

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Council

**DATE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

#### **RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARIES**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

To seek the Council's approval to the recommendation of the Electoral Cycle & Parliamentary Boundary Review Working Group on the Boundary Commission for England's 2023 Review of Parliamentary boundaries.

##### **2. Recommendations**

The Council is requested to resolve that the draft response as at Appendix A be submitted to the Boundary Commission for England by 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021.

##### **3. Legal, Financial and Other Implications**

**Legal** – none identified.

**Human Resources** – none identified.

**Financial** – none identified.

##### **4. Supporting Information**

###### **Background**

- 4.1 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) published initial proposals on a 2023 Review of Parliament boundaries on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021. A consultation period on the initial proposals is open until 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021.
- 4.2 Further details on the 2023 Review are available from the following link:  
<https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review/>
- 4.3 The BCE is the independent and impartial non-departmental public body tasked with reviewing constituency boundaries in England. It is currently working on a review on the basis of rules most recently adopted in 2020, based on retaining the number of constituencies (650) and complying with strict parameters, particularly the number of electors in each constituency.
- 4.4 Public consultation is a key part of the process and written representations and engagement at public hearings will take place across two rounds of consultation.

The BCE is required to make a formal report to the Speaker of the House of Commons before 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 setting out its formal recommendations on the distribution, shape, size, name or designation of constituencies. The Government must turn the recommendations into an 'Order of the House' that implements the recommendations which would come into force at the next General Election after the date the legislation is approved.

## Proposals for Slough

4.5 The figures used in the review are set out below:

Local authority	Electorate	Mathematical Entitlement
Bracknell Forest	86365	1.18
Reading	107541	1.47
Slough	87846	1.2
West Berkshire	120432	1.64
Windsor and Maidenhead	107695	1.47
Wokingham	125258	1.71

4.6 As Members will know the current constituency boundary for Slough matches the local authority boundary, with exception of the Colnbrook with Poyle ward which is in the Windsor constituency.

4.7 The expansion of Slough's population means that the electors in the Slough constituency exceeds the parameters set out the constituency size specified by BCE. The proposals for Slough are therefore to move the Foxborough and Langley Kedermister wards into the Windsor constituency.

Electorate by ward for Slough				
Local authority	Ward	ONS code	Electorate	Proposed constituency
Slough	Baylis and Stoke	E05009337	5960	Slough BC
Slough	Britwell and Northborough	E05009338	6238	Slough BC
Slough	Central	E05009339	6289	Slough BC
Slough	Chalvey	E05009340	5771	Slough BC
Slough	Cippenham Green	E05009341	6412	Slough BC
Slough	Cippenham Meadows	E05009342	6769	Slough BC
Slough	Colnbrook with Poyle	E05009343	3624	Windsor CC
Slough	Elliman	E05009344	5523	Slough BC
Slough	Farnham	E05009345	5783	Slough BC
Slough	Foxborough	E05009346	2294	Windsor CC
Slough	Haymill and Lynch Hill	E05009347	6592	Slough BC
Slough	Langley Kedermister	E05009348	6641	Windsor CC
Slough	Langley St. Mary's	E05009349	6874	Slough BC
Slough	Upton	E05009350	6667	Slough BC
Slough	Wexham Lea	E05009351	6409	Slough BC

- 4.8 The proposals are shown on the map in Appendix B.
- 4.9 The proposed Slough constituency would have an electorate of 75,287 compared to 72,566 for Windsor. A full breakdown of some surrounding constituencies is set out below for comparison.

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Area Km2</b>	<b>Pop Density</b>
Reading	71283	Borough Constituency	25.79	2763.98
Earley and Woodley	70083	Borough Constituency	48.99	1430.56
Wokingham	70235	County Constituency	138.43	507.37
Bracknell	70247	Borough Constituency	46.99	1494.94
Maidenhead	73463	County Constituency	182.50	402.54
Windsor	72566	County Constituency	91.25	795.24
Slough	75287	Borough Constituency	24.64	3055.48
Spelthorne	72897	Borough Constituency	51.19	1424.05
Weybridge and Chertsey	74908	County Constituency	109.83	682.04
Esher and Walton	73922	Borough Constituency	59.81	1235.95
Epsom and Ewell	76844	Borough Constituency	58.23	1319.66
Reigate	69805	County Constituency	81.10	860.73
East Surrey	73145	County Constituency	259.87	281.47
Dorking and Horley	75001	County Constituency	270.81	276.95
Guildford	71367	County Constituency	126.16	565.69
Woking	71737	Borough Constituency	63.64	1127.23
Surrey Heath	70825	County Constituency	130.56	542.47

