

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

15 December 2021

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND – 2023 REVIEW OF UK PARLIAMENT CONSTITUENCIES – INITIAL PROPOSALS

**Report by Chief Executive
(Report No. 21/247)**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report advises that on 14 October 2021, the Boundary Commission for Scotland published its initial proposals in respect of boundaries for constituencies for the UK Parliament.

This report refers to the proposals as they affect the Perth & Kinross Council area, in relation to the existing UK Parliament constituencies of Perth & North Perthshire and Ochil & South Perthshire.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland commenced the 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies in January 2021. The Review is required by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 and is being conducted simultaneously by the four parliamentary Boundary Commissions in Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The Review is to report before 1 July 2023.
- 1.2 The 2023 Review will see the total number of UK Parliament constituencies remain at 650. However, Scotland has been allocated 57 constituencies for the 2023 Review, a reduction of two from the current position.
- 1.3 For the 2023 Review:
 - The legislation defines 2 Scottish island constituencies – Na h-Eileanan an Iar constituency and Orkney and Shetland constituency;
 - The electorate for every other constituency in Scotland must be between 69,724 and 77,062 electors, i.e. within 5% of the UK-wide electoral quota of 73,393, unless it exceeds 12,000 square kilometres;
 - No constituency may exceed 13,000 square kilometres.
- 1.4 The Boundary Commission for Scotland also has in place their own policy principles which are as follows:
 - recognising community ties
 - special geographic considerations
 - local geography including transport links, other electoral and administrative boundaries, and natural features

- do not cross a council area boundary, or where not practicable propose constituencies that are each wholly within two neighbouring council areas
 - minimise disruption caused by any boundary changes
- 1.5 The Commission published its initial proposals on 14 October 2021 and these, together with other supporting information on the review process, are available on the Commission's website at [2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies | The Boundary Commission for Scotland \(independent.gov.uk\)](https://www.independent.gov.uk/2023-review-of-uk-parliament-constituencies-the-boundary-commission-for-scotland/).
- 1.6 The public consultation on the initial proposals runs from 14 October to 8 December 2021. However, officers have secured an extension from the Boundary Commission to 17 December 2021 to ensure that the position of the Council is reflected in the consultation.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The Commission has developed the initial proposals using electorate data from 2 March 2020.
- 2.2 Eighteen existing constituencies are within the electorate quota for the 2023
- 2.3 Due to the reduction in the number of constituencies, and the requirements for each constituency to have a number of electors within set limits, significant changes to existing constituencies have been proposed.

Perth & Kinross Council Area

Existing Constituencies

- 2.4 At present, there are two UK Parliament constituencies covering the Perth & Kinross Council area:
- Perth & North Perthshire – March 2020 Electorate – 73,523
 - Ochil & South Perthshire North Tayside – March 2020 Electorate – 80,381

Proposed Constituencies

- 2.5 In its initial proposals, the Commission has proposed the following county constituencies covering the Perth & Kinross Council area, which are set out in the following table – maps showing the proposals are attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report:

New Constituency	Total Electorate	Wards Included (& Electorate)
Angus and Strathmore	72,775	Ward 1 - Carse of Gowrie (part) – 413 Ward 2 - Strathmore – 11,971 Ward 3 - Blairgowrie and Glens – 8,713

Dundee West and Gowrie	75,161	Ward 1 - Carse of Gowrie (part) – 7,514
Glenrothes and Loch Leven	74,155	Ward 8 - Kinross-shire (part) – 9,460
Perth and Tay	74,589	Ward 4 - Highland – 7,160 Ward 5 - Strathtay – 9,243 Ward 6 -Strathearn – 8,360 Ward 7 - Strathallan – 8,959 Ward 9 - Almond and Earn – 7,698 Ward 10 - Perth City South – 12,922 Ward 11 - Perth City North – 8,685 Ward 12 - Perth City Centre – 11,562
West Fife	74,589	Ward 8 -Kinross-shire (part) – 1,780

3. LOCAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The implications of the initial proposals in the 2023 review of UK Parliamentary are wide ranging for several communities across Perth and Kinross.
- 3.2 The design of the proposed UK Parliament constituencies is beyond any historical constituency boundaries that may have been recognised previously.
- 3.3 Furthermore, the splitting of the Council area across five new UK Parliament constituencies and their resulting design does not, in the opinion of officers, meet with the policy principles set out by the Commission, namely -
 - recognising community ties
 - special geographic considerations
 - local geography including transport links, other electoral and administrative boundaries, and natural features
 - do not cross a council area boundary, or where not practicable propose constituencies that are each wholly within two neighbouring council areas
 - minimise disruption caused by any boundary changes
- 3.4 Officers consider that the grouping of communities with little in common and where there is a keen sense of identity is likely to be contentious for those impacted. It is considered that this will have a negative impact on voter participation and awareness and cause voter confusion
- 3.5 The quality of representation would suffer for the Perth and Kinross area, due to the area being represented by five different Members of Parliament. These members will have to build new relationships with these revised areas that have differing demographics, economic and social issues.
- 3.6 Due to the proposed boundary changes, the initial proposals are likely to be disruptive to community organisations.

