

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND

HELD AT

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HULL

ON

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DAY ONE

Before:

Mr John Feavours, The Lead Assistant Commissioner

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THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this public hearing on the Boundary Commission for England's initial proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries in the Yorkshire and the Humber region. We were going to start this morning at 10.00 am but in the absence of any speakers I have just put the start back a little bit, it is just coming up to 10.40 am. My name is John Feavyour and I am an Assistant Commissioner of the Boundary Commission for England. I was appointed by the Commission to assist them in their task of making recommendations for new constituencies in the Yorkshire and the Humber region. I am responsible for chairing the hearing today and tomorrow, in just the same way as I chaired the meetings recently in Leeds, Sheffield and Northallerton. I am also responsible, with my fellow Assistant Commissioner Collette Rawnsley, for analysing all the representations received about the initial proposals for this region and then presenting recommendations to the Commission as to whether or not those initial proposals should be revised.

I am assisted here today by members of the Commission staff, led by Tim Bowden, who is sitting beside me. Tim will shortly provide an explanation of the Commission's initial proposals for new constituencies in this region. He will tell you how you can make written representations and he will deal with one or two administrative matters.

The hearing today is scheduled to run from now until 8.00 pm this evening, and tomorrow it is scheduled to run from 9.00 am in the morning until 5.00 pm. I can vary that timetable and I will take into account the attendance and demand for opportunities to speak. I should point out that under the legislation that governs the Commission's review, each public hearing must be held over two days and cannot be extended into a third.

The purpose of this public hearing is to allow people to make oral representations about the initial proposals for the Yorkshire and the Humber region. A number of people have already registered to speak and have been given a timeslot, and I will invite them to speak at the appropriate time. If there is any free time during the day or at the end of the day, then I will invite anyone who has not registered but who would like to speak, to do so. I would like to stress that the purpose of this public hearing is for people to make oral representations about the initial proposals. The purpose is not to engage in a debate with the Commission about the proposals, nor is this hearing an opportunity for people to cross-examine other speakers during their presentation. People may seek to put questions for clarification to the speakers, but they should do that through me, as the Chair. I will now hand over to Tim, who will provide a brief explanation of the Commission's initial proposals for the Yorkshire and the Humber region.

MR BOWDEN: Thank you very much and good morning. As John has mentioned, my name is Tim Bowden, I am Head of Reviews and I am a member of the Commission staff. I am responsible for supporting the Commissioners in their role to recommend new parliamentary constituency boundaries, and at that this hearing I lead the team of staff responsible for ensuring that the hearing runs smoothly. As John has already stated, he will chair the hearing itself and it is his responsibility to run the hearing at his discretion and take decisions about speakers, questioners and timings. My team and I are here today to support John in carrying out his role. Please ask one of us outside of the hearing if you need any help or assistance.

We use the European electoral regions as a template for the allocation of the 499 constituencies to which England is entitled but that does not include the two constituencies allocated to the Isle of Wight. This approach is permitted by the legislation and has been supported by previous public consultation. This approach does not prevent anyone from putting forward counter-proposals that include one or more constituencies being split between the regions but it is likely that compelling reasons would need to be given to persuade us to depart from the regional-based approach we have adopted in formulating our initial proposals.

I would like to talk now about the Commission's proposals for the Yorkshire and Humber region. The region has been allocated 50 constituencies; a reduction of four from the current number. Our proposals leave three of the existing 54 constituencies unchanged. As it has not always been possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties in the Yorkshire and the Humber region, we have grouped some county and local authority areas into sub-regions. The number of constituencies allocated to each sub-region is determined by the electorate of the combined local authorities. Consequently, it has been necessary to propose some constituencies that cross county or unitary authority boundaries. We have proposed four constituencies that contain electors from North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire. Two of these combine electors from North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire, with both constituencies including wards from the district of Selby. The remaining two constituencies combine electors from West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire, including wards of the borough of Barnsley, the borough of Kirklees and the borough of Wakefield. In Humberside we have proposed a pattern of nine constituencies, which includes two constituencies that are completely unchanged.