- 4.10 The Electoral Cycle and Parliamentary Boundary Review Working Group met on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the proposals and to determine whether to recommend a response to Council.
- 4.11 The Working Group recognised that under the terms of the Review there was a legal requirement for constituencies to have between 69,724 and 77,062 electors. The number of electors in the 14 wards comprising the existing Slough constituency would exceed the upper limit set out by law and members therefore accepted that some electors would need to be transferred to another constituency, namely Windsor given the fact it needs to transfer in electors to meet the minimum constituency size.
- 4.12 The Working Group concluded that there was a necessity to transfer some electors from the Slough constituency and whilst the Council would be reluctant to destabilise the integrity of the boundary of the town of Slough, and local authority boundary (with the exception of Colnbrook with Poyle which is already in the Windsor constituency), it agreed with the BCE that of the available options the transfer of Foxborough and Langley Kedermister wards to the Windsor constituency was the most logical.
- 4.13 It was noted that this change would have no impact on the local authority boundary, the BCE proposal related only to the boundary for Parliamentary constituencies and in operational terms the Council's electoral services team already worked closely with the

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead in relation to the Colnbrook with Poyle ward which was already in the Windsor constituency.

- 4.14 The Working Group requested that the Council use its social media channels in order to raise awareness of the consultation to local residents, particular those in Foxborough and Langley Kedermister, so they could respond directly with their views. Information and a link to the BCE consultation page was circulated following this request.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 The Council is invited to consider and agree the recommended response set out in Appendix A.

## **5 Appendices**

A – Draft Response of the Council to BCE

B – Proposed map of Slough constituency

C – BCE South East summary

**DRAFT RESPONSE TO INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR REVISED PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES**

**Boundary Commission for England's Initial proposal**

- 1 The Council notes the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) initial proposal is to transfer the Foxborough and Langley Kedermister Wards from the Slough Constituency to the Windsor Constituency.

**Council Views on initial proposals**

- 2 The Council notes the aims of the Review and the statutory rules for the Review as set out in the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020 and the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011.
- 3 The Council acknowledges that under the terms of the Review there is a legal requirement for constituencies to have between 69,724 and 77,062 electors. We recognise that the number of electors in the 14 wards comprising the existing Slough constituency would exceed the upper limit set out by law and accept that some electors would need to be transferred to another constituency.
- 4 We support the BCEs general principle of moving transferring whole wards to maintain their electoral integrity and minimise any confusion from electors.
- 5 Taking these factors into account, we agree that transferring Foxborough and Langley Kedermister wards into the Windsor constituency is the most logical proposal to bring the Slough and Windsor constituencies within the required range.
- 6 We regret the that the integrity of the existing Slough parliamentary boundary would be destabilised by the proposal, however, we acknowledge the legal necessity of doing so to meet the required parameters. We also acknowledge that it is insufficient to transfer one ward to Windsor and meet the required electorate size.
- 7 The reasons for taking this position are that Foxborough has close geographic proximity to the Windsor and was indeed part of the constituency in recent history. It is also adjacent to the Slough local authority ward of Colnbrook with Poyle which is already in the Windsor constituency.
- 8 Parts of the Langley Kedermister ward have also previously been in the Windsor constituency. Transferring Langley Kedermister would be less disruptive and cause less geographic severance than alternatives such as the Upton or Langley St Mary's wards.
- 9 The Council has responded to the previous Parliamentary boundary reviews, including in the last review, to express opposition to the BCE proposal at that time to move the Chalvey ward into the Windsor constituency. For the reasons expressed at that time, principally local and historic ties between the ward and

Slough, we maintain the position taken at that time and are pleased it has not been proposed in the current review.

- 10 In summary, we acknowledge the necessity which drives the proposal and whilst we would be reluctant to destabilise the integrity of the boundary of the town of Slough, and local authority boundary (with the exception of Colnbrook with Poyle which is already in the Windsor constituency), we agree with the BCE that of the available options the transfer of Foxborough and Langley Kedermister wards to the Windsor constituency is the most logical.

July 2021