



Agenda Item 9

Licensing & Regulatory Committee 19 July 2021

Title: 2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies

Lead Officer: Graham Leach, graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456114

Portfolio Holder: Andrew Day

Public report

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: No

Included within the Forward Plan: No

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: Budbrooke Ward Councillors

Final Decision: Yes

Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

| Officer Approval | Date | Name |
|--|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Chief Executive/ Deputy Chief Executive | 8/7/2021 | Chris Elliott Andrew Jones |
| CMT | | |
| Section 151 Officer | 8/7/2021 | Mike Snow |
| Monitoring Officer | 8/7/2021 | Andrew Jones |
| Finance | 8/7/2021 | Lorraine Henson |
| Portfolio Holder(s) | 8/7/2021 | Andrew Day |

1. Summary

- 1.1. The report informs the Committee of the proposed Parliamentary Constituencies for Warwick District as part of the first consultation and provides a suggested submission on behalf of the Council.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Committee notes the two proposed Parliamentary Constituencies covering Warwick District, of Kenilworth & Southam and Warwick and Leamington, as set out on the Plans at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the report.
- 2.2. The Committee asks the Boundary Commission for England to consider the following points when setting the boundaries:
 - (i) broadly the Council supports the proposed Boundaries as they will address some long-standing issues within the District.
 - (ii) the Council objects to the creation of an island constituency for Warwick & Leamington for the reasons set out in the report.
 - (iii) the Warwick District Ward of Budbrooke should be moved into the Constituency of Warwick and Leamington for the reasons set out in the report.
 - (iv) the significant expected growth in the electorate for the Kenilworth & Southam Constituency and that this could be mitigated by moving the Budbrooke District Council Ward to Leamington & Warwick Constituency for the reasons set out in the report without the need for the Commission to recognise growth.
 - (v) the current LGCBE boundary review for Stratford on Avon District Council and seeks assurance that the final Wards for this will be allowed for within the final boundaries for any constituencies for South Warwickshire to avoid the current issues of non-aligned boundaries.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1. The 2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies is underway, with the first proposals having been published by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE). The proposals are available [online](#) and open to comment from anyone by 2 August 2021.
- 3.2. The initial proposals for the West Midlands include revised boundaries for both the Kenilworth & Southam Constituency and the Warwick and Leamington Constituency. These would have electorates of 74,107 and 72,784 respectively, being the two largest electorates of the five in Warwickshire, however these are not the largest in the region which is over 77,000 or the smallest which is just under 70,000.

- 3.3. The remit of the Boundary Commission for England for this review sets the UK electoral quota for the 2023 to the nearest whole number, 73,393. Accordingly, every recommended constituency (except the five 'protected' constituencies) must have an electorate as at 2 March 2020 that is no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062. There will be a further review of constituency boundaries but this will be for 8 years after the completion of the 2023 review.
- 3.4. This Council has, for a significant time, received complaints regarding the current Constituency Boundaries as they are not aligned with either District or Town/Parish Boundaries. For example, in parts of Milverton Ward, a small number of properties on the same road are divided between two Constituencies. These proposals resolve those issues without significant change for the District.
- 3.5. There are 2 broad points of issue about the constituency proposals. The first is about the projected growth in size and the second is about the geography of the constituencies.
- 3.6. Growth: Officers have been looking at the growth of the electorate in South Warwickshire generally. Between now and 2028 within Warwick District, based on the current local plan proposed sites and approved developments, the electorate in the Warwick and Leamington Constituency is expected to grow by circa 4,400 electors and Kenilworth & Southam by 6,126. This growth in Kenilworth and Southam does not allow for growth within any Wards from Rugby Borough nor Stratford-on-Avon District Councils. For example, the development of the Gaydon Village site (circa 3,000 homes) is underway and the Cawston, Bilton, Dunchurch site (circa 5,000 homes) is now coming forward. As a result, there is potential for the Kenilworth & Southam constituency to become greater than 90,000 by the time of the next review, with Warwick & Leamington also being over the upper limit of 77,062.
- 3.7. To help mitigate the implications of some of this growth it is suggested that the Bubrooke Ward is retained within the Warwick and Leamington Constituency. It would enable by 2028, an electorate in Warwick & Leamington of over 82,000 and Kenilworth and Southam of over 81,000, which is a far more balanced outcome.
- 3.8. This said, by law, the Boundary Commission for England is not permitted to consider future growth, however it can consider special geographical considerations, including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency; and any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies. Therefore, any proposal to move Budbrooke Ward would need to provide clear evidence on these points.
- 3.9. Geography: The Committee should note that the Constituency of Warwick and Leamington would be completely surrounded by the Constituency of Kenilworth & Southam. From inspection of the proposed constituencies in England, this only occurs in one other situation where York Central Constituency is surrounded by York Outer Constituency. No guidance on such an arrangement is provided by the BCE, however the LG BCE makes the following reference on what they call "Doughnut Wards" - "*we occasionally*

