

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016/2017 REPORT NO. 87

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Council
21 September 2016

REPORT OF:

Chief Executive

Agenda – Part: 1	Item: 9
Subject: Boundary Commission for England Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Review 2018	
Wards: All	
Cabinet Member consulted: Not applicable	

Contact officer and telephone number: James Kinsella 020 8379 4041

E mail: James.Kinsella@enfield.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) announced in February 2016 that, in accordance with the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, it would be commencing its next review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries in September 2016.
- 1.2. The BCE published its initial proposals for the review of parliamentary constituency boundaries on Tuesday 13 September 2016 and this report outlines how the proposals will impact on Enfield and the timetable for the consultation and review process which the BCE will now follow.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. Council is asked to note publication of the initial parliamentary constituency boundary review proposals by the Boundary Commission for England and timetable for their review process.
- 2.2. That the review proposals be referred on to the Electoral Services Panel for more detailed consideration and in order to consider whether Council should be recommended to make formal representations to the BCE as part of the review process.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Review Process

- 3.1.1 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) has the task of periodically reviewing all Parliamentary constituencies in England. In accordance with the

Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, they have now commenced their latest review, on which they are required to make recommendations to Government by September 2018.

3.1.2 The legislation requires that there will be 501 parliamentary constituencies in England (an overall reduction of 32) and that, with the exception of the Isle of Wight, each constituency must contain between 71,031 and 78,507 parliamentary electors. The legislation also states that in undertaking the review, the Commission may take into account:

- a. Special geographical considerations, including the shape, size and accessibility of a constituency (primarily relating to physical, geography e.g. lakes, rivers rather than human or social geography)
- b. Local government boundaries as they existed on 7 May 2015;
- c. Boundaries of existing constituencies;
- d. Any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.

Guidance published by the BCE on the review makes it clear, however, that whilst these factors may be taken into account, the statutory electorate range will remain as the primary consideration i.e. achieving electorates of between 71,031 and 78,507. These figures are based on the requirement within Schedule 2 of the 2011 Act that every constituency must have an electorate (as at the review date) that is no less than 95% and no more than 105% of the UK electoral quota, which for the 2018 review is the nearest whole number to 74,769.

3.1.3 The BCE have also been clear in their review guidance on factors that will not be taken into consideration which include:

- a. Impact on future elections results;
- b. New local government boundaries; and
- c. Changes to the electorate after the initial review date (which has been based on the revised electoral register published on 1 December 2015)

3.1.4 The parliamentary electorates for the 3 existing Enfield constituencies (based on the electoral register published on 1 December 2015) are as follows:

Edmonton	Bush Hill Park	9,872
	Edmonton Green	9,491
	Haselbury	8,872
	Jubilee	8,502
	Lower Edmonton	8,849
	Ponders End	8,441
	Upper Edmonton	9,333
	Total	63,360
	Under quota by	(7,671)

Enfield North	Chase	9,210
	Enfield Highway	9,402
	Enfield Lock	9,711
	Highlands	9,630
	Southbury	8,782
	Town	10,525
	Turkey Street	8,721
	Total	65,981
	Under quota by (5,050)	
Enfield Southgate	Bowes	7,796
	Cockfosters	9,532
	Grange	9,321
	Palmers Green	9,154
	Southgate	9,321
	Southgate Green	8,805
	Winchmore Hill	9,129
	Total	62,915
	Under quota by (8,118)	

- 3.5 The BCE decided at the outset to base its recommendations on the nine regions used for European Parliamentary elections, of which London is one. On this basis, there is a need to reduce the number of Members of Parliament (MPs) elected in London by 5 from 73 to 68. In adopting this approach the BCE have made it clear that this is not designed to impact on European electoral matters and has not been affected by the recent referendum result. They have also advised that whilst it will not prevent anyone from submitting alternative proposals, as part of the consultation process, that do cross regional boundaries, “very compelling reasons” would need to be provided to persuade them to depart from this regional based approach.

