

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND
an **EXTRAORDINARY** meeting of the
BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH
to be held on

TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2016 at 7pm
in the Council Chamber, Swanspool House, Wellingborough
for the purpose of transacting the following business.

(Please note that prayers will be said prior to the commencement of the meeting.
You may leave the room during prayers if you wish to do so.)

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of interest.
- I 3. Report on the review of parliamentary boundaries 2018.

John T Campbell
Chief Executive

11 November 2016

I Enclosed

Further information:

If you have any questions regarding this agenda, please contact Carol Mundy, Democratic Services Officer, on 01933 231 521 or cmundy@wellingborough.gov.uk

Requests to address the council meeting:

If you wish to speak at the council meeting in relation to an agenda item, you must register your request no later than **5pm on the day before the meeting.**

You can do this by:

- Completing the form on the council's website at www.wellingborough.gov.uk/speakersform; or
- Completing the form at Swanspool House reception; or
- contacting Carol Mundy by telephone or email, as detailed above.

Prior to the meeting, your request will be put to the mayor or chairman of the council meeting who will need to be satisfied that what you wish to say is relevant to the public agenda for the meeting.

The following conditions apply:

- maximum time limit for addressing the meeting is three minutes;
- where a number of people wish to speak on the same subject to express similar views, the chairman may require these views to be put by a spokesperson.

Membership of the Council:

The Mayor, Councillor M Waters, Deputy Mayor, Councillor B Graves and Councillors Abram, Allebone, Anslow, Aslam, Bailey, Beirne, Bell, Bone, Carr, Ekins, Emerson, Francis, Gough, Griffiths, Hallam, Harrington, Henley, G Lawman, L Lawman, Lloyd, Maguire, Morrall, Partridge-Underwood, Patel, Scanlon, Scarborough, Simmons, Skittrall, Stevenson, Walia, Ward, V Waters, Watts and York. (36)



Report of Head of Resources

Review of parliamentary boundaries 2018

1 Purpose of report

Members are asked to consider their response to the current review of parliamentary boundaries, a response to which must be submitted by 5 December 2016.

2 Executive summary

The review of parliamentary boundaries makes proposals which have a significant effect on the constituents in the existing Wellingborough constituency. Any individual, group, or organisation may submit a response to the consultation.

3 Appendices

Appendix one: criteria used by the Boundary Commission

Appendix two: map showing the proposed boundary for the Wellingborough constituency

4 Proposed action:

The council is invited to RESOLVE to relay the following concerns to the Boundary Commission for England in relation to the review of parliamentary constituencies 2018:

- 4.1 The division of the borough of Wellingborough between four parliamentary constituencies, thus further losing the identity of the borough as a historical and well understood unit;**
- 4.2 The linkage of part of the borough to an area of Leicestershire, as part of an extensive rural constituency, which lacks cohesion, threatens accessibility, and breaks local ties;**
- 4.3 The fragmenting of a long-standing and understood constituency simply to accommodate numerical compliance for those around it;**
- 4.4 Any other specific recommendations or comments agreed by members.**

5 Background

- 5.1 The parliamentary boundaries for the East Midlands area were last reviewed in 2007. As a result the Wellingborough constituency changed, to transfer the Earls Barton and West wards to the Daventry parliamentary constituency.**

- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 Parliament has specified that the 2018 Review must reduce the number of constituencies, and therefore MPs, in the UK, to 600. In the East Midlands the number of constituencies will reduce from 46 to 44.
- 5.4 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) has been asked to consider where the boundaries of the new constituencies in England should be, ensuring that every new constituency has roughly the same number of electors: no fewer than 71,031 and no more than 78,507.
- 5.5 The BCE's aim is to retain constituencies within regional boundaries, and use current wards as their main building blocks. Set out in appendix one is a more detailed explanation of the factors the BCE take into account.
- 5.6 The BCE has also stated that they try to retain existing constituencies where they can.
- 5.7 To ensure consistency across the country, all electorate calculations are based on the revision to the register of electors published on 1 December 2015.
- 5.8 The BCE determined that the best way to approach the review for the East Midlands would be to divide it into sub-regions: Northamptonshire was not considered large enough to be a sub-region on its own (electorate: 494,000) so they made the decision that "there would have to be a constituency that crossed the county boundary" and "it could only be linked with Leicestershire for the purpose of creating constituencies that were within 5% of the electoral quota. As we had already concluded that Nottinghamshire should also be linked with Leicestershire, we therefore decided to consider Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire (with Rutland) and Northamptonshire as a sub-region, with an allocation of 27 constituencies to the sub-region as a whole."
- 5.9 In terms of the Wellingborough constituency the BCE report stated that "Although the existing Wellingborough constituency, with its electorate of 74,916, did not need to change, we considered that it would have to be modified in our proposals in order to accommodate the changes we have proposed elsewhere."
- 5.10 The review is expected to take approximately two and a half years. Initial proposals for new boundaries were published on 13 September 2016. This began a twelve week public consultation period
- 5.11 The Boundary Commission for England held three public hearings with regard to the initial proposals to the East Midlands region, one of which was in Northampton on 31 October-1 November.
- 5.12 The final recommendations will be made to Parliament in late 2018.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The new proposed boundary has an impact on several areas of the borough:
 - (a) **Finedon ward** would become part of the proposed **Kettering** parliamentary constituency;
 - (b) **Harrowden and Sywell ward** would become part of the proposed **Daventry and Lutterworth** constituency (note: three villages from this ward - Ecton, Mears Ashby and Sywell - are already part of the current Daventry parliamentary constituency);
 - (c) **Wollaston and Bozeat wards** would become part of the proposed **Northampton South** constituency;

- (d) **Irthlingborough Waterloo** and **Irthlingborough John Pyel** wards would become part of the proposed **Wellingborough** constituency.
- 6.2 The BCE has invited comments on their proposals, asserting that the “review process is heavily informed by public consultation”.
- 6.3 As set out in appendix one in more detail, the BCE focuses on four criteria:
 - (a) special geographical considerations, including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency;
 - (b) local government boundaries as they existed on 7 May 2015 (see paragraph 16 of the BCE Guide to the 2018 Review);
 - (c) boundaries of existing constituencies; and
 - (d) any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.
- 6.4 **Geographical considerations:** Accessibility will become an issue for some residents of the borough if this proposal goes ahead. At the last review, residents in Earls Barton and the former West ward expressed their concerns about being part of Daventry constituency, the main town being 45 minutes’ drive away. Being part of the Lutterworth constituency would feel even more remote as it is outside the county and the most direct route to access it would be via the M1.
 - (a) **Boundaries of existing constituencies:** this proposal results in a constituency which already “takes in/gives away” from two authorities and will be divided between four constituencies. The BCE stated that it would not change existing parliamentary boundaries unless absolutely necessary. Compared with the rest of the county the borough of Wellingborough is affected the most, as Kettering, Northampton and Corby don’t “lose” any of their borough residents, and Daventry/South Northants only give away two wards each. Wellingborough gives away five wards;
- 6.5 **Local ties:** By dividing the borough of Wellingborough into four this will result in many ties being broken.
 - (a) Finedon is very close to Wellingborough, and a new development to the east of the town will cross the parish boundary. In effect, people living next to each other could be represented by different MPs.
 - (b) The Harrowden and Sywell/Earls Barton wards will be represented by an MP whose base will be in another county, and is unlikely to be familiar with the locations or the issues affecting electors.
 - (c) Wollaston and Bozeat would be some distance from the centre of the Northampton South constituency, being on the Northamptonshire/Bedfordshire boundary. The current office for the MP for Northampton South is on Billing Road in Northampton, roughly 11 and 13 miles from Wollaston and Bozeat respectively.
 - (d) Since the last review of parliamentary constituencies, there has been a Local Government Boundary Commission for England review of the ward boundaries in the borough of Wellingborough, which led to the creation of the Harrowden and Sywell ward in place of the old North and West wards. The existing constituency of Daventry is formed, in part, by Earls Barton ward and the old West ward, now part of Harrowden and Sywell; if the council was to suggest any changes to the initial proposals it is unlikely that the BCE would be receptive to the idea of splitting the existing ward to accommodate a change.