The statutory rules allow us to take into account local government boundaries as they existed on 7 May 2015. These include both the external boundaries of local councils and their internal boundaries (known as "wards" or "electoral divisions"). We seek to avoid dividing wards between constituencies wherever possible. Wards are well-defined and well-understood units which are generally indicative of areas which have a broad community of interest. We consider that any division of these units between constituencies would be likely to break local ties, disrupt political party organisations

and cause difficulties for electoral registration and returning officers who are responsible for the running of elections. It is our view that only in exceptional and compelling circumstances will splitting a ward between constituencies be justified and our initial proposals do not do so. If an alternative scheme proposes to split wards, strong evidence and justification will need to be provided and the extent of such ward splitting should be kept to a minimum.

The scale of change in this review is significant and we look forward to hearing the views of people at this hearing and throughout the rest of the consultation period. We are consulting on our initial proposals until Monday 5 December, so there is still time after this hearing for people to contribute in writing. There are also reference copies of the proposals present at this hearing and they are also available on our website and in a number of places of deposit around the region. You can make written representations to us through our consultation website at www.bce2018.org.uk. I do urge everyone to submit representations to us before the deadline of 5 December.

Finally, I would like to remind all participants that this hearing is part of a public consultation and you will be asked to provide us with your name and address if you make an oral representation. The Commission is legally obliged to take a record of the public hearings and, as you can probably see at the back, we are taking a video recording from which we will create a verbatim transcript. The Commission is required to publish the record of the public hearing along with all written representations for a four-week period during which members of the public have an opportunity to comment on those representations. We expect this period to occur during spring of next year. The publication of the hearing records and written representations will include certain personal data of those who have made representations. I therefore invite all those contributing to read the Commission's data protection and privacy policy, a copy of which we have with us and which is also available on our website.

Before handing back to the Chair to begin the public hearing, just a few details. We are not expecting a fire alarm this morning, if one should go off the exit is behind you through the door and to the left, and the meeting point is outside the front of the hotel itself. If you want to use the toilets they are outside the door to my right from here, so probably all of your left and just up the ramp outside the room.

Finally, if you have a mobile phone we ask you to switch it to silent or vibrate. If you want to take a call that is fine, I appreciate everyone is busy, but we ask you to go outside the room and obviously take those calls, rather than do it inside the hearing.

At this stage I now hand you back to John, as Chair of the hearing to begin the public hearing, and thank you very much for your attendance today. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thanks, Tim. As I said earlier, I have got a list of people who have booked schedules to come in and the first booking was, in fact down to be 11.00 am, that is Mr David McCobb, but Mr McCobb, you are here this morning a little earlier. If you are ready, Sir, would you like to come up to the table. As Tim said, if you could start by giving us your name and address and then tell us what you would like me to hear please.

MR DAVID McCOBB: (Liberal Democratic Party) Thank you very much. Mr name is Dave McCobb of 78 Park Avenue, Kingston-Upon-Hull and I am a Hull City Councillor, representing Beverley ward on Hull City Council.

For a small bit of background, I was brought up in the East Riding ward of Willerby and Kirk Ella and, over the last 15 years I have lived in the Avenue of Newland and Beverley Wards of Kingston-Upon-Hull so, I have a wide range of experience of the diverse communities that make up the north bank of the Humber.

I am here firstly, to support the proposals as set out by the Boundary Commission for England for their reconfiguration of the Humber Area. I would like to congratulate the Commission for proposing what I feel is the best possible fit for this area within the rules that have been set out for your work. I think it is a major improvement on the first draft proposals from the 27 Review, which, whilst never implemented, a number of people who I am sure will contribute to this also contributed to.

In terms of the proposals that you are putting forward here; firstly, looking at that the Beverley and Holden and East Yorkshire constituencies, I fully support the Boundary Commission's proposals to retain both of these constituencies on their current boundaries. They already meet the electoral quota and there is no need, therefore, for unnecessary change, so I wholeheartedly support that. This was also recognised on the unimplemented 2011 to 2013 Review, where your original proposals were to change the boundaries of those constituencies, there was significant representation from members of the public not to do so, that was listened to in the revised proposals and I am pleased that you have stuck with that in your draft proposals for this review.