3.2 Review Proposals

- 3.2.1 The BCE published its initial proposals on 13 September 2016. It decided from a “purely practical approach” to divide London into two sub-regions: North Thames and South Thames.

Enfield has been placed in the North Thames sub-region along with Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Brent, Camden, City of London, Ealing, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Tower Hamlets Waltham Forest and Westminster. On this basis, 42 constituencies have been recommended in the sub region, 3 fewer than at present.

- 3.2.2 The BCE’s rationale for the grouping of boroughs into sub regions is as follows:

“Our approach in attempting to group London boroughs together into sub-regions was based both on trying to respect natural boundaries, and on achieving where we could, obvious practical groupings such as those dictated in some part by the geography of the area.....we were mindful of seeking to respect, where we could, the external boundaries of London boroughs and the natural boundaries such as the River Thames and the River Lee.”

The BCE then go on to state, within their initial proposals: “A particular issue that affected our distribution of constituencies throughout London is the electoral size of the wards in each London borough. The majority of wards contain more than 6,000 electors. This made it difficult to create constituencies with an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota, while avoiding dividing wards between constituencies. In considering alternative distributions of constituencies in London, we noted that it was possible to create constituencies by aggregating wards from a number of neighbouring boroughs.”

3.2.3 In terms of the specific proposals for the North Thames sub region the BCE state:

“The electorate for the North Thames sub-region is 3,171,133....of the existing constituencies 14 have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota: Barking, Bethnal Green and Bow, Brent Central, Chipping Barnet, Ealing North, Hackney North and Stoke Newington, Hackney South and Shoreditch, Hampstead and Kilburn, Hornchurch and Upminster, Hornsey and Wood Green, Ilford South, Poplar and Limehouse, Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner and Twickenham. Of the remaining constituencies 25 have electorates that are below the 5% limit and six are above.

We considered whether we could leave unchanged any of the 14 existing constituencies that have an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which all the proposed constituencies are within the 5% limit and taking account of the reduction in number of constituencies in this sub-region, we propose changing all but two constituencies – Hornchurch and Upminster and Twickenham.

In this sub-region, we treated the River Lee as a natural boundary and were thus able to allocate 11 constituencies to the east of the Lee, across the five London boroughs (Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest). However, our proposed Bow and Canning Town constituency crosses the River Lee at the local authority boundaries of Newham and Tower Hamlets.”

The BCE then go on to state: “Our proposals to the west of the River Lee, extending to the Edgware Road and Maida Vale (A5), include the boroughs of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Tower Hamlets, the City of London and part of Westminster.....Our proposals in the remainder of the North Thames sub-region, west of the Edgware Road and Maida Vale (A5) include the boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea and Richmond upon Thames.”

3.2.4 In terms of the specific proposals relating to Enfield, the BCE have stated in their initial proposals:

“In Enfield, we noted that the borough was too large for two constituencies. We propose an **Enfield constituency**, which retains seven wards from the existing Enfield North constituency and adds Grange ward from the existing Enfield Southgate constituency. Our proposed **Edmonton constituency** retains seven wards from the existing constituency and includes the ward of Palmers Green from the existing Enfield Southgate constituency. We believe that this reconfiguration provides for improved road connections within the constituency, particularly with the Bush Hill Park ward that lies to the west of the A10.”

In addition the proposals state:

“In Barnet, we noted that the borough was too small for three whole constituencies within its borough boundary. We propose a **Finchley and Southgate Constituency**, which includes three wards (Southgate, Southgate Green & Winchmore Hill) from the existing Enfield Southgate constituency, two wards from the existing Chipping Barnet constituency and three wards from the existing Finchley and Golders Green constituency. We propose a **Chipping Barnet and Mill Hill constituency**, which retains five wards from the existing Chipping Barnet constituency and includes Cockfosters ward from the existing Enfield Southgate constituency and Mill Hill ward from the existing Hendon constituency....”

