

**PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL****Council Meeting – 24 June 2009****BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND – FIRST PERIODICAL REVIEW OF  
SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT BOUNDARIES****Report by Head of Democratic Services****ABSTRACT**

This report advises that on 21 May 2009, the Boundary Commission for Scotland published its revised proposals for constituencies for the Scottish Parliament following the local inquiry held in August 2008. The Commission has also published provisional proposals for eight Scottish Parliament regions. This report refers in particular to the proposals as they affect the Perth and Kinross Council area, in relation to the existing Scottish Parliament constituencies of Perth and North Tayside, and the region of Mid-Scotland and Fife.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Council considers how it wishes to respond to the proposals by the Boundary Commission for Scotland in respect of
- (i) the boundaries of the Scottish Parliament constituencies in the Perth and Kinross Council area as outlined in Paragraph 3.15 of this report; and
  - (ii) the boundaries of the Mid-Scotland and Fife Scottish Parliament region as outlined in Paragraph 3.18 of this report.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland was established in legislation under the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Act 1944, and its form is currently defined in the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986.
- 2.2 The Commission is responsible under Schedule 1 of the Scotland Act 1998, as amended by the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004, to keep the boundaries of constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament under review.
- 2.3 After completing a review, the Commission submits a report to the Secretary of State for Scotland, recommending any changes. The Secretary of State is responsible for submitting a draft Order in Council to give effect to the report, for approval by both Houses of Parliament. The constituencies and regions, if approved by both Houses of Parliament, come into operation from the general election to the Scottish Parliament following the making of the Order in Council.

- 2.4 The first review of Scottish Parliament boundaries by the Boundary Commission for Scotland was announced on 3 July 2007, and is taking place as required by the Scotland Act 1998, as amended by the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004. The review covers all of Scotland apart from Orkney and Shetland, where the Act specifies each will be a separate constituency. The legislation provides that there will be 71 constituencies for the Scottish Parliament apart from Orkney and Shetland, and also determines the rules which the Commission should follow when proposing constituencies. Those rules include a requirement to have regard to the boundaries of local authority areas, and to the electoral quota as is practical. The electoral quota is calculated by taking the number of local government electors on the Electoral Register in Scotland at the review start date, excluding electors in the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands, and dividing it by 71. The quota is fixed and is used throughout the life of the review.

### **3. PROPOSALS**

#### **General – Constituencies**

- 3.1 The current constituencies for the Scottish Parliament were defined in 1995. The Commission has concluded that having regard to the changes in the distribution of population, as well as the changes to local government areas since then, a comprehensive review of constituency boundaries is required.
- 3.2 The Commission has established the theoretical entitlement of seats at the Scottish Parliament for each local authority area by dividing the number of electors in that area by the electoral quota of 54,728.
- 3.3 In the case of 9 local authority areas, the theoretical entitlement of seats is very close to a whole number, and the Commission is proposing a whole number of constituencies exactly covering each of these local authority areas.
- 3.4 In the case of 20 local authority areas, the Commission is proposing to group local authorities so that in combination they are entitled to a whole number of constituencies.
- 3.5 For the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area, the Commission is proposing that, due to the detached nature of the Council area, it should form a single constituency, even though the electorate falls below the electoral quota.
- 3.6 Each constituency is designated as either a burgh constituency (BC) or county constituency (CC) – this designation affects the regulations concerning election expenditure.

#### **General – Regions**

- 3.7 As with the constituencies, the existing regions were defined in 1995. The Commission has also now published its proposals for 8 regions used in the Scottish Parliament elections.

### **Perth and Kinross Council Area**

#### Existing Constituencies

- 3.8 At present, there are two Scottish Parliament constituencies covering the majority of the Perth and Kinross Council area – Perth (with an electorate of 63,976) and North Tayside (with an electorate of 62,817). However, as elected members will be aware, the North Tayside constituency covers part of the Angus Council area; and both the Angus Constituency and the Ochil Constituency cover parts of the Perth and Kinross Council area.
- 3.9 At the time of a general election to the Scottish Parliament, which since 1999 has been combined with Scottish Local Government elections, the existing constituency boundaries have presented significant cross-boundary issues in terms of electoral management and administration.

