

Cherwell District Council

Council

28 February 2022

Parliamentary Boundary Review update

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To update Council on the next stages of the Parliamentary Boundary Review 2023

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the update on the Parliamentary Boundary Review 2023.
- 1.2 To note that the Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review working group will consider and draft a submission to the second and any subsequent consultations.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in the Chairman's absence) of the Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review working group, to finalise the council's submission and respond on behalf of Cherwell District Council to the second and any subsequent consultation periods held during the review, including via attendance at a public hearing if considered appropriate.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 At the 19 July 2021 meeting, Council received a [report](#) (Minute 24 refers) detailing the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) approach to the review of the Parliamentary boundaries.
- 2.2 Council delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review working group (the working group) to respond to the first consultation.
- 2.3 The first Parliamentary Boundary Review consultation period was held on initial proposals from the BCE between 8 June to 2 August 2021.

- 2.4 The BCE have now [published all responses received during the first consultation](#). A secondary consultation on the same proposals will run from 22 February to 4 April 2022, and will include a series of public hearings.
- 2.5 The secondary consultation is an opportunity for interested parties to submit further comments in relation to the proposals, or respond to comments made by others during the initial consultation.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 The BCE proposals are as follows:

- The proposals are based on the current ward boundaries following the 2015 CDC boundary review.
- No Cherwell parishes will fall under a constituency that is administered by a different local authority.
- All CDC district wards will come under either the Banbury constituency (approximate electorate 69,943) or the new Bicester constituency (approximate electorate 70,389). Both constituencies will incorporate district wards from West Oxfordshire District Council.
- The CDC (Acting) Returning Officer will be responsible for the administration of parliamentary elections for both the Banbury and Bicester constituencies

3.2 The Working Group considered the proposals and submitted the following consultation response to the initial consultation:

“Cherwell District Council have considered the proposals and support the proposed Banbury and Bicester constituencies, they are logical from a geographical perspective.

Regarding the proposed Bicester constituency, we would like to make the BCE aware of the level of housing growth for Bicester. There are 4486 homes with planning permission, and a further 2192 projected permissions for the period to March 2031 and this will impact significantly on the electorate for this constituency. If the current proposals are implemented as planned, the Bicester constituency could rapidly reach and exceed the 77,062 upper limit on electors”

- 3.3 The Working Group had differing opinions on the proposed names for the two Constituencies, however as no consensus view could be reached on potential alternatives no reference was made to constituency names in the response.
- 3.4 The Working Group will be meeting to discuss the comments submitted to the BCE during the initial consultation, and determining whether it is necessary for a further response to be submitted to the secondary consultation, and/or attendance scheduled at a public hearing.
- 3.5 Public hearings are being held at four locations in the South East during March. Attendees can book a 10-minute slot to make an in-person representation on proposals in the region.
- 3.6 The BCE timetable for the review sets out that revised proposals will be published and a further four-week written consultation period will take place in ‘late 2022’.

- 3.7 Notwithstanding the proposal for authority to be delegated to the Chief Executive to respond to the BCE consultations on behalf of the Council, any individual or organisation can submit their own consultation response via the [BCE consultation portal](#), and/or book a slot at a public hearing via the [BCE website](#).

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 It is important for Cherwell District Council to respond to the Boundary Commission for England consultation on Parliamentary Boundaries, due to the impact on all residents in the district.
- 4.2 As the review will continue during 2022 and early 2023, delegating authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the working group will allow responses to any and all consultation periods to be submitted in a timely manner once exact details of subsequent consultation periods are announced.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 None in the preparation of this report.
- 5.2 The Boundary Commission for England is conducting the Parliamentary Boundary Review and subsequently the consultation for the review and administration of public hearings.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to respond to the Parliamentary Boundary Review consultation. This is rejected as this could result in the District having Constituency boundaries imposed which do not offer the best representation for the electorate

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. If attendance at a public hearing was considered necessary, travel costs would be reimbursed in line with the relevant allowance scheme and such costs can be met from existing budgets.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director – Finance. Michael.Furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk; 01295 221845

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Chris Mace, Solicitor. Christopher.mace@cherwell-dc.gov.uk; 01295 221808

Risk Implications

7.3 There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes.

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Equalities and Inclusion Implications

7.4 There are no equalities and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Lauren Rushen, Senior Policy Officer. Lauren.rushen@oxfordshire.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

N/A

Lead Councillor

N/A

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- None

Background papers

None

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