In Haringey we propose a **Hornsey and Wood Green constituency**, which retains nine of its current wards and includes the Enfield borough ward of Bowes from the existing Enfield Southgate constituency. These changes have been undertaken to ensure that the constituencies are within 5% of the electoral quota.”

3.2.5 The parliamentary electorates for the 5 constituencies that are proposed for Enfield by the BCE are as follows:

Chipping Barnet and Mill Hill	72,580
(Cockfosters)	
Above minimum quota by	1,549
Below maximum quota by	(5,927)
 Edmonton	 72,514
(Bush Hill Park, Edmonton Green, Haselbury, Jubilee, Lower Edmonton, Palmers Green, Ponders End, Upper Edmonton)	
Above minimum quota by	1,483
Below maximum quota by	(5,993)
 Enfield	 75,302
(Chase, Enfield Highway, Enfield Lock, Grange, Highlands, Southbury, Town and Turkey Street)	
Above minimum quota by	4,271
Below maximum quota by	(3,205)

Finchley and Southgate	76,857
(Southgate, Southgate Green and Winchmore Hill)	
Above minimum quota by	5,826
Below maximum quota by	(1,650)

Hornsey and Wood Green	74,418
(Bowes)	
Above minimum quota by	3,387
Below maximum quota by	(4,089)

3.2.6 If the BCE's initial proposals are approved by Parliament, there will be a number of practical implications, which will include the following:

- a) 5 rather than the current 3 MPs will have a constituency interest in Enfield, which may present challenges to those MPs, to other elected representatives including councillors and to the local authority;
- b) The arrangements for local government, London Mayoral and Assembly and European Parliamentary elections will remain unchanged. The re-drawing of parliamentary constituency boundaries will have no direct effect on the electoral boundaries relating to these other elections;
- c) There will be no effect on electoral registration matters. The Electoral Registration Officer for Enfield will continue to administer the register of electors and absent voting arrangements for the borough for all elections;
- d) There will however be a direct effect on the administration of parliamentary elections. The Returning Officers for the relevant constituencies (which are likely to be Enfield for Edmonton and Enfield Barnet for Chipping Barnet and Mill Hill & Finchley and Southgate and Haringey for Hornsey and Wood Green) will be responsible for the administration of the polls in each of those constituencies, and will therefore be managing the polls within the respective areas of Enfield. This situation will be exacerbated should a parliamentary election be combined with that for any local government, London Mayoral, London Assembly or European Parliamentary election, as is currently scheduled in 2020 with the Parliamentary due to be combined with the London Mayoral and Assembly elections;
- e) When parliamentary polling districts and polling places are reviewed in the future, the Returning Officers for the relevant constituencies will need to be invited to make representations in the Enfield wards they "take in", not the Enfield Returning Officer.

3.3 Consultation Process and Timetable

3.3.1 The BCE are consulting on their initial proposals for a 12-week period, from 13 September to 5 December 2016. In doing so, they have made it clear that:

- a) They cannot recommend constituencies that have parliamentary electorates of less than 71,031 or more than 78,507;
- b) In the absence of exceptional and compelling circumstances, it would not be appropriate to divide wards;
- c) Compelling reasons would need to be given to persuade them to cross regional boundaries.

3.3.2 The 2018 review is being carried out under a new procedure that relies on a combination of written representations and oral representations at public hearings. The system of public inquiries previously used has been abolished to be replaced by shorter public hearings, chaired by an independent Assistant Commissioner. The Commission has stated that “all representations [written or oral] will be given equal consideration”.

3.3.3 The BCE is required to consider all written representations made in the 12-week consultation period. In order to enable comments to be submitted the Commission has set up an interactive consultation website which not only allows you to submit comments but also to check which constituency you will fall within under the new proposals and compare this with the existing constituency and local government boundaries. The website can be accessed via the following address:

www.bce2018.org.uk

The BCE are strongly encouraging anyone who wishes to submit their comments in writing to do so via the consultation website.

