



General Purposes Urgency Sub Committee

Date:	24 November 2011
Classification:	For General Release
Title:	Outstanding issues arising out of the Review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries by the Boundary Commission for England report at the General Purposes Committee on 18 October 2011
Report of:	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Management of the Council
Financial Summary:	The cost of administering UK Parliamentary elections is met from the Government grant for administering these elections. Any cost applicable to making City Council representation at this review would need to be met from the appropriate budget
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Boundary Commission for England is consulting on its initial proposals for a 12- week period from 13 September 2011 to 5 December 2011. A report was presented at the General Purposes Committee meeting on 18 October 2011 (Appendix A).
- 1.2 At the General Purposes Committee meeting on 18 October 2011 members indicated a strong preference to maintain the constituency link with the City of London and to also retain two MPs for the City of Westminster. Officers were asked to report back to a meeting of the General Purposes Urgency Sub Committee with proposed representations based on the principles set out above.

- 1.3 Officers have studied the initial proposals in detail and looked at how the strong preference of members to maintain a link with the City of London and to also retain two Members of Parliament for the City of Westminster could be retained.
- 1.4 In assessing which proposals would work in terms of delivering the strong preference expressed by members, Officers have had to follow the Rules laid down by the Commission and the methodology that the Commission has requested be used when responding to their initial proposals.
- 1.5 A précis of the Rules is attached as an appendix to the General Purposes Committee Report of 18 October 2011.
- 1.6 The Commission would like to know the following from those bodies or persons making representation
 - a) If the body or person agrees in full, in part or not at all with the initial proposals for the London Region.
 - b) which sub-regions the body or person making representation agrees with and why.
 - c) which sub-regions a body or person making representation disagrees with and why (Westminster is included in the North, West, and Central London sub-region which also includes Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond upon Thames, and the City of London).
 - d) if the body or person making representation can propose alternatives for areas that are disagreed with and that meet the statutory rules set out in the Commission's report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee consider whether a representation should be made by the City Council and considers the options for representation made within this report.
- 2.2 The City of Westminster acknowledges the strict Rules that the Commission has been obliged to follow and thanks the Commission for delivering the initial proposals without needing to split wards.
- 2.3 That the Committee consider whether representations be made based on the contents of paragraph 4 (sections 4.1- 4.6) of the report and the option set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 That the Committee consider whether representations be made, based on the contents of paragraph 4 (section 4.8) of the report and the option set out in Appendix 2.

- 2.5 That the Committee consider whether representations be made, based on the contents of paragraph 4 (section 4.9) of the report and the option set out in Appendix 3.
- 2.6 That the Committee consider whether representations be made, based on the contents of paragraph 4 (section 4.10) of the report and the option set out in Appendix 4
- 2.7 That the Committee consider whether representations be made, based on the contents of paragraph 4 (section 4.11) of the report, ie that more than one option be presented and/or that a preferred option be presented as such.

3. Background Information – Possible Options for Representation

- 3.1 That it agrees in part with the initial proposals for the London Region; that it agrees with the initial proposals made for the North East London sub-region and the South London sub-region; that it disagrees with the initial proposals made in respect of the North, West, and Central London sub-region, as it believes (Option 1 see below) that the Boundary Commission for England should revise its initial proposals to ensure that the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster is maintained and/ or (options 2 (a) or (b) see below) that the Commission should revise its initial proposals to ensure that the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster is maintained and that a counterproposed constituency consists (either wholly or in very large part) of City of Westminster wards and incorporates the City of London; that it makes a counterproposal for the North, West , and Central London sub-region which requires that a revision be made to the initial Commission proposals. This counterproposal, which is designed (option 1 see below) to ensure that the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster is maintained and/or (options 2 (a) or (b) see below) that the historic constituency link between the two Cities is maintained and that a counterproposed constituency consists (either wholly or in very large part) of City of Westminster wards and the City of London, meets all the statutory rules set out in the Commission’s report and ensures that all the factors the Commission may take into account are properly addressed.
- 3.2 In considering whether a representation should be made by the City Council to retain the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster (both options 1 and 2(a) or (b) below deliver this), the following should be taken into account. Officers believe that a strong case can be made to retain this link. Representation made to retain the constituency link can be viewed as likely to have broad support amongst voters and other interested persons or groups across the Cities of London and Westminster and will be supported by others making representation to the Commission. All three major political parties are agreed in their counter-proposals that the City of London should remain tied to the City of Westminster. Such a representation would fall within the confines of Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972, that the City Council may make representations “where it considers it

expedient for the promotion or protection of the interests of the inhabitants of their area”.