receive proposals for a pattern of wards which propose an 'inner' ward and an 'outer' ward for a town or village. We will not normally recommend this kind of pattern because the communication links between the north and south of the outer ward are usually poor and we also often find that people in the northern part of the outer ward share higher levels of community identity with residents in the north of the inner ward than with residents in the south of the outer ward. Where we need to split a town or village to achieve electoral equality, we will usually seek an alternative to this pattern."

- 3.10. Officers have considered this point and have consulted with its Budbrooke Ward Councillors, who support Budbrooke remaining with Warwick & Leamington Constituency. The view of officers and Budbrooke Ward Councillors is due to the proximity of the Budbrooke Ward to Warwick and its relationship with its infrastructure being aligned with that of its nearest major town as well as Bishop's Tachbrook, this Ward should remain part of the Warwick & Leamington Constituency. Further the increased development in and around the east of this Ward will have greater community relationship with Warwick and Leamington and this will need to be fostered to help build a stronger and more cohesive community.
- 3.11. This change will recognise the concerns that the Local Government Boundary Commission raise generally about community and identity, which, while harder to achieve for large constituencies, officers consider that every effort should be made to follow them, especially when these communities are being built.
- 3.12. Currently, there is a Ward Boundary review being undertaken of Stratford-on-Avon District Council Wards, which will be concluded prior to the review of the Parliamentary Constituency review. While this may or may not come into effect dependent on the outcome of the potential merger with Warwick District Council, this Council should champion the need for coterminous boundaries. This is especially important when the changes could impact upon one of the Constituencies which represent Warwick District.

4. Policy Framework

4.1. Fit for the Future (FFF)

- 4.1.1. The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.
- 4.1.2. The FFF Strategy has 3 strands, People, Services and Money, and each has an external and internal element to it, the details of which can be found [on the Council's website](#). Section 4.2 below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

4.2. **FFF Strands**

4.2.1 **External impacts of proposal(s)**

People - Health, Homes, Communities – The report brings forward a proposed consultation response that is considered will help build stronger community identities within the District.

Services - Green, Clean, Safe – The report proposals has no direct impact on this aspect.

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment - The report proposals has no direct impact on this aspect.

4.2.2. **Internal impacts of the proposal(s)**

People - Effective Staff – The report proposals has no direct impact on this aspect.

Services - Maintain or Improve Services - The report proposals has no direct impact on this aspect.

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term - The report proposals has no direct impact on this aspect.

4.3.1.Supporting Strategies - Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies but this report does not directly impact on any of them.

4.3. **Changes to Existing Policies** – The report does not propose any changes to existing policies.

4.4. **Impact Assessments** – None have been undertaken as the report recommendations are a response to a public consultation.

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1. The report does not impact on the budgetary framework or budget of the Council.

6. Risks

6.1. The report provides a response to a public consultation which do not present any significant risk to the Council.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1. Within the guidelines for such reviews no alternative options have been considered however the Committee could choose to provide a different submission to the Boundary Commission for England.

8. Background

- 8.1. The Guide to review and all reference documents can be found on the review [website](#)
- 8.2. The timetable for the review by the Boundary Commission for England is as follows:
- 5 Jan 2021: Publication of headline electorate figures by ONS, BCE begin development of initial proposals;
 - 24 March 2021: Publish complete ward-level electorate figures (i.e. including 'prospective' wards);
 - 10 May 2021: Publish 'Guide to the 2023 Review';
 - 8 June 2021: Publish initial proposals and conduct eight-week written consultation;
 - Early 2022: Publish responses to initial proposals and conduct six-week 'secondary consultation', including between two and five public hearings in each region;
 - Late 2022: Publish revised proposals and conduct four-week written consultation;
 - June 2023: Submit and publish final report and recommendations