#### Proposed Constituencies

- 3.10 Based on an electorate of 108,160 and the calculation outlined at 3.2 above, the theoretical entitlement in the Perth and Kinross Council area is two constituencies.
- 3.11 In its provisional recommendations, the Commission proposed two county constituencies as follows:-

North Perthshire	July 2007 Electorate - 52,310
(Covering Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 12)	
South Perthshire and Kinross	July 2007 Electorate - 55,850
(Covering Wards 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11)	

- 3.12 At its meeting on 26 March 2008, the Council agreed to advise the Commission that the Council believed that the City of Perth is a single entity and should be retained within one constituency, which would support the campaign to restore Perth's full city status, avoid the division of neighbouring communities and have one MSP speaking for the City of Perth. The Council further agreed that to achieve this, Ward 12 (Perth City Centre) be included within the proposed South Perthshire and Kinross-shire Constituency and that Ward 6 (Strathearn) be included in the proposed North Perthshire Constituency.
- 3.13 As a result of the Council's objection, a local inquiry was held at the AKBell Library in August 2008.
- 3.14 On 21 May 2009, the Commission published its revised recommendations for Scottish Parliament constituencies, which took account of representations received and reports from the local inquiries held.



High Street	Perth
Birnam Library, Station Road	Birnam
Scone Library, Sandy Road	Scone
Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street	Perth
Aberfeldy Library, Bank Street	Aberfeldy
Alyth Library, Airlie Street	Alyth
Auchterarder Library, Chapel Wynd	Auchterarder
Blairgowrie Library, 46 Leslie Street	Blairgowrie
Crieff Library, 6 Comrie Street	Crieff
Coupar Angus Library, Town Hall, Union Street	Coupar Angus
Kinross Library, 27 High Street	Kinross
Pitlochry Library, 26 Atholl Road	Pitlochry
A K Bell Library	Perth

- 4.2 Copies of the maps illustrating the provisional proposals were supplied to political group leaders, and all elected members were made aware that the proposals were available to download from the Commission's website at [www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk)
- 4.3 Representations on the proposals are to be submitted within one month of publication (as defined in statute) i.e. by 21 June 2009. However, the Commission has discretion to consider representations after that date and following a letter to the Commission advising that the Council would be considering the proposals at a meeting on 24 June 2009, the Commission has agreed that it will receive the Council's comments after the Council meeting that day.
- 4.4 Where representations objecting to a proposal concerning a constituency are made by a local authority covering the proposed constituency or by a body of 100 or more electors resident in the proposed constituency, and no local inquiry has already been held in the area as part of the review, the Commission will hold a local inquiry. Otherwise, local inquiry may be held, but it is not obligatory.
- 4.5 Where representations objecting to a proposal concerning a region are made by a local authority whose area is wholly or partly within the region, or by a body of 50 or more electors resident in the proposed region, and no local inquiry has already been held about the proposal as part of the review, the Commission will hold a local inquiry. Otherwise, local inquiry may be held, but it is not obligatory.

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from the recommendations contained in this report.

## **6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2006-2010**

6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2006-2010 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) Healthy, Caring Communities
- (iii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy
- (iv) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens
- (v) Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities

The subject matter of this report relates to all of these objectives.

## **7. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The proposals presented in this report were considered under the Corporate Equalities Assessment Framework and the determination was made that the items summarised in this report do not require further assessment as they do not have an impact on people's wellbeing as defined by the Act.

## **8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

8.1 The proposals presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the determination was made that the items summarised in this report do not require further action as they do not qualify as a plan, programme or strategy as defined by the Act.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

9.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland has undertaken the first review of the boundaries for the Scottish Parliament constituencies and published its revised proposals on 21 May 2009. In relation to the Perth and Kinross Council area, the revised proposals are for two constituencies – namely Perthshire North and Perthshire South and Kinross-shire. Also the Commission has proposed revised Scottish Parliament regions, with the constituencies falling with the Perth and Kinross Council area being within a revised region of Mid-Scotland and Fife. The Council requires to consider how it wishes to respond to the Commission's provisional proposals.

**GILLIAN A TAYLOR  
HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**Note:**

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

Letter and enclosures of 18 May 2009 from the Boundary Commission for Scotland to the Chief Executive of Perth and Kinross Council.

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