- 3.3 In considering whether a representation should be made by the City Council to seek to retain and return two Members of Parliament for the City of Westminster and City of London area (which is the status quo position in respect of the two current Parliamentary constituencies- Cities of London and Westminster and Westminster North), the following should be taken into account. The combined electorate figure for the Cities of London and Westminster area is 131,076. The electoral quota Rules applied at this review, and in particular the part of the Rules which stipulate that any constituency should be no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473, would mean that other wards, possibly from within more than one other London Borough, would need to be affixed to any redefined constituency counterproposal which would be designed to also preserve the constituency link. The knock-on effect on other initially proposed constituencies or boroughs of seeking to make this two MP representation may mean that such a proposal could be viewed as a weak one in terms of the likelihood of the Commission accepting it and, in seeking to present this two MP model, the case for seeking to retain the historic constituency link between the two Cities may be compromised. The Commission has commented on some of the outcomes of its initial proposals and in so doing has offered further insight as to what it expects a future map of constituencies to look like. When considering whether to leave unchanged any of the eight existing constituencies within the North, West , and Central London sub-region that *do* have an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota, at paragraph 42 of its London initial proposals document the Commission has stated that, in applying the 5% electoral quota rule and reducing the number of constituencies, it has only permitted two to remain unchanged. Furthermore of the proposed 24 constituencies within this sub-region, only seven are situated solely within one London borough, 16 contain parts of two London boroughs and one contains parts of two London boroughs and the City of London.
- 3.4 When considering whether a representation should be made by the City Council (presented as options 2 (a) and 2 (b) see below) that one of any counterproposed constituency should be situated (wholly or in very large part) within the City of Westminster area and incorporate the City of London- and that a representation designed to preserve a 2 MP variant of the status quo Cities of London and Westminster and Westminster North position, should not be an overarching objective- the following Commission rationale should be taken into account. Neither of the two existing constituencies meets the electoral quota rules. The Cities of London and Westminster constituency has 65,140 electors and Westminster North constituency has 65,936 electors (this is the numbers point made previously in this report). The Commission has based its proposals on a London sub-region model of three segments. Had it decided to base its review on a larger number of borough clusters then it may have been possible to make a 2 MP and borough associated recommendation which stood some chance of being accepted. The Commission will however not recommence its process and therefore the London three sub-region model framework remains in place. The Commission has described this as ‘a purely practical’ approach.

In considering whether a representation should be made by the City Council, the following two options should be considered. Option 1 is focussed solely on seeking to retain the constituency link with the City of London (and requires that minimum change be made to the Commission's initial proposals) and option 2 is based on seeking to retain the historic constituency link and create a constituency which sits (wholly or in very large part) within the City of Westminster (and incorporates the City of London area).

4. Option 1 - Background

4.1 Option 1 should be based, in part, on the fact that the size of the City of London electorate (5933) is that of an average sized ward and that moving the City of London into another initially proposed constituency and addressing the knock-on effect of this in terms of the electoral quota would ensure that proper consideration is given to the other factors (in addition to those electoral quota Rules) which the Commission may also take into account. These other factors are:

- i) special geographical considerations, including the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency;
- ii) local government boundaries as they existed on 6 May 2010;
- iii) boundaries of existing constituencies;
- iv) any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.

