commission is promoting use of a specifically designed consultation website as the primary tool for displaying the proposals and receiving comments on them. This is available at www.bcereviews.org.uk

1.2.2 The final proposed maps for the Constituencies that encompass our Borough are set out at **Annex 2**. (These maps include the current ward structure, not the new ward structure to be introduced in February 2023.)

1.2.3 The first proposed maps and current maps for the constituencies are set out at **Annex 3**

1.2.4 Members should note that the final proposals still show that we will have 3 Constituencies, called County Constituencies (CC) in the consultation, covering our Borough, Chatham & Aylesford CC, Maidstone and Malling CC and Tonbridge CC.

1.2.5 None of the proposed constituencies are co-terminus with the Borough boundaries. In these proposals each of the 3 MPs will be shared across local authority boundaries.

1.2.6 The proposed Chatham & Aylesford CC loses Ditton and South Aylesford and gains more of Rochester/Chatham.

1.2.7 The proposed Tonbridge CC loses some of the Mallings and gains New Ash Green, Hartley and part of Longfield.

1.2.8 The new proposed Maidstone & Malling CC incorporates the Mallings, Barming, Allington and part of Maidstone.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 There are no legal implications associated with this information paper, and none for TMBC in respect of the draft Constituency boundaries.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this information paper, and none for TMBC in respect of the draft Constituency boundaries.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 There are no risks to report to Members associated with this information paper, or the draft Constituency boundaries.

1.6 Equality Assessment

1.6.1 This is an information report, and no Equality Impacts are associated with it.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 Members are invited to consider the proposals in order to inform a Borough Council response to the Consultation, to be submitted by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader.

contact: Daune Ashdown

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive