

Minutes of Policy and Finance

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 29 November 2022, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Atkinson (Chair)

Councillors:

D Berryman	J Hill
S Bibby	M Hindle
A Brown	S Hore
L Edge	K Horkin
S Fletcher	R Newmark
M French	D Peat
G Hibbert	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Director of Community Services and Principal Policy and Performance Officer

Also in attendance: Councillors J Alcock, T Austin, B Buller, K Fletcher, G Mirfin, M Robinson and G Scott

516 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillor R Thompson.

517 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

518 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

519 2023 PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW - FINAL CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report outlining the recommendations of the Boundary Review working group for response to the final consultation on the Boundary Commission's 2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies within England.

As part of the review, the number of constituencies would increase from 533 to 543. Each constituency must also contain a number of electors no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062. A final consultation period of four weeks started on 8 November 2022 until 5 December 2022 on the latest recommendations.

Committee were reminded of the initial proposals made in June 2021 which kept the Ribble Valley constituency mainly intact, with the three wards of Billington & Langho, East Whalley, Read & Simonstone and Whalley & Painter Wood moved from Ribble Valley to the new Hyndburn constituency. This affected 7,339 electors.

The latest proposals effectively split the Ribble Valley area into two Parliamentary constituencies with Clitheroe and wards in the east of Ribble Valley moved into the new Pendle and Clitheroe constituency. This would affect 21,611 electors and would

leave the new Ribble Valley constituency without an obvious administration/service centre.

The Chief Executive informed the committee that the working group felt the initial proposals, although disappointing, would better preserve the community and geographical links with most Ribble Valley residents and their MP.

However, they also felt that if the latest proposal was to go ahead that it could be improved with minor changes to a few wards.

Committee discussed various scenarios and Councillors Austin, Buller, Mirfin, Robinson and Scott were given permission to speak on the item.

The overall view of committee was that the Ribble Valley constituency should remain in its present form, however, should changes have to be made, the lesser upheaval would be that of the initial proposals made in June 2021. Should this option not be available either then minor changes to the latest proposals were suggested which included moving a few wards around.

Committee were also conscious that electors did not fully understand exactly what was being consulted upon and believed the proposed changes to be affecting the Borough boundaries not just the parliamentary constituencies. Once the outcome of the consultation was known the Chief Executive agreed that electors would be informed.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE

1. Agree to reject the latest proposals from the Boundary Commission for the reasons outlined,
2. Reluctantly request the Boundary Commission go back to the initial proposals made in June 2021 when the wards of Billington and Langho, East Whalley, Read & Simonstone and Whalley & Painterwood were moved into the new Hyndburn constituency, and
3. Request that if the latest proposals must be accepted, the wards of Whalley & Painter Wood and Chatburn be moved back into the Ribble Valley constituency and Bamber Bridge East be moved into the South Ribble constituency.
4. The draft response to the Boundary Commission be shared with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition before being sent.

520

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Olwen Heap 01200 414408 olwen.heap@ribblevalley.gov.uk.