



2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales

Progress Report

January 2017

Boundary Commission for Wales

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Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 3(2C) of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, as amended by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011.

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Introduction

1. This report, as required by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, sets out the progress the Boundary Commission for Wales (“the Commission”) has made in respect of the preparation of the boundary review that is to be submitted by 30 September 2018. As you will be aware, you are required by section 3(2C) to lay our report before Parliament.

Progress to date

2. On 23 March 2016 the Commission announced the start of the 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales. The Commission’s initial proposals under the rules set out in the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act (i.e. reduction from 40 to 29 constituencies and every constituency to be within 5% of the UK quota) were published in Welsh and English on 13 September 2016.
3. Leading up to the publication of the initial proposals the Commission in conjunction with the Boundary Commission for England and the Boundary Commission for Scotland developed an online consultation portal. This portal went live in England and Wales on the same day that the initial proposals were published and has subsequently proved to be a great success.
4. An initial 12 week consultation period was carried out from 13 September until 5 December 2016. During this period the Commission received over 500 written representations. Taking into account the petitions that were received this represented the views of around 1,260 individuals. The Commission also conducted five public hearings during the initial consultation period, in Carmarthen, Bangor, Cardiff, Llandrindod Wells and Wrexham. A total of 74 individuals spoke at these public hearings.

The Next Steps

5. Representations received during the initial consultation period, both in writing and at public hearings, are currently being processed prior to their publication when there will be a further four week consultation period where people will be invited to comment on the responses that others had made.
6. The representations that the Commission receive during both the first and second consultation periods will be considered by the three Assistant Commissioners who will then make recommendations to the Commission as to how it may revise its proposals.
7. The Commission will then consider all of the representations that were made and the recommendations of the Assistant Commissioners and consider changes to the initial proposals. If appropriate the Commission will then publish revised proposals and open a period of consultation on those proposals.
8. The Commission will consider all of the representations made in relation to its revised proposals and decide whether to make any further changes. The Commission is confident that it will be in

a position to publish final recommendations before the statutory deadline of 30 September 2018.

Other Matters

9. In July 2016 Mr Justice Lewis was appointed as Deputy Chair to the Boundary Commission for Wales, with effect from 1 August 2016. Mr Justice Lewis succeeded Mr Justice Wyn Williams who had indicated his pending retirement as a High Court judge. By virtue of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 the position of Deputy Chair of a Parliamentary Boundary Commission must be held by a judge of the High Court.

The Hon. Mr Justice Lewis
Deputy Chairman
Boundary Commission for Wales

Mr Steve Halsall
Secretary
Boundary Commission for Wales