

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL

OUTCOME FOR NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE OF THE 2021-2023 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES IN ENGLAND

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To report on the outcome for North Lincolnshire following the 2021-2023 UK Review of Parliamentary Boundaries in England.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) commenced the above review in January 2021 and submitted its final report to Parliament in June 2023. The final report's recommendations became law through the Parliamentary Constituencies Order 2023 on 15 November 2023, with the revised constituencies to be used for the next Parliamentary (General) Elections (for any by-election that may take place beforehand, existing constituencies are to be used).
- 2.2 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is an independent and impartial advisory non-departmental public body, established under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 ('the Act') to keep under review Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England. Similar Commissions conduct equivalent work in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The statutory rules governing the conduct of the BCE's work are contained within the Act. These rules require a review of all UK Parliamentary constituencies to be conducted every eight years, with a report and recommendations submitted to Parliament at the end of the review. The statutory rules establish a fixed number of 650 constituencies (the same as the existing number of constituencies) for the UK, from which elections are to be held for the House of Commons. From this total, five constituencies (two in Scotland, one in Wales and two for the Isle of Wight) are 'protected', in the sense that they are reserved for the specified areas and thereby not subject to some of the criteria applied to all other constituencies (in particular as regards electorate size).

- 2.3 For a given review, the Act specifies a UK electorate figure at a particular point in time that is to be used throughout that review. For the 2021-2023 Review this is the figure from the register of Parliamentary electors on 2 March 2020. The legislation then specifies a mathematical formula to determine how the 645 unprotected constituencies are allocated to each part of the UK for a given review, taking into account the relative sizes of the respective Parliamentary electorates of each part of the UK (not including the electorates of the five protected constituencies).
- 2.4 The legislation requires all recommended unprotected constituencies to be broadly similar in electorate size. Specifically, they must all be within 5% of an 'electoral quota' figure, which is the mean average Parliamentary electorate for the 645 unprotected constituencies. Using the 2023 Review electorate data, the electoral quota figure is 73,393, meaning the 'permitted electorate range' for the review was between 69,724 (minimum) and 77,062 (maximum). Where the Commission wish to take into account local government boundaries the Act enables the BCE to take into account such boundaries as they existed – or were in prospect – at a specified point in time. For the 2021-2023 review, the local government boundaries were those that existed or – where relevant – were in prospect (due to being made by an as yet unimplemented Order) as at 1 December 2020. Consequently, 17 North Lincolnshire Council wards instead of the current 19 wards (post 2021/22 Electoral Periodic Review of North Lincolnshire) are referred to in the BCE report)*.
- 2.5 The Act also requires all unprotected constituencies to be no larger than 13,000 square kilometres in size (except in prescribed circumstances). In England, this is not a concern, as even in its most sparsely populated areas constituency sizes do not come near this figure. The legislation for the review also requires an eight-week published consultation period on initial proposals and if they are revised, a final four-week consultation period. Public hearings where required were also facilitated. Over 60,000 representations were received by the BCE.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Through the Parliamentary Constituencies Order 2023, the revised constituencies impacting upon North Lincolnshire are now required in law to be used for the forthcoming Parliamentary (General) Elections. The former constituencies of Brigg and Goole County Constituency and Scunthorpe County Constituency have been replaced with the –

**Brigg and Immingham County Constituency,
Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme County Constituency and
Scunthorpe County Constituency**

- 3.2 Brigg and Immingham County Constituency includes the areas of the North Lincolnshire Council wards used at the time of the review (see paragraph 2.4 above, but will now also include any additional new wards within the constituencies) of Barton, Brigg and Wolds, Broughton and Appleby (now Broughton and Scawby) and Ferry, and North East Lincolnshire Council wards of Humberston and New Waltham, Immingham, Scartho, Waltham and Wolds.

Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme County Constituency includes the areas of North Lincolnshire Council wards of Axholme Central, Axholme North and Axholme South and City of Doncaster Council wards of Finningley, Hatfield, Rossington and Bawtry and Thorne and Moorlands.

