

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND (BCE): 2018 BOUNDARY REVIEW

We have been informed that the Boundary Commission's final report has been laid in Parliament. The recommendations have been published in full on the Boundary Commission's website at www.bce2018.org.uk

This note deals solely with the position in relation to Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Initial proposals. Of the seven constituencies in this sub-region, four (Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Buckingham, and Wycombe) are within the permitted electorate range, the electorates of Milton Keynes North, and Milton Keynes South are above the permitted electorate range, while that of Chesham and Amersham is below. Of the four that are within the permitted electorate range, the BCE was able to retain the Beaconsfield constituency

As the Borough of Milton Keynes has too many electors for two constituencies, but not enough for three, two of its wards had to be allocated to a neighbouring constituency. The BCE selected the Stony Stratford and Wolverton wards to be included in the Buckingham constituency. In Milton Keynes the BCE proposed constituencies of Milton Keynes Bletchley and Milton Keynes Newport Pagnell. In the proposed Aylesbury constituency, the BCE included the District of Aylesbury Vale wards of Edlesborough, Pitstone & Cheddington, and Wingrave from the existing Buckingham constituency, as well as the whole of the wards of Oakfield & Bierton, and Watermead, which are currently divided between the Buckingham and Aylesbury constituencies.

To bring the Chesham and Amersham constituency within the permitted electorate range, the BCE proposed the inclusion of the District of Wycombe wards of Lacey Green, Speen and the Hampdens, and Greater Hughenden, while to the Wycombe constituency the BCE proposed the inclusion of the District of Wycombe wards of Bledlow and Bradenham, and Stokenchurch and Radnage.

Consultation on the initial proposals. During the consultation on the BCE's initial proposals, the BCE received both support and objection in this sub-region. Much of the opposition focused on including Milton Keynes wards in a Buckingham constituency. The only alternative to this would be to cross the regional boundary, and include Milton Keynes wards in either an East Midlands or Eastern region constituency. The BCE received counter-proposals suggesting this but, following investigations, the BCE considered that none of these provided improved solutions in those regions, and so the BCE found they did not provide exceptional or compelling evidence to do so. The BCE also received some counter-proposals that suggested alternative wards from the Borough of Milton Keynes be included in the Buckingham constituency. The suggestion was that the Tattenhoe ward should be included in the Buckingham constituency rather than Wolverton. It was argued that the Tattenhoe ward should be included in the Buckingham constituency as it was closer to Buckingham, whereas the Wolverton ward was divided from the constituency by the A5.

The BCE received a small number of representations that suggested that the Lacey Green, Speen and the Hampdens ward had links with The Risboroughs ward and to Wycombe, and that The Risboroughs ward had links to Aylesbury, rather than to Chesham and Amersham, or Buckingham, as in the BCE's initial proposals. However, a suggested attempt to address this in a counter-proposal relied upon separating the Hazlemere wards between the Chesham and Amersham, and Wycombe constituencies.

Revised proposals. Having considered the evidence received, the BCE decided to revise its initial proposals for Milton Keynes. The BCE was persuaded by the evidence to include the Tattenhoe ward in a constituency with Buckingham in place of Wolverton ward. The BCE investigated the other counter-proposals for the remaining constituencies in this sub-region but was not persuaded to make any further changes to its initial proposals.

Consultation on the revised proposals. The responses during the consultation on the revised proposals were similar to those received during the earlier consultation periods. With respect to the Tattenhoe ward, respondents indicated that, although Tattenhoe is on a direct road to Buckingham, it had always been part of Milton Keynes and was a relatively recent development. Respondents suggested that the Wolverton ward, as one of the pre-Milton Keynes villages, had a separate identity as the Wolverton Urban District until 1974. This also included the neighbouring Stony Stratford area. Although these wards are separated by the A5, they are joined by Millers Way and Stratford Road. Both areas had been part of the Buckingham constituency from at least 1918 until 1992. The counter-proposals received suggested that the BCE should revert to the initial proposals for Buckinghamshire in the Milton Keynes area.

Final recommendations. Having considered the evidence received, the BCE has decided to modify its revised proposals. The BCE has decided to revert to its initial proposals, in that the two Milton Keynes wards of Stony Stratford and Wolverton be included in the Buckingham constituency, and that the Tattenhoe ward should be allocated to the Milton Keynes South constituency. The BCE considers that the evidence regarding shared community ties between the Wolverton and Stony Stratford wards was persuasive and that both wards should be included in the Buckingham constituency.

The BCE has also reflected on the names of the constituencies in the sub-region in light of the reconfiguration outlined above. As part of its final recommendations, it has proposed that the Buckingham constituency be renamed Buckingham and Milton Keynes West to reflect that the constituency includes parts of Milton Keynes borough, and Milton Keynes South West be renamed Milton Keynes South to reflect the orientation of the constituency.

The BCE's final recommendations for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes are for constituencies of: Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Buckingham and Milton Keynes West, Chesham and Amersham, Milton The 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries: Volume one 137 Keynes North East, Milton Keynes South, and Wycombe.

Wards making up new Aylesbury Constituency

Aston Clinton and Stoke Mandeville, Bedgrove, Central and Walton, Coldharbour, Edlesborough, Elmhurst, Gatehouse, Mandeville and Elm Farm, Oakfield and Berton, Pitstone and Cheddington, Riverside, Southcourt, Walton Court and Hawkslade, Watermead, Wendover and Halton, Wing and Wingrave.

Wards making up new Buckingham and Milton Keynes West Constituency

Buckingham North, Buckingham South, Great Brickhill and Newton Longville, Great Horwood, Grendon Underwood and Brill, Haddenham and Stone, Long Crendon, Luffield Abbey, Marsh Gibbon, Oakley, Quainton, Steeple Claydon, Stewkley, Tingewick, Waddesdon, Winslow, Stony Stratford, Wolverton, Icknield and the Risboroughs.