4.2 A representation to maintain the historic constituency link between the City of London and the City of Westminster, and which meets the Commission's electoral quota rules, could be made by the rotation of 3 wards and the City of London. City of London moved into the proposed Westminster and Kensington constituency, the Pembridge ward moved from Westminster and Kensington into the proposed Paddington constituency, the Abbey Road ward moved from Paddington into the proposed Camden and Regent's Park constituency, the Bloomsbury ward moved from Camden and Regent's Park constituency into the (* name change required City of London)and Islington South constituency. This model (Appendix 1) would be presented as follows;

- i) A proposed Westminster and Kensington Constituency. This constituency would be comprised of the City of London and the Kensington and Chelsea wards of Abingdon, Brompton, Campden, Hans Town, Holland, Norland, Queen's Gate and the Westminster wards of Churchill, Knightsbridge and Belgravia, St James's, Tachbrook, Vincent Square, Warwick and West End. The Electorate is 80,301.
- ii) A proposed Paddington Constituency. This constituency would be comprised of the Kensington and Chelsea wards of Colville, Golborne, Notting Barns, Pembridge, St Charles, and the Westminster wards of

Bayswater, Harrow Road, Hyde Park, Lancaster Gate, Little Venice, Maida Vale, Queen's Park, and Westbourne. The Electorate is 78,070.

- iii) A proposed Camden and Regent's Park Constituency. This constituency would be comprised of the Camden wards of Belsize, Camden Town with Primrose Hill, Cantelowes, Haverstock, Regent's Park, and St Pancras and Somers Town and the Westminster wards of Abbey Road, Bryanston and Dorset Square, Church Street, Marylebone High Street and Regent's Park. The Electorate is 79,666.
 - iv) A proposed (* name change required- City of London) and Islington South constituency. This constituency would be comprised of the Camden wards of Bloomsbury, Holborn and Covent Garden, and King's Cross and the Islington wards of Barnsbury, Bunhill, Caledonian, Canonbury, Clerkenwell, St Mary's and St Peter's. The electorate is 79,634.
- 4.3 All four constituencies would therefore meet the electoral quota Rule of having between 72,810 to 80,473 electors.
- 4.4 That any representation (options 1 and 2) to maintain the historic link between the City of London and the City of Westminster should comment on the Commission's note as included at paragraph 44 of its London initial proposals document. 'Although the City of London has had a longstanding constituency link with wards from the City of Westminster, we noted that there are also close communication links between the City of London and the south of the borough of Islington'. This statement can be readily challenged both in terms of the close communication and other links between the City of London and the City of Westminster and in terms of the City of London's links with other authorities which are not being used as the basis for determining prospective Parliamentary constituencies i.e. the City of London link with Tower Hamlets (sharing a Health Authority, close public transport links, sharing a GLA electoral constituency, forming part of the Canary Wharf financial district).
- 4.5 That any representation (options 1 and 2) to maintain the historic constituency link between the City of London and the City of Westminster should make reference to the following links between the City of London and the City of Westminster.
- i) The City of London and the City of Westminster have been combined since 1948.
 - ii) The two Cities make up the UK's primary centre of financial and professional services provision.
 - iii) The two Cities are the two most visited boroughs by geographical area and both share an architectural heritage.
 - iv) There are strong and important transport links between the two Cities. Twice as many vehicles pass along the main routes between the City of

London and City of Westminster as do between the City of London and Islington.

- v) The two Cities share a number of professional communities such as the legal profession base in the west of the City of London and the Royal Courts of Justice based in Westminster.
- vi) The two Cities share significant security and public disorder challenges.
- vii) The two Cities share a strong civic and ceremonial tradition e.g the hosting of foreign Heads of State.

- 4.6 Consideration should be given, that if an option 1 (and/or option 2) representation is made to maintain the historic constituency link between the City of London and the City of Westminster, whether reference should be made to the other responses which we know to be making representation to retain the constituency link. These include representations made by the City of London and by the Member of Parliament for Cities of London and Westminster, Mark Field. Consideration should be given to making representation jointly with the City of London, if their intended representation is the same as that made by the City of Westminster.

If a City Council representation- which is solely concerned with retaining the constituency link (option 1)- is accepted by the Commission, the outcome will be that three Members of Parliament will represent the City of Westminster area, which is the same number of MPs as in the Commission's initial proposal of Camden and Regent's Park, Paddington and Westminster and Kensington constituencies.

A disadvantage of this model is that the Cities constituency would be very stretched, incorporating an area from Shepherd's Bush to Tower Hill.