Scunthorpe County Constituency includes areas of North Lincolnshire Council wards of Ashby, (now Ashby Central and Ashby Lakeside wards) Bottesford, Brumby, Burringham and Gunness, Burton-upon Stather and Winterton, Crosby and Park, Frodingham, Kingsway with Lincoln Gardens, Ridge (now Messingham and Ridge wards) and Town.

Maps of the three new constituency areas are attached as appendices. (with more available on the Boundary Commission for England website).

* With reference to paragraph 2.4 above, there are some parishes/polling districts which because of the timing of the Review and the NLC periodic review are now situated in 'non-coterminous constituencies'. These are identified in an appendix to the report which indicates which parishes/polling districts are within a named/identified constituency for parliamentary elections.

- 3.3 Following enactment of the Review the North Lincolnshire Acting Returning Officer (ARO) for Parliamentary Elections has been informed in law that they will be responsible for elections in the Scunthorpe County Constituency. The ACO for North East Lincolnshire Council being responsible for Brigg and Immingham County Constituency and the ARO for the City of Doncaster Council for Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme County Constituency. (AROs for Parliamentary Elections in county constituencies are usually a named senior officer (Chief Executive) who discharge the functions of Returning Officers whose roles are more ceremonial as the High Sheriff or Sheriff of the county area).

Where a constituency is contained wholly within a single local authority area then electoral law provides that that local authority will provide the Acting Returning Officer for the constituency and deliver parliamentary elections for the constituency.

Where a constituency falls within more than one local authority area, the Secretary of State will designate by Order the local authority that will provide the Acting Returning Officer for the constituency (i.e. the lead local authority for the constituency, usually based on it having the greater electorate).

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The future parliamentary elections will now be held for the above constituencies across the North Lincolnshire area in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Parliamentary Constituencies Order 2023.

The new boundaries will be applied and polling districts and places within current wards used for the North Lincolnshire electorate. There is currently a statutory review of parliamentary polling districts and places ongoing in North Lincolnshire. Few changes are expected as polling districts and places were only reviewed recently following the 2021/22 Periodic Electoral Review of North Lincolnshire. However, following required consultation it is anticipated that any changes recommended (subject to approval of the Council) should be made prior to the next parliamentary elections.

- 4.2 To not carry out the requirements of the Parliamentary Constituencies Order 2023 will be unlawful and is therefore not an option.

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

- 5.1 There are no specific resource implications arising from the review. North Lincolnshire Electoral Services are already liaising with North East Lincolnshire Council and City of Doncaster Council on cross-council boundary arrangements to provide any required joint working on associated electoral arrangements, use of polling stations/facilities and human resources. The government provides grant funding for management and operational costs to Acting Returning Officers (ACOs) responsible for delivering parliamentary elections in allocated constituencies, and any cross-council boundary costs are recouped where applicable.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

- 6.1 Required guidance and standards of the Electoral Commission for parliamentary elections will be applied ensuring that electoral arrangements provide all voters and elections staff with a safe environment to participate in parliamentary elections in their constituencies and fulfil their democratic role, experience and responsibilities.

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 Not applicable.

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 There are no conflicts of interest.

8.2 As previously stated, legislation governing the Review of Parliamentary Boundaries in England required an eight-week published consultation period on initial proposals and if revised, a final four-week consultation period. Public hearings where required were also facilitated. Over 60,000 representations were received by the BCE.

8.3 Further associated publicity, including on the council's website, will be provided for the North Lincolnshire electorate on their constituency when the parliamentary elections are called.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the outcome for North Lincolnshire of the 2021-2023 Review of Parliamentary Boundaries in England, the implementation of the Parliamentary Constituencies Order 2023 and revised constituencies for North Lincolnshire for the next Parliamentary (General) Elections be noted.

DIRECTOR: OUTCOMES

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Author: R A Mell
Date: February 2024

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report - Final report of the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) on the 2021-2023 Review of Parliamentary Boundaries in England and Parliamentary Constituencies Order 2023.