7 Legal powers

Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended in 2011).

8 Financial and value for money implications

There are no financial or value for money implications for the council in relation to these proposals.

9 Risk analysis

The key risk associated with this change to parliamentary constituencies is the feeling by electors that they are not engaged with the MP who represents them and so are disinclined to take part in the democratic process.

10 Implications for resources

The proposed change will have a major effect on the team who deliver elections: they will need to work with four other local authorities to agree protocols for cross-boundary working. It was clear in 2015 that this presented significant challenges when working with only two other authorities.

11 Author and contact officer

Bridget Gamble, Head of Resources

12 Consultees

Chief Executive
Principal Corporate Support Manager
Electoral Services Team Leader

13 Background papers

Background papers include all documentation produced by the BCE and an information document produced for members to consider on 18 October 2016 at their informal meeting.

Appendix one

The legislation referred to in guidance published by the BCE is: the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended by the Boundary Commissions Act 1992 and the 2011 Act) available at www.legislation.gov.uk. The 1986 Act (as amended) is referred to throughout the remainder of this Guide simply as 'the Act'.

Rule 5 in Schedule 2 of the Act provides for a number of other factors that the BCE may take into account in establishing a new map of constituencies for the 2018 Review, specifically:

- special geographical considerations, including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency;
- local government boundaries as they existed on 7 May 2015 (see paragraph 16 of the BCE Guide to the 2018 Review);
- boundaries of existing constituencies; and
- any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.

Special geographical considerations

The BCE considers that special geographical considerations that may have an impact on the ability to form a constituency with an electorate within the statutory electorate range will primarily relate to physical geography such as mountains, hills, lakes, rivers, estuaries, islands, rather than to human or social geography. Matters of culture, history, socio-economics and other possible aspects of non-physical geography are more likely to arise as issues when considering the separate factor of 'local ties'.

Local government boundaries

The BCE may take into account local government boundaries. These include both the external boundaries of local councils and their internal – ward or electoral division

While the BCE proposes to identify constituencies by reference to local authority external boundaries as far as practicable, it is nevertheless often necessary to cross these boundaries in order to form constituencies that comply with the statutory electorate range.

