
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	1 December 2016
Report By:	Head of Legal & Property Services	Report No:	GM/LP/153/16
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712710
Subject:	2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies – Publication of Initial Proposals		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report informs the Council of the Initial Proposals received from the Boundary Commission for Scotland for the 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies and advises that consultation responses are invited by 11 January 2017.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland (BCS) is an independent non-political body which makes recommendations for UK Parliament Constituencies in Scotland.
- 2.2 BCS is undertaking a review of UK Parliament Constituencies in Scotland and it is intended that a report be made to the Secretary of State for Scotland by 1 October 2018.
- 2.3 The Initial Proposals which have been received use electorate data from 1 December 2015 and proposes a new Inverclyde and Largs County Constituency in Inverclyde and North Ayrshire Council areas with 73,965 electors. Consultation comments on the proposals are invited by 11 January 2017.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Council consider the BCS 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies relative to the proposed Inverclyde and Largs County Constituency and remits it to the Head of Legal & Property Services to respond to the consultation, accordingly.

Gerard Malone
Head of Legal & Property Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The BCS is one of the four UK Parliamentary Boundary Commissions which are simultaneously reviewing UK Parliament Constituencies. The BCS is an independent, non-political body which is undertaking the review in Scotland in terms of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986. A report is to be submitted by the BCS to the Secretary of State for Scotland in respect of the Scottish UK Parliament Constituencies by 1 October 2018.
- 4.2 The Council received on 20 October 2016 a copy of the Initial Proposals from the BCS. The consultation period for responses expires on 11 January 2017 and comments on the proposals are invited.
- 4.3 The proposals form the basis of the current review for 2018 alteration. Members may recall that the BCS previously undertook as consultation exercise for the proposed Sixth Review in March 2011 but in January 2013, the UK Parliament amended the relative legislation and, as a result, the BCS stopped that work on the review.
- 4.4 The previous proposal, as reported to the Council in December 2011, was to extend the Inverclyde County Constituency to include Bishopton, Bridge of Weir, Langbank, Erskine and Inchinnan (resulting in a proposed electorate of 77, 647 at that time).

5.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Upon receipt of the Initial Proposals, public display of the proposals has been undertaken in the Customer Service Centre and in the public libraries within Inverclyde. As part of the consultation process, public hearings are also being held throughout Scotland and the relative location for the proposed Inverclyde and Largs County Constituency is to be held in Ayr Town Hall, Newbridge Street, Ayr KA7 1JX on 1 December 2016 (for the local authority areas of East Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and South Ayrshire).

6.0 PROPOSED INVERCLYDE AND LARGS COUNTY CONSTITUENCY

- 6.1 It is proposed that the new UK Parliament Constituency is Inverclyde and Largs and this will comprise 73,965 electors with a total area of 346km². The proposed constituency follows ward boundaries in Inverclyde and North Ayrshire Council areas with one exception: Ward 6 (Dalry and West Kilbride) where the boundary follows a Community Council boundary. The review of UK Parliament Constituencies was originally announced in February 2016 and will use electorate data as from 1 December 2015. The review is undertaken in terms of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 which specifies that there are now to be 600 constituencies in total within the UK with each constituency returning a single member to the UK Parliament.
- 6.2 By virtue of the legislation, there is a UK electoral quota of 74,769.2 electors per constituency. This is calculated by dividing the total electorate by the relevant number of seats to be allocated (there are provisions for island constituencies within this calculation). It is a provision of the legislation that there be no less than 95% and no more than 105% of the UK electoral quota and this means that the electorate of a constituency has to be no fewer than 71,031 and no more than 78,507 electors. Within Scotland, there are 51 UK Parliament Constituencies and 2 specified islands constituencies making a total of 53 constituencies. The constituencies may not exceed a maximum area of 13,000km².
- 6.3 In terms of BCS principles for constituency design, account is taken of existing boundaries and it is an objective to design as many constituencies as practicable that do not cross a Council area boundary and which recognises existing community ties, takes into consideration any local geography issues (for example transport links, other electoral boundaries, administrative boundaries and natural features) and which considers any special geographical considerations, where appropriate. There are 59 existing UK Parliament Constituencies within Scotland as from 2005. In terms of the review, the number of mainland constituencies in Scotland will reduce from 57 constituencies to 51 constituencies (with two island constituencies making the overall total 53 constituencies).

- 6.4 The BCS is explicit in its terms that it is aware that many people would like the boundaries of the UK Parliament Constituencies and the Scottish Parliament Constituencies to be the same: there are 73 Scottish Parliament Constituencies and as there are to be 53 UK Parliament Constituencies within Scotland it is not possible for their boundaries to coincide. Equally the BCS is aware that many people would wish the boundaries of constituencies and Council areas to be the same but the same practical considerations apply with regard to the quota.
- 6.5 As part of the BCS review, there is a recommended name for each constituency and it is within these guidelines to use an existing constituency name where there is a successor constituency that is recognisably similar, hence the proposed Inverclyde and Largs County Constituency.
- 6.6 Five public hearings around Scotland are to be held during the consultation period to 11 January 2017 (as above, the relevant Inverclyde Council and North Ayrshire Council public hearing being in Ayr on 1 December 2016). The purpose of these hearings is to explain the proposals and to give an opportunity to all to make representations on these.
- 6.7 Written representations can be made by the Council (and by members of the public) by 11 January 2017. Representations can oppose or support the Initial Proposals. After 11 January 2017, the BCS will publish on its website the representations received along with the record of the public hearings and will invite written comment on them during a further period of four weeks. If the Initial Proposals are altered in the light of these comments, the BCS will publish the resulting Revised Proposals for further public consultation and will invite representations about these. The consultation period for any Revised Proposals will be eight weeks.
- 6.8 When the BCS has completed its review, it will submit its recommendations in a report to the Secretary of State for Scotland in September 2018. The Secretary of State for Scotland is responsible for laying the report before the UK Parliament. Thereafter, when all of the four Boundary Commissions have submitted their reports, Ministers will be responsible for submitting a draft Order to the UK Parliament to give effect to any of the recommendations and when this process completes its legislative steps, it will come into operation for the next general election to the UK Parliament.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 7.1 None.

Financial Implications:

One Off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

Legal

- 7.2 This review is being undertaken by the BCS in terms of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 and the Council has an opportunity to submit its written consultation response by 11 January 2017.

Human Resources

7.3 None.

Equalities

7.4 None.

Repopulation

7.5 There are no direct impacts affecting the Council's repopulation strategies.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 This Council has the opportunity to consider the BCS proposals and to submit a consultation response. The public consultation map will be on display for the Council meeting. The BCS has prepared a summary of initial proposals and a booklet specifying its policies and procedures and both have been made available within the Members' library. The consultation portal sponsored by the BCS is: www.bcs2018.org.uk.