4.7 Option 2

Option 2 is based on seeking to retain the historic constituency link between the two Cities and creating a constituency which consists (wholly or in very large part) of City of Westminster wards (and incorporates the City of London).

Officers have looked at variations which deliver these objectives. Two models are set out below. Option 2 (a) (Appendix 2) sets out a model which retains the historic constituency link and delivers a constituency which consists solely of City of Westminster wards and includes the City of London. Option 2 (b) (Appendix 3) sets out a model which retains the historic constituency link and delivers a constituency which is comprised mostly of City of Westminster wards, 3 wards from Kensington and Chelsea and includes the City of London.

4.8 Option 2 (a)- Appendix 2

i) A constituency centering around Kensington

To be made out of Harrow Road, Maida Vale, Queen's Park wards from Westminster and Abingdon, Brompton, Campden, Colville, Goldborne, Hans Town, Holland, Norland, Notting Barns, Pembridge, Queen's Gate and St Charles wards from Kensington and Chelsea. This would be comprised of the western halves of the proposed Paddington BC and Westminster and Kensington BC. The electorate would be 79,740.

ii) A constituency centering around the City of Westminster and including the City of London - a Cities of London and Westminster constituency. This would add the City of London to an area otherwise comprised of Westminster wards Bayswater, Churchill, Lancaster Gate, Little Venice, Hyde Park, Knightsbridge and Belgravia, St. James's, Tachbrook, Vincent Square, Warwick, Westbourne, West End. This would be the eastern halves of the proposed Westminster and Kensington constituency and the proposed Paddington constituency (excepting Abbey Road) as well as the City of London. The electorate would be 78,631.

iii) Camden and Regent's Park BC

This constituency would comprise the Camden wards of Belsize, Camden Town with Primrose Hill, Cantelowes, Haverstock, Regent's Park, and St Pancras and Somers Town and the Westminster wards of Abbey Road, Bryanston and Dorset Square, Church Street, Marylebone High Street, and Regent's Park.

This would be largely the same as that proposed by the Commission, only Abbey Road would be added from the proposed Paddington constituency and Bloomsbury would be lost to the proposed Islington South constituency. The electorate would be 79,666.

iv) Islington South BC

This constituency would comprise the Camden wards of Bloomsbury, Holborn and Covent Garden, and King's Cross and the Islington wards of Barnsbury, Bunhill, Caledonian, Canonbury, Clerkenwell, St Mary's and St Peter's.

This would be largely the same as proposed by the Commission, only with the City of London moved to the newly created constituency centering around Westminster and Bloomsbury added from Camden and Regent's Park. The electorate would be 79,634.

A potential disadvantage of this model is that there is a very small connection between Brompton and Hans Town and the rest of Kensington.

4.9 Option 2 (b) – Appendix 3

This would retain the historic constituency link and creates a constituency which consists mostly of Westminster wards, 3 Kensington and Chelsea wards and the City of London.

- i) A borough constituency of 'The Cities of London & Westminster', comprising the City of London, the wards of Bryanston & Dorset Square, Churchill, Hyde Park, Knightsbridge & Belgravia, Marylebone High Street, St. James's, Tachbrook, Vincent Square, Warwick, and West End in the City of Westminster, and the wards of Brompton, Hans Town and Queen's Gate in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. (The electorate is 79,010).
- ii) A borough constituency of 'Kensington', comprising the wards of Bayswater, Harrow Road, Lancaster Gate, Queen's Park and Westbourne in the City of Westminster, and the wards of Abingdon, Campden, Colville, Golborne, Holland, Norland, Notting Barns, Pembridge, and St Charles in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. (The electorate is 78,772).
- iii) A borough constituency of 'Camden & Westminster North', comprising the wards of Abbey Road, Church Street, Little Venice, Maida Vale and Regent's Park in the City of Westminster, and the wards of Belsize, Camden Town with Primrose Hill, Cantelowes, Haverstock, Regent's Park and St. Pancras & Somers Town in the London Borough of Camden.(The electorate is 80,255).
- iv) A borough constituency of 'Islington South & Holborn', comprising the wards of Bloomsbury, Holborn & Covent Garden and King's Cross in the London Borough of Camden, and the wards of Barnsbury, Bunhill, Caledonian, Canonbury, Clerkenwell, St. Mary's and St. Peter's in the London Borough of Islington (The electorate is 79,634).

