

PART A

Report to: Functions Committee
Date of meeting: 2 November 2017
Report of: Head of Democracy and Governance
Title: Consultation on Proposed Boundary Changes for the Watford Parliamentary Constituency

1.0 Summary

1.1 On 17 October 2017 the Parliamentary Boundary Commission published its latest consultation on proposed changes to Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries. The consultation ends on 11 December 2017. In view of the potential impact on the Watford Constituency, members are asked if they wish to submit any comments on behalf of the Council.

2.0 Risks

2.1

| Nature of Risk | Consequence | Suggested Control Measures | Response <i>(Treat, tolerate, terminate, transfer)</i> | Risk Rating (the combination of severity and likelihood) |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| That the Boundary Commission proceeds with proposals regardless of the views of the Council | If the proposals remain as is then Watford will not only have to take electors from Three Rivers but also have to lose electors to St. Albans | Unfortunately the council has no control over the final decision of the Commission | Tolerate | 6 |

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| | creating extra work for the election team in what is always a busy period | | | |
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3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That members consider the consultation at appendix 1 and make any comments.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact
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4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 Attached as appendix 1 is the consultation document published on 17 October 2017 setting out the Parliamentary Boundary Commissions proposals for Parliamentary Constituencies in the Eastern Region of England.

4.2 This follows an earlier consultation which the Council did not participate in. The Consultation runs until 11 December 2017.

4.3 The aim of the Commission is to reduce the number of constituencies in England from 533 to 501 with the size of the electorate in each being no smaller than 71,030 and no larger than 78,507 (with the exception of the Isle of Wight). For the Eastern Region this means a reduction of 1 constituency.

4.4 The current proposals for Watford as set out in the appendix are:-

- Move part of Watford Borough (Woodside Ward area) together with the current 3 x Three Rivers District (Abbots Langley & Bedmond; Leavesden and Gade Valley) Wards area to the North of Watford, to proposed St Albans and Hemel Hempstead constituencies respectively;
- Extend the Watford constituency to the south, to take in Three Rivers' South Oxhey Ward area, in addition to existing Carpenters Park and Oxhey Hall & Hayling Wards;

But

- Disappointingly, has done nothing to establish all of the Meriden estate addresses within the Watford constituency. A small number of

properties/electors located, top eastern corner of estate, within Hertsmere BC area remain within the Hertsmere County constituency.

4.5 This is a change from the original proposals which did not see the current Watford Council wards split out of the Watford Constituency. The Council did not comment on the initial proposals, however, in view of the stated intention to recommend the splitting of the Woodside Ward out of the Watford Constituency members are asked if they wish to make any comments on behalf of the Council.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Head of Finance comments that there are no direct financial implications in this report.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that once the Parliamentary Boundary Commission has made its final recommendations to Parliament it will be up to Parliament to decide whether to accept or reject them.

5.3 **Equalities/Human Rights**

5.3.1 This is a piece of work being undertaken by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 Depending on the final outcome if the proposals stay as they are this will mean more work for the elections office as they will have to liaise with two neighbouring authorities instead of one as at present.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Revised Proposals for New Constituency boundaries in the Eastern Region

Background Papers

- No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

- None