

# MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON THE INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR THE LONDON REGION

Session 1: Thursday 9 June 2016

Present:

David Elvin QC, Commissioner  
Neil Pringle, Commissioner  
Sam Hartley, Secretary to the Commission  
Tony Bellringer, Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Tim Bowden, Head of Reviews  
Donna Smith, Review Manager

Mrs Smith presented the schemes for the London Region that had been prepared by the Secretariat.

## **London Region**

The Secretariat explained that the London Region could be considered as two sub-regions: North Thames and South Thames. The region consists of 32 local London boroughs (LBs) and the City of London; 21 LBs and the City of London are in the North Thames sub-region and 11 LBs are in the South Thames sub-region. The electorate for each sub-region is 3,092,886 and 2,025,998 respectively. Currently the region has 73 constituencies. Commissioners noted that as part of this review the region had been allocated 68; a reduction of five.

The Secretariat explained that 20 of the existing constituencies met the electoral quota: Barking (72,314), Bethnal Green and Bow (75,002), Brent Central (74,899), Chipping Barnet (72,480), Croydon Central (74,571), Dulwich and West Norwood (72,576), Ealing North (73,703), Hackney North and Stoke Newington (72,758), Hackney South and Shoreditch (72,586), Hampstead and Kilburn (74,977), Hornchurch and Upminster (78,064), Hornsey and Wood Green (74,641), Ilford South (78,212), Kingston and Surbiton (77,995), Poplar and Limehouse (76,149), Richmond Park (74,740), Ruislip Northwood and Pinner (71,331), Tooting (71,428), Twickenham (78,247), and Vauxhall (71,358).

The Secretariat further explained that 43 of the existing constituencies were below the lower electoral quota (71,031) and 10 beyond the upper (78,501) and that major reconfiguration to the majority of constituencies would be required to meet the given reduction of five constituencies.

The Commissioners agreed a pattern of constituencies that resulted in no constituencies crossing the natural boundary of the River Thames. The Secretariat explained that this would make it possible to retain up to five of the existing constituencies.

## **North Thames**

The Secretariat explained that the North Thames sub-region should be allocated 42 constituencies - a reduction of three from the current allocation. Commissioners agreed that this allowed for the existing constituencies of Hornchurch and Upminster (78,064) and Twickenham (78,247) to be retained.

Commissioners also considered that in the North Thames sub-region the River Lee also provides for a clear boundary and that it was important to consider the crossings of the River Lee in formulating constituencies.

Starting in the east of the region, Commissioners agreed to constituencies covering the local authorities of Havering, Barking and Dagenham and Redbridge. Commissioners agreed to retaining the Hornchurch and Upminster constituency, adding Eastbrook ward to the Romford constituency, combining parts of Rainham and Dagenham to form a Rainham and Dagenham constituency and dividing Ilford between the Barking constituency and Ilford North constituency.

Moving to the west of these local authorities, Commissioners considered that the River Lee provided a clear boundary in the north of the region and had few crossing points. However, Commissioners did consider that the River Lee could be crossed between the authorities of Newham and Tower Hamlets in formulating a constituency pattern that was within the electoral quota. Commissioners agreed that a Bow and Canning Town constituency could be created that crossed the River Lee. Commissioners observed that in this part of London, the existing constituency did not cross the River Lee.

To the north of this constituency, Commissioners agreed to formulating constituencies of East Ham, Forest Gate and Loxford, Chingford and Woodford and Walthamstow. Commissioners observed that these constituencies did not reflect existing ones but accepted that the size of the wards did not provide for many alternative configurations.

In the north of this sub-region, Commissioners agreed to create constituencies of Edmonton, Enfield, Hornsey and Wood Green, Chipping Barnet and Mill Hill and Tottenham. Commissioners observed that these constituencies were similar to existing ones, subject to the minor modifications to bring them within the electoral quota.

In the Hackney area, the Secretariat had proposed constituencies of Finsbury Park and Stoke Newington, Hackney and Stoke Newington and Hackney West and Bethnal Green. Commissioners firstly considered alternative configurations for the Finsbury Park and Stoke Newington constituency. Commissioners investigated whether the Stoke Newington area could be included in a Hackney constituency and whether the Finsbury Park area could be included in an Islington constituency. Commissioners accepted that significant modifications to this constituency would require consequential changes in neighbouring constituencies, which would not better reflect the factors in the Act. However, Commissioners did suggest changes to the Hackney West and Bethnal Green and Hackney and Stoke Newington constituencies. Commissioners agreed that the Hackney West and Bethnal Green constituency should include the ward of London Fields and that Shacklewell ward should be included in the proposed Hackney and Stoke Newington constituency.

Commissioners also considered that the Edgware Road provided a clear boundary with limited crossing points and that this should be used as a boundary in formulating constituencies where possible. Commissioners considered that constituencies of Hendon Harrow East and Brent North could be created which used this boundary. However, Commissioners did accept that the Edgware Road would need to be crossed towards the south in order to formulate a pattern of constituencies that was within the electoral quota. Commissioners agreed to create a Kilburn and Regent's Park constituency that crossed the Edgware Road. Included in this constituency were the areas of Regent's Park, Kilburn and Queen's Park.