- 3.7 In terms of administering the UK Parliament elections, these proposals will cause significant administrative issues for the Tayside Valuation Joint Board in administering the electoral register and the Council in both conducting the election and in establishing and maintaining working relationships with five MPs.
- 3.8 Under the current arrangements for the administration of a UK Parliamentary election, Perth & Kinross Council works closely with one other Council (Clackmannanshire) for Perth and Kinross voters who fall within the Ochil and South Perthshire Constituency. Under the new Boundary Commission proposals Perth & Kinross Council would be required to liaise with three other Councils for the four new constituencies that will include Perth and Kinross voters. This will lead to confusion for prospective candidates, agents, voters and other stakeholders as well as have significant implications for officers and most importantly communities.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Commission published its proposals on its interactive consultation portal at www.bcs2023review.com.
- 4.2 Copies of the maps illustrating the provisional proposals were supplied to political group leaders, and all elected members were made aware that the proposals were available to download from the Commission's website.
- 4.3 In early 2022, the Boundary Commission will publish all comments received during the initial consultation period. At this time the Boundary Commission will invite further comments and hold between two and five public meetings. In late 2022, revised proposals may be published for consultation. Final recommendations will be published before 1 July 2023.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland has commenced the 2023 review of the boundaries for the UK Parliament constituencies and published its initial proposals on 14 October 2021. In relation to the Perth & Kinross Council area, these revised proposals are for five new constituencies – namely Angus and Strathmore, Dundee West and Gowrie, Glenrothes and Loch Leven, Perth and Tay and West Fife.
- 5.2 The initial proposals contained within the 2023 Review are not considered to be consistent with the Boundary Commissions own stated principles and the proposals will, if implemented, have a significant impact on communities across Perth and Kinross and lead to increased administration for the Council in administering future UK Parliamentary elections.
- 5.3 It is recommended that the Council:
- (a) consider and note the initial proposals by the Boundary Commission for Scotland in respect of the 2023 review of the boundaries of the UK

Parliament constituencies in the Perth & Kinross Council area as outlined in Paragraph 2.5 of this report.

- (b) agree to submit a consultation response to the Boundary Commission for Scotland, in line with the concerns highlighted within the report and provide further direction on the content of any submission.
- (c) instructs the Chief Executive to respond to the Commission by 17 December 2021, on the basis that a response is to be provided.

Author

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Approved

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Thomas Glen	Chief Executive	6 December 2021

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	N/A
Corporate Plan	N/A
Resource Implications	
Financial	N/A
Workforce	N/A
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	N/A
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	N/A
Strategic Environmental Assessment	N/A
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	N/A
Legal and Governance	N/A
Risk	N/A
Consultation	
Internal	N/A
External	N/A
Communication	
Communications Plan	N/A

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The proposals set out in this report do not relate directly to the achievement of priorities in the Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The proposals set out in this report do not relate directly to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from the proposals set out in this report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications arising directly from the proposals set out in this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising directly from the proposals set out in this report.

3. Assessments

- 3.1 No assessments have been undertaken in relation to the proposals set out in this report.

Legal and Governance

- 3.2 There are no legal and governance implications arising directly from the proposals set out in this report.

Risk

- 3.3 No key risks have been identified in relation to the proposals set out in this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 There has been no internal consultation in relation to the proposals set out in this report.

External

- 4.2 There has been no external consultation in relation to the proposals set out in this report.

5. Communication

- 5.1 There is no requirement for the Council to undertake communications activity in relation to the proposals set out in this report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers other than those referred to in this report were relied on in preparing the report.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Angus & Strathmore County Constituency
Appendix 2 – Dundee West & Gowrie County Constituency
Appendix 3 – Glenrothes and Loch Leven County Constituency
Appendix 4 – Perth and Tay County Constituency
Appendix 5 – West Fife County Constituency