

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

5 DECEMBER 2017

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Report Title	PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW REVISED PROPOSALS
Purpose of Report	To ensure that the Council responds to this consultation document and that Members are kept up to date.
Decision(s)	<i>The Committee to:-</i> (1) <i>Note the revised proposals from the Boundary Commission for England for Parliamentary boundaries for the Stroud District Council area; and</i> (2) <i>Consider whether to put forward any comments/views that it would like to include in the response to the Boundary Commission.</i>
Consultation and Feedback	Details are contained within the body of the report.
Financial Implications and Risk Assessment	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Adele Rudkin, Accountant Tel: 01453 754109 Email: adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk
Legal Implications	It should be noted that the Decision Box simply sets out the points which the Committee needs to consider to ascertain whether it is possible to formally respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council. It is for the Committee to resolve the response. Any consultation response should include evidence in support taking account of the factors in paragraph 3.2. of the report. Karen Trickey, Head of Legal Services Email: karen.trickey@stroud.gov.uk
Report Author	Hannah Emery, Elections Manager Email: hannah.emery@stroud.gov.uk
Options	The Council can choose whether or not to make a response to the consultation document. This response can either support proposals or suggest changes and must be submitted by the 11 December 2017.
Background Papers	Revised proposals for the new constituency boundaries in the South West – Published by the Boundary Commission

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is an independent and impartial non-departmental public body which is responsible for reviewing Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England.
- 1.2 The BCE are currently conducting a review to reduce the number of constituencies in England to 501 (from 533). The rules require that every constituency – apart from two specified exemptions - must have an electorate that is no smaller than 71,031 and no larger than 78,507. The final recommendations must be published in September 2018. [Please see the following link.](#)
- 1.3 The legislation also states that when deciding on boundaries, the Commission may also take into account:
 - 1.3.1 Special geographical considerations, including particular in size, shape and accessibility of a constituency;
 - 1.3.2 Local government boundaries and electorate as they existed in December 2015;
 - 1.3.3 Boundaries of existing constituencies; and
 - 1.3.4 Any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.

Initial proposals

- 1.4 The BCE published their initial proposals for the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England on 13 September 2016. This was followed by a 12 week consultation period.
- 1.5 The initial proposals split the Stroud District across three constituencies:
 - 1.5.1 Quedgeley Feildcourt and Quedgeley Severn Vale was moved to Stroud Constituency from Gloucester Constituency;
 - 1.5.2 Nailsworth and Minchinhampton were to be part of The Cotswolds Constituency; and
 - 1.5.3 Berkeley, Cam East, Cam West, Dursley, Kingswood, Vale and Wotton-Under-Edge would be part of the Dursley, Thornbury & Yate Constituency.
- 1.6 A further 4 week consultation opened from the 28 February 2017 to the 27 March 2017 for written comments to be submitted to the Commission on the representations it received during the initial consultation period to either challenge or support comments made during the consultation period.
- 1.7 All the responses (including the records of public hearings from the initial 12-week consultation) have been published on the Commission's website (<https://www.bce2018.org.uk>) and can be viewed by constituency area.

Revised proposals

- 1.8 Revised proposals (Appendix A) were published on the 17 October 2017 and a further 8-week consultation period has opened until the 11 December 2017.

- 1.8.1 The revised Stroud Constituency will have an electorate of 71,107;
 - 1.8.2 Minchinhampton will move back to the Stroud Constituency from The Cotswold Constituency; and
 - 1.8.3 Cam East, Cam West, Dursley, Kingswood, Vale and Wotton-Under-Edge will form part of the proposed Dursley, Thornbury & Yate Constituency.
- 1.9 Amendments made to the initial proposals (published December 2016):
- 1.9.1 Quedgeley Feildcourt and Quedgeley Severn Vale will remain in Gloucester;
 - 1.9.2 Nailsworth will no longer move to The Cotswold Constituency; and
 - 1.9.3 Berkeley will no longer move to the proposed Dursley, Thornbury & Yate Constituency

2 ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 The ward data provided for the review is based on the December 2015 ward patterns and electorate. Although our ward patterns have now changed and the electorate did increase prior to the EU Referendum in June 2016 and the UK Parliamentary General Election in June 2017, this cannot be factored into the proposals.
- 2.2 The revised proposals for the Stroud Constituency result in the district containing parts of two constituencies instead of three as originally proposed.
- 2.3 Within the revised proposals it is recommended that Berkeley will remain in the Stroud Constituency and Vale will form part of Dursley, Thornbury and Yate Constituency. This will split the Berkeley Vale district ward formed in 2016.
- 2.4 If Vale were to remain in the Stroud Constituency the electorate would be 72,669 and the electorate for Dursley, Thornbury and Yate Constituency would be 72,339. This would maintain the community identity for the ward and both electorates are within the electorate threshold for each constituency.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The consultation period enables interested parties to inform the BCE where they think the proposals are acceptable and also to propose alternatives where it is felt they do not meet the Commission's criteria (improve electoral equality, reflect community identity and provide effective and convenient local government).
- 3.2 The Council is not compelled to respond to the consultation; however this is the final consultation period and the only opportunity for the Council to respond to the BCE with written comments on the revised proposals.