
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	1 December 2011
Report By:	Chief Executive	Report No:	LA/756/11
Contact Officer:	Head of Legal & Democratic Services	Contact No:	01475 712139
Subject:	Boundary Commission for Scotland - Sixth Periodic Review of Westminster Constituencies		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of a consultation exercise currently underway by the Boundary Commission for Scotland in relation to the Sixth Periodic Review of Westminster Constituencies.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland, which operates independently of political considerations or influence published its initial proposals for UK Parliamentary constituencies on 13 October 2011. The consultation period runs for 12 weeks until 4 January 2012. During November, the Commission is holding Hearings throughout Scotland to explain its proposals, with one taking place on 22 November at Glasgow. There will be a further period of consultation when revised proposals are issued.
- 2.2 Parliament has decided to reduce the number of UK Parliamentary Constituencies from 650 to 600. For Scotland, this results in a reduction from 59 to 52.
- 2.3 Taking into account the general principles outlined in the body of this report, the proposals for Inverclyde mean that the current parliamentary seat of Inverclyde County Constituency which covers the whole of the Inverclyde area is being extended to include parts of wards 10 (Bishopton, Bridge of Weir and Langbank) and 11 (Erskine and Inchinnan) of Renfrewshire. The resulting constituency will comprise an electorate of 77,647 and still be known by the name 'Inverclyde County Constituency'.
- 2.4 The proposals have been advertised in the local press and are available at various libraries within Inverclyde. The Head of Legal & Democratic Services advised all members and Community Councils of the consultation by letter on 13 October 2011. The proposals have also been published on the Boundary Commission's website http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk/6th_westminster/initial_proposals/
Comments should be submitted directly to the Commission.
- 2.5 There is no specific requirement on the Council to respond to the proposals, it being expected that political parties will make their own responses. However, if Members wish to make comments to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services, such comments will be collated and forwarded to the Boundary Commission, as appropriate.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Members (i) note the position with regard to the consultation exercise and (ii) submit comments on or before 14 December 2011 to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and delegate authority to her to forward such comments to the Boundary Commission.

John W Mundell
Chief Executive

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland is currently carrying out its Sixth Annual Review of the United Kingdom Parliamentary Boundaries, all in terms of The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, as amended. The Boundary Commission carries out its duties in a non-partisan manner.
- 4.2 The number of Westminster Constituencies is being reduced from 650 to 600. In Scotland there will be a reduction of 7 seats, from 59 to 52.
- 4.3 The electoral quota for this review is set at 76,641.2. The electorate for each constituency must be within 5% of this number, the smallest permissible number being 72,180 and the largest being 80,473. Exceptions to the general rule are in place in relation to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Orkney and Shetland.
- 4.4 The reduction in the number of constituencies, coupled with the requirements in relation to size of electorates has meant that the Boundary Commission has been unable to leave constituencies as they are. Consequently, changes are proposed for the Inverclyde County Constituency.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 As outlined in para 2.3 above, the proposals for the current seat of the Inverclyde Council Constituency, mean that the seat will be extended to take into account certain parts of Renfrewshire Council to create a seat of some 77,647 electors.
- 5.2 The Boundary Commission's review is scheduled to be completed by 1 October 2013 with the new constituencies being in place by the next General Election.
- 5.3 Any member of the public or a political party who wish to make comment on the proposals should do so direct to the Boundary Commission. All comments so made will be taken into account when the Boundary Commission issues revised proposals at the end of the initial period of consultation.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Finance: None
- 6.2 Personnel: None
- 6.3 Legal: The current review is a statutory review.