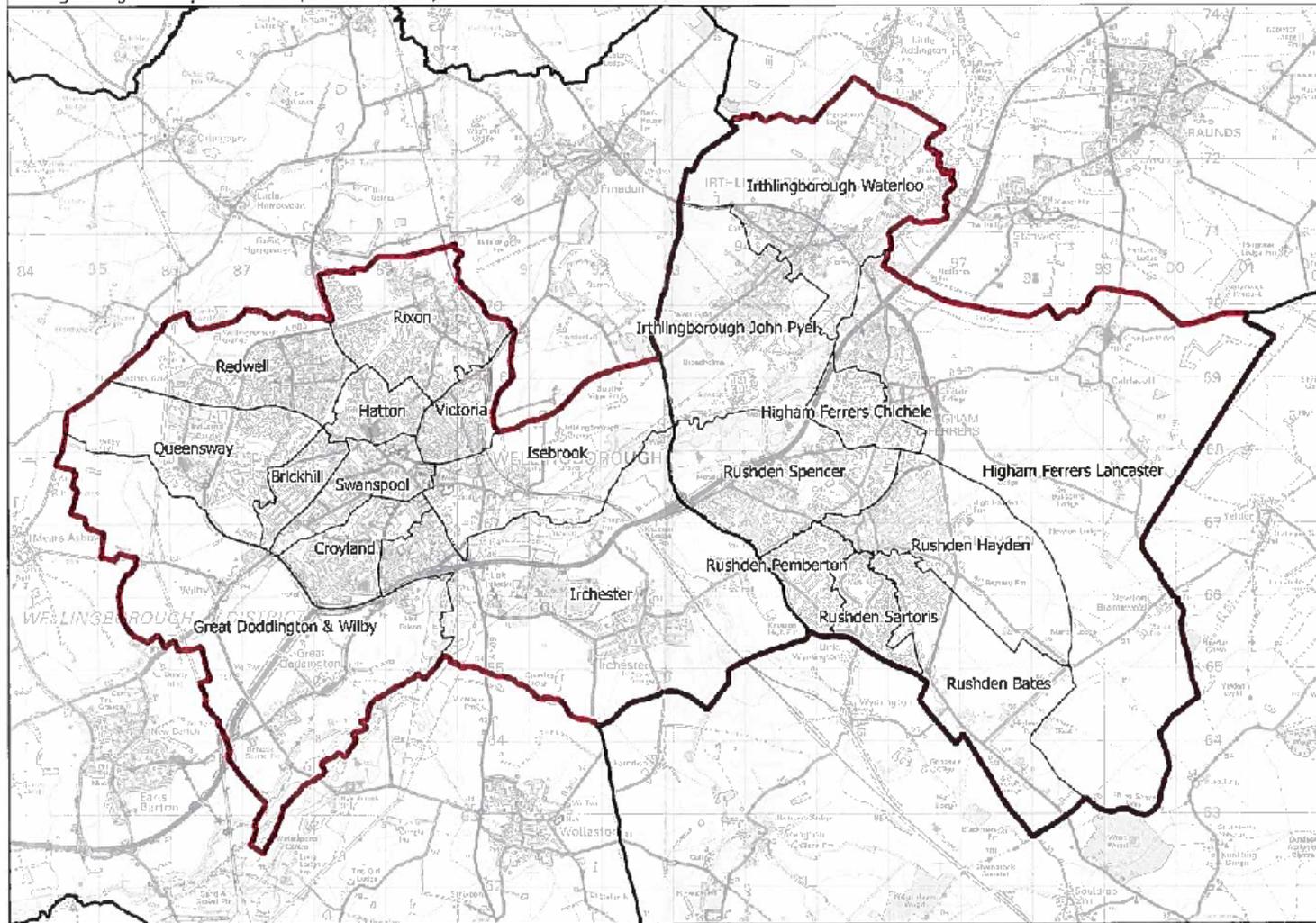
The BCE uses wards (in district and borough council areas) or electoral divisions (in areas of unitary authorities that have a county status) as the basic building block for designing constituencies. The use of the term 'ward' throughout the rest of this document should be taken to include electoral divisions in unitary authorities.

The BCE seeks to avoid dividing wards between constituencies wherever possible. Wards are well-defined and well-understood units, which are generally indicative of areas which have a broad community of interest. Any division of these units between constituencies would be likely to break local ties, disrupt political party organisations, and cause difficulties for Electoral Registration and Returning Officers. The BCE's view is therefore that wards should continue to be the default building block for constituencies.

The BCE intends to have regard generally to existing constituencies as far as possible,

as it does not consider that it would be appropriate to start from a 'blank sheet of paper'. However, this does not mean that an existing constituency should be automatically considered to be 'protected from change', simply on the basis of its electorate figure already falling within the statutory range. One of the effects of reducing the overall number of constituencies allocated to England, together with the requirement of the statutory electorate range, is that many of the existing constituencies that have an electorate that is within the statutory range will, nonetheless, need to be altered as a result of the need to create viable constituencies in the surrounding area.

Boundary Commission for England - Initial Proposals for the East Midlands Region
Wellingborough County Constituency - Electorate 71,501



— Constituency — Local authorities — Wards

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Wellingborough CC