

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 16

REPORT TO: **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**
DATE : **31 JANUARY 2012**
REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
SUBJECT : **BOUNDARY COMMISSION - 2013 REVIEW OF
PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN WALES**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform Members of the process and timetable for the Boundary Commission's 2013 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 On 4th March 2011 the Commission announced the 2013 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 as amended by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011.

2.02 The Commission has now published its initial proposals for public consultation. These proposals take account of developments since the last general review and in particular the fundamental change to the legislation.

2.03 The Commission has published initial proposals for the whole of Wales in a single document.

2.04 A new requirement of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 is that the Commission must submit a periodical report on a general review of all the constituencies in Wales by 1 October 2012 and by 1 October every 5 years after that date.

2.05 In summary, the proposals are for constituencies in Wales to be reduced from 40 to 30. Each constituency must have an electorate as at the review date that is no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473 (the statutory range) as per the legislation.

2.06 A summary of the initial proposals is appended to this report. Full details can be found within the Boundary Commission's report deposited at County Hall, Mold, the Public Library, Wepre Drive, Connaught Quay and at www.bcomm-wales.gov.uk.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Initial Proposals

The Commission is required to consider representations about their initial proposals

for the Review within 12 weeks of their publication on **11 January 2012**. The period for submitting representations will end on **4 April 2012**.

- 3.02 In submitting any objections to the proposals, the Commission is asking for alternative proposals to be outlined; an objection accompanied by a counter-proposals will carry more weight than a simple statement of objection.

Public Hearings

- 3.03 The Commission is required to conduct at least two and no more than five public hearings in Wales. The public hearings in Wales shall be concerned with proposals for Wales, and shall between them cover the whole of Wales.
- 3.04 A public hearing is intended to provided an opportunity for people to make representations about any of the Commission's initial proposals and to present any counter-proposals.
- 3.05 Representations at each public hearing are likely to be based on proposals for the area closest to the location of the hearing, but this does not preclude making representations that relate to any part or the whole of Wales.
- 3.06 Each hearing is chaired by an independent Assistant Commissioner selected by the Commission.
- 3.07 The dates and locations of the public hearings are as follows:

Location	Venue	Date
Swansea	The Liberty Stadium	15-16 February 2012
Cardiff	The Millennium Stadium	22-23 February 2012
Wrexham	Glyndwr University	29 February - 1 March 2012
Caernarfon	Celtic Royal Hotel	7-8 March 2012
Llandrindod	The Pavilion	20-21 March 2012

- 3.08 Individuals wishing to make an oral representation at one of the hearings are encouraged to book in advance with the Commission by contacting the Commission direct with the preferred date and time. The Commission will write to all of those who make a request with further information about the hearings and provide an allocated timeslot. It if is not possible to fit all requested representations at one particular venue, the nearest alternative venue will be offered.
- 3.09 A verbatim transcript taken at each public hearing of all the representations made, and any visual aids used at a presentation will be attached to the transcript of that hearing.

Secondary consultation period

- 3.10 As soon as possible after the initial 12 week consultation on the Commission's initial proposals, the Commission will publish on its website all of the representations that it has received (including transcripts of the public hearings) in both Welsh and English.
- 3.11 Once the representations have been published there will be a further statutory four-week period during which people can submit to the Commission written comments on those representations it received during the initial consultation period, for example, challenging or supporting assertions made in a representation. There are no public hearings at this stage.
- 3.12 Once translated and redacted the Commission will publish all the written representations received during the four-week secondary consultation period.

Redaction and Privacy Policy

- 3.13 The Commission wishes to publish as much of the representations and other correspondence that it receives. However, the need for transparency needs to be balanced against the protection of an individual's right to privacy and the statutory requirement for the Commission to protect an individual's personal data. The Commission has therefore created a redaction policy which will apply to all representations received (*page 56 of the Initial Proposals*).

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Members are asked to note the process and timetable for the Boundary Commission's 2013 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 None directly associated with this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None directly associated with this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None directly associated with this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 None directly associated with this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 None directly associated with this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 As outlined within the report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Initial consultation period, as outlined, 11 January 2012 to 4 April 2012.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contained within the Executive Office, County Hall, Mold.

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Chapter 4 Summary of proposals

- The new legislation has reduced the number of parliamentary constituencies in Wales from 40 to 30.
- No existing constituency would remain unchanged under the initial proposals. For many areas the proposed changes are considerable.
- The UKEQ is 76,641 with a tolerance of between 95% and 105% of this figure (72,810 and 80,473 respectively). There are presently 39 constituencies below the minimum number of electors and one (Cardiff South and Penarth BC) which falls within the statutory range. Under the proposals all constituencies would be within the statutory range with 19 constituencies below the electoral quota and 11 above the electoral quota.
- 15 existing constituencies would be wholly contained within a new constituency (Alyn and Deeside, Blaenau Gwent, Brecon and Radnorshire, Bridgend, Cardiff West, Ceredigion, Dwyfor Meirionnydd, Llanelli, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, Neath, Rhondda, Torfaen, Vale of Glamorgan, Wrexham and Ynys Mon).
- Under the proposals 6 Unitary Authorities would be wholly contained within a new constituency (Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, the Isle of Anglesey, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire and Torfaen). There are 7 Unitary Authorities in Wales which fall below the maximum of the statutory electorate range and which therefore could be included wholly within a new constituency. These are Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, the Isle of Anglesey, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire and Torfaen.
- There would be 6 constituencies over 1,000 km² (Caerfyrddin, Ceredigion and North Pembrokeshire, Glyndwr and North Powys, Gwynedd, South and West Pembrokeshire, and South Powys). 3 of these constituencies would be between 2,000 and 3,000 km² (Caerfyrddin, Ceredigion and North Pembrokeshire, and Glyndwr and North Powys), and 2 constituencies over 3,000 km² (Gwynedd and South Powys).
- 10 of the existing names would be retained.
- 877 of the 881 electoral divisions in Wales would be wholly contained within a new constituency. It has been considered appropriate to split 4 electoral divisions in order to adhere to Rules 2 and 5 (Llansamlet, Penycae and Ruabon South, Ponciau and Tremeirchion would be split into the communities).