One disadvantage of option 2 (b) is that it involves including a small part of Kensington & Chelsea along with the two Cities.

- 4.10 Representation has been made by others to seek to retain the historic constituency link between the two Cities. One representation which delivers this and also delivers a constituency which consists of Westminster wards (an option 2 model) is that made by Mark Field MP, Cities of London and Westminster, at an open hearing held in Kensington on 17 October 2011. There are four proposed constituencies involved in his counterproposal, which is shown as Appendix 4.

- i) A borough constituency of 'The Cities of London & Westminster', comprising the City of London, and the wards of Bayswater, Bryanston & Dorset Square, Churchill, Hyde Park, Lancaster Gate, Marylebone High Street, St. James's, Tachbrook, Vincent Square, Warwick, West End and Westbourne in the City of Westminster. The electorate is 79,238.
- ii) A borough constituency of 'Kensington', comprising the wards of Harrow Road, Knightsbridge & Belgravia and Queen's Park in the City of Westminster, and the wards of Abingdon, Brompton, Campden, Colville, Golborne, Hans Town, Holland, Norland, Notting Barns, Pembridge, Queen's Gate and St Charles in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. The electorate is 78,544.
- iii) A borough constituency of 'Camden & Westminster North', comprising the wards of Abbey Road, Church Street, Little Venice, Maida Vale and Regent's Park in the City of Westminster, and the wards of Belsize, Camden Town with Primrose Hill, Cantelowes, Haverstock, Regent's Park and St. Pancras & Somers Town in the London Borough of Camden. The electorate is 80,255.
- iv) A borough constituency of 'Islington South & Holborn', comprising the wards of Bloomsbury, Holborn & Covent Garden and King's Cross in the London Borough of Camden, and the wards of Barnsbury, Bunhill, Caledonian, Canonbury, Clerkenwell, St. Mary's and St. Peter's in the London Borough of Islington. The electorate is 79,634.

Mark Field's proposal delivers constituencies which satisfy a 'two-authority' principle. Three of the counterproposed constituencies will include Westminster wards.

4.11 In deciding whether a representation should be made by the City Council the following should be further considered:

Whether an option 1, only, representation should be made- to retain the historic link between the two constituencies- (and which requires that minimum change be made to the Commission's initial proposals).

Whether an option 2 representation, only, should be made (to retain the historic link between the two Cities and option 2 (a) create a constituency which sits solely within the City of Westminster and incorporates the City of London or option 2 (b) create a constituency which sits mostly within the City of Westminster and incorporates 3 Kensington and Chelsea wards and the City of London. If an option 2 representation is made, whether both options should be represented or just one. Given the geography of wards and how they fit within constituencies , whether initially proposed or counterproposed, and the review Rules applied by the Commission, there appear to be a very small number of potential models, which both meet the overarching objectives and which are likely to stand up as credible alternatives to the Commission's

initially made proposals. Three option 2 models are shown within this Report, options 2(a) and 2 (b) and the Mark Field MP model.

Whether multiple options should be presented and if presented in this way, whether a preferred option should be noted as such.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows local authorities to make representations “where it considers it expedient for the promotion or protection of the interests of the inhabitants of their area.

6. Other Implications

- 6.1 These remain as set out in the report to the General Purposes Committee on 18 October 2011.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to General Purposes Committee on 18 October 2011

Appendix 1: Option 1- Representation made, solely, to retain the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster

Appendix 2- Option 2 (a): Representation made to retain the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster and to create a constituency which consists solely of City of Westminster wards and incorporates the City of London).

Appendix 3- Option 2 (b): Representation made to retain the historic constituency link between the Cities of London and Westminster and to create a constituency which consists mostly of City of Westminster wards and 3 Kensington and Chelsea wards and incorporates the City of London.

Appendix 4: Mark Field MP proposal.