To the south of the region Commissioners noted that it was possible to create a constituency that was coterminous with the boundaries of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Commissioners also noted that limited change was required to the constituencies of Cities of London and Westminster and that a constituency could be formulated which was largely based on the local authority of Hammersmith and Fulham.

To the east of the Edgware Road, Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Harrow and Stanmore, Kenton and Willesden. Commissioners noted that these constituencies were different in configuration to existing.

In the north west of this sub-region, Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Hillingdon and Uxbridge, Ruislip Northwood and Pinner and Hayes and Harlington. Commissioners observed that the size of electorates in the wards and boundary of the sub-region provide little alternatives to this configuration.

Commissioners identified that different constituency configurations could be formulated in the Ealing area. Commissioners agreed that the Ealing Common ward should be included in the Ealing Central and Shepherd's Bush constituency and that the Southfields ward should be included in the proposed Brentford and Chiswick constituency. To the north of Ealing, Commissioners agreed to create a constituency of Wembley and Harrow on the Hill.

Commissioners noted that the existing Twickenham constituency could be retained as it was within the electoral quota. To the north of this constituency, Commissioners agreed to create constituencies of Feltham and Hounslow, and Southall and Heston.

Given the changes to constituencies in the North Thames sub-region, Commissioners carefully considered what constituency names should be proposed. In most cases Commissioners agreed that the existing constituency names should be retained where constituencies broadly reflect current constituencies. Commissioners did consider that some alternative names, to those put forward by the Secretariat were required. Commissioners agreed to the constituency names of Enfield, Finchley and Southgate, Walthamstow, Harrow and Stanmore, Kenton, Wembley and Harrow on the Hill, Brentford and Chiswick, Willesden and Ealing Central and Shepherd's Bush.

### South Thames

The Secretariat explained that the South Thames sub-region would be allocated 26 constituencies a reduction of two from the current allocation. Commissioners noted that

under this sub-region the existing constituencies of Kingston and Surbiton (77,995), and Richmond Park (74,740), could be retained.

The Commissioners noted that the local authorities of Croydon and Bromley could retain three constituencies although with different configurations to the existing ones. Covering the Bromley London Borough, Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Beckenham, Bromley and Chislehurst and Orpington. Covering the Croydon London Borough, Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Croydon Central, Croydon North and Croydon South.

In the London Boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley, Commissioners noted that limited changes were required in formulating constituencies. Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Bexley and Old Sidcup, Erith and Crayford, Woolwich, Eltham and Greenwich and Deptford.

In the west of the sub-region, Commissioners agreed that the existing constituencies of Richmond Park and Kingston and Surbiton should be retained in the initial proposals. In the London Borough of Sutton, Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Carshalton and Wallington and Sutton and Cheam. Commissioners noted that the latter included wards from the borough of Merton to ensure it met the electoral quota.

In the centre of this sub-region Commissioners agreed that more extensive changes were required in order to ensure constituencies that met the electoral quota. Commissioners noted that it was therefore necessary to use wards from the London Borough of Wandsworth, Lambeth, Merton, Southwark and Lewisham to formulate a pattern of constituencies that achieved the electoral quota. Commissioners also noted that the size of the wards in these boroughs did not provide for much flexibility in formulating constituencies. Commissioners agreed to formulate constituencies of Battersea, Tooting, Streatham and Mitcham, Lewisham and Catford, Clapham North and Stockwell, Camberwell and Vauxhall Bridge, Peckham and Lewisham West and Dulwich and West Norwood.

Similarly to the North Thames sub-region, Commissioners agreed to retain existing constituency names where possible, although some new constituency names would need to be proposed due to the reconfigurations. Commissioners suggested the constituency name of Woolwich to reflect that this area was at the centre of this constituency. Commissioners also agreed the constituency names of Wimbledon Common and Putney, and Merton and Wimbledon Central.

Session 2: - Monday 13 June 2016

Present:

The Hon Mrs Justice Patterson, Deputy Chair of the Commission  
Neil Pringle, Commissioner  
Sam Hartley, Secretary to the Commission  
Tony Bellringer, Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Tim Bowden, Head of Reviews

Mr Pringle presented the Commissioners' agreed conclusions from Session 1. Mr Pringle firstly outlined that the River Thames had been used as a boundary to create the sub-regions of North Thames and South Thames.

Mr Pringle and the Secretariat outlined the proposed constituencies for North Thames. It was agreed that the River Lee provided a clear boundary and that it was suitable to be crossed in the Newham and Tower Hamlet areas. The Secretariat outlined the constituencies proposed following Session 1 and the requirements for reconfiguring constituencies in most of the sub-region. The Secretariat also outlined the proposed constituency names following Session 1. The Deputy Chair and Mr Pringle agreed that the name of Queen's Park and Regent's Park should be proposed rather than Kilburn and Queen's Park as the former appeared to better reflect the communities in the constituency.

Mr Pringle and the Secretariat then outlined the proposed constituencies for the South Thames sub-region. It was detailed that changes were required to the majority of constituencies in this sub-region, particularly in the centre, in order to ensure all constituencies were within the electoral quota. Mr Pringle detailed the proposed constituency names as suggested during Session 1.

The Deputy Chair agreed that the Commission's initial proposals would be as agreed during session 1 with the amendment of the constituency name of Queen's Park and Regent's Park as outlined above.