3.3.4 In addition the BCE will also welcome oral representations, for which purpose they will be conducting a series of public hearings during the consultation period.

3.3.5 Five public public hearings have been arranged across London with the locations and dates as follows:

- Westminster: Central Hall Westminster: Monday 17 – Tuesday 18 October 2016
- Bromley: Bromley United Reform Church Hall – Thursday 20 – Friday 21 October 2016
- Harrow: Kenton Hall, Woodcock Hill – Monday 24 – Tuesday 25 October 2016
- Kingston: The Main Guildhall – Thursday 27 – Friday 28 October 2016
- Romford: Havering Town Hall – Monday 31 October – Tuesday 1 November 2016

The purpose of these hearings is to provide an opportunity for people to put their views on the proposals directly to an Assistant Commissioner, who will

chair the hearing and subsequently assist the Commission in the analysis of all the evidence received in the region. The Commission have advised that that the hearings will differ from the previous way they used to conduct “local inquiries” which were much more judicial in style e.g. allowing people to cross examine each other. The legislation under which the current review is being undertaken specifically rules out these type of inquiries, requiring instead that the Commission host “public hearings” intended “purely as a way for people to make representations orally, directly to representatives of the Commission, as well as to provide an opportunity for the Commission to explain its proposals”. As such they have stated that any “public hearing is intended to provide an opportunity for people to make representations about any of the BCE’s initial proposals ... and to present any counter-proposals ... [and] is not intended to focus to any significant degree on comments about any counter-proposals ... put forward by others, as this can be done in the secondary consultation stage”.

3.3.6 For ease of consideration, the Commission has asked that consultation responses take the following form:

- a) “First, if you support our proposals, please tell us so...;”
- b) “Second, if you are considering objecting to our proposals, do please use the resources (such as maps and electorate figures) available on our website and at the places of deposit to put forward counter-proposals which are in accordance with the rules to which we are working...”

3.3.7 Whilst keen to encourage the submission of any comments, the Commission have also highlighted the need to consider any knock-on effects that may arise as a result of the suggestions being made not only on neighbouring constituencies but also further afield across the region as a whole.

3.3.8 The BCE have also confirmed that comments can be submitted both in writing (via their interactive website) and also in person at one of the public hearings.

3.3.9 As soon as possible after the initial 12-week consultation period, the BCE will publish all of the representations received.

3.3.10 A further 4-week secondary consultation period will then follow (likely to take place in Spring 2017) to allow interested parties to submit written comments to the BCE on those representations. There are no public hearings at this stage.

3.3.11 Following the initial and secondary consultation periods, the Commission will consider and analyse all representations made and whether the initial proposals should be amended or not in light of those representations.

3.3.12 If any of the initial proposals are revised by the BCE, then they will need to publish the revised proposals for the areas concerned and consult on them for a further period of 8-weeks. This is likely to be towards the end of 2017, and

will not involve any further public hearings or the same opportunity to comment on any representations received.

3.3.13 The Commission will then consider any further representations made on the revised proposals and throughout the review, before determining their final recommendations which will be set out in a published report to the Government.

3.3.14 The Government must then lay the final report and a draft Order in Council giving effect to the recommendations before Parliament. It may not modify any of the recommendations unless specifically requested to do so by the BCE.

3.3.15 Both Houses of Parliament must actively debate and approve or reject the draft Order. If the draft Order is not approved by both Houses, the Government may amend the draft and lay an amended version before Parliament for approval.

3.3.16 Any revised constituency boundaries will come into effect at the next general election, in May 2020.

3.4 London Borough of Enfield - review

3.4.1 Council is being asked to note publication of the initial consultation proposals by the BCE and how they impact on Enfield, along with the timetable for the BCE review process. It is also recommended that consideration of the detailed proposals be undertaken by the Electoral Services Review Panel in order to consider whether any formal representations should be recommended to Council in terms of how the review affects Enfield.

3.4.2 Attached for information as Appendix A is a breakdown of the wards and electorates within each of the five constituencies initially proposed where Enfield will have an interest

3.4.3 Attached as Appendix B are maps showing the outlines of the 5 constituencies initially proposed by the BCE in which Enfield will have an interest.

3.4.4 It should be noted that the boundary changes proposed will not affect local government boundaries, which means that the London Borough of Enfield will continue as an administrative entity despite parts of the area falling within a parliamentary constituency also covering another local authority area. .

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council is not obliged to make representations to the BCE but the Commission has published its initial proposals for consultation by all interested parties.

5 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To determine whether Council should be recommended to make representations to the BCE.

6 COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

a) Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications other than Officer time in the preparation of supporting information.

b) Legal Implications

The BCE must undertake its review of parliamentary constituency boundaries in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, including taking into account representations made by interested parties.

7 KEY RISKS

The re-designation of parliamentary constituency boundaries will have an effect on the relationship of MPs with the Council. At present, 3 MPs have a direct interest in the Borough; the BCE's initial proposals will increase this representation to 5, 3 of whom will also have an interest in neighbouring local authority areas.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All

To ensure fairness for all, appropriate democratic representation is required at all levels.

8.2 Growth and Sustainability

To generate growth and sustainability, appropriate democratic representation at all levels is required.

8.3 Strong Communities

The development and maintenance of strong communities is enhanced by effective democratic representation at all levels..

9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The designation of effective and appropriate parliamentary constituency boundaries assists the local authority in continuing to deliver high quality services across the borough.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken at this stage in relation to the BCE consultation proposals.

11. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

The development and monitoring of public health is enhanced by effective democratic representation at all levels.

Background papers:

Boundary Commission for England's initial proposals for the review of parliamentary constituency boundaries published on 13 September 2016

APPENDIX A
Proposed Constituencies
Electorate Figures

Proposed Constituency	Electorate	Ward & Borough
CHIPPING BARNET & MILL HILL	72,580	
	10,684	East Barnet – LB Barnet
	10,508	High Barnet – LB Barnet
	11,380	Mill Hill – LB Barnet
	10,637	Oakleigh – LB Barnet
	9,302	Totteridge – LB Barnet
	10,537	Underhill – LB Barnet
	9,532	Cockfosters – LB Enfield
EDMONTON	72,514	
	9,872	Bush Hill Park – LB Enfield
	9,491	Edmonton Green – LB Enfield
	8,872	Haselbury – LB Enfield
	8,502	Jubilee – LB Enfield
	8,849	Lower Edmonton – LB Enfield
	9,154	Palmers Green – LB Enfield
	8,441	Ponders End – LB Enfield
	9,333	Upper Edmonton – LB Enfield
ENFIELD	75,302	
	9,210	Chase – LB Enfield
	9,402	Enfield Highway – LB Enfield
	9,711	Enfield Lock – LB Enfield
	9,321	Grange – LB Enfield
	9,630	Highlands – LB Enfield
	8,782	Southbury – LB Enfield
	10,525	Town – LB Enfield
	8,721	Turkey Street – LB Enfield
FINCHLEY & SOUTHGATE	76,857	
	10,823	Brunswick Park – LB Barnet
	9,989	Coppetts – LB Barnet

	9,748	East Finchley – LB Barnet
	8,794	West Finchley – LB Barnet
	10,391	Woodhouse – LB Barnet
	9,178	Southgate – LB Enfield
	8,805	Southgate Green – LB Enfield
	9,129	Winchmore Hill – LB Enfield

HORNSEY & WOOD GREEN	74,418	
	7,796	Bowes – LB Enfield
	7,473	Alexandra – LB Haringey
	7,195	Bounds Green – LB Haringey
	8,207	Crouch End – LB Haringey
	7,735	Fortis Green – LB Haringey
	7,150	Highgate – LB Haringey
	7,880	Hornsey – LB Haringey
	7,049	Muswell Hill – LB Haringey
	7,078	Noel Park – LB Haringey
	6,855	Woodside – LB Haringey