In terms of the Hull East constituency; within the City of Hull the big community divide is the River Hull and so for me it makes sense that any Hull East constituency should contain within it the maximum number of electors possible East of the River Hull. As anybody who lives in the City will tell you, if people ask you are you from East Hull or West Hull, they will be talking about the river. Therefore, I think what you have done with East Hull is eminently sensible because within the constraints of the rules that have been set out for you, you have included as many electors from east of the River as

possible in the East Hull constituency, which I fully support. This reunites the Bransholme Estate, which is currently split between the North and East Hull constituencies. It also reunites the Sutton Park Estate, which is currently split between the North and East Hull constituencies. The Sutton Park Estate is currently half in Kings Park Ward and half in Sutton Ward, which is a very artificial division of a community, and I am pleased that you are putting that community back together and uniting all of the Bransholme Estate in one constituency, that makes eminent sense. The Bransholme Estate, for your reference, is primarily in Bransholme East and Bransholme West, but some parts of it are in Sutton ward and there is also a small part of it in Kings Park ward, so having that wholly within one constituency makes very strong sense on community grounds.

Turning next to your proposed Hull Central constituency; having lived in three different wards in this constituency over the years, I fully support the proposal that you are putting forward here. In fact, I think it is an improvement on the existing Hull North constituency, partly, as I have just said, because it does not split Bransholme and Sutton Park between two constituencies unnaturally as the current boundaries do. The focal point of this constituency really is the University of Hull and the communities around the University of Hull. That community spreads downwards into the city centre so there is student accommodation in the city centre, Myton ward, so actually having a seat that is based on the community around the University of Hull that includes Myton ward makes sense. It also brings together the city centre in one constituency by putting Drypool and Myton wards into one constituency. Parts of Drypool ward are recognised as being parts of the city centre. The City Council has recognised that when putting together its Area Committee Boundaries because it includes Drypool in the Riverside area along with Myton.

The Beverley Road Traders Organisation organises along the Beverley Road corridor, which includes Myton Avenue, Newland, Beverley and University wards, so there are strong ties of community up the Beverley Road corridor, which starts here at the city centre, and goes all the way up to the Dunswell Roundabout. Having a constituency for whom the principal focal points are the city centre, the Beverley Road corridor and the communities around the University, makes absolute sense.

Bricknell, Newland, University, Beverley and Avenue wards all look to the university. They have high student and academic populations and it is important that those five wards remain together in a single constituency as they all look towards the university.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Could you just repeat those five again, just so I have got them clearly?

MR DAVID McCOBB: Bricknell, Newland, University, Beverley and Avenue. All of those wards contain a significant chunk of the student and academic populations of the city. Newland Park, which is the first big residential street as you come into Bricknell ward, travelling from Newland, is well known to be where a significant chunk of the city's academics live. It is immediately opposite the university and has very strong ties with the university community. It is therefore, in my view, very important that those five wards are all within the same constituency because they are the crux of the community that is based around Hull University. For that reason I oppose the counter-proposal that I believe has been put forward by the Conservative Party, which unnecessarily splits Bricknell ward off from its natural community. Its natural community is looking in towards the Avenues, towards Newland and towards University wards. Chanterlands Avenue runs through Bricknell, Goddard Avenue runs through from Newland into Bricknell, they are a single unit and they should not be split up.

Turning to Hull West and Haltemprice; I support the Commission's proposal for the proposed Hull West and Haltemprice seat. Again, given the strict nature of the rules under which you are working, it is clear that at least one constituency must include wards from both Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. I strongly believe that your proposals here are the best possible fit in those circumstances. Your proposal leaves many of the roads that are currently split between Hull and the East Riding sitting together in the same constituency. For example, the road Rokeby Park is currently split between Tranby ward in the East Riding and Pickering ward in Hull, there are houses in both constituencies. Faversham Avenue and Coleville Avenue both have houses in Boothferry ward of Hull and Tranby ward of the East Riding. Cradley Road has houses in Derringham ward of Hull and also houses in Cottingham South ward of the East Riding. So, what you are doing in this proposal is to put into the same constituency roads which, quite arbitrarily in some cases, currently have different MPs, so that makes a lot of sense.

Again, I think on that basis it is important to view Derringham, Boothferry and Pickering wards as a block, just as it is important to view the wards that have their focal point as the university, as a block that should sit together, it is important to treat Derringham, Boothferry and Pickering wards as a block for a number of reasons. Firstly, they are a council area committee, so the City Council has recognised that there is a commonality of interest between those three wards. Not only are many council services aligned on that basis, also a number of other services have aligned around those boundaries because the Council has also done so. Keeping those three wards as a block makes a lot of sense. That is why I do not think that the counter-proposals that I believe have been put forward by the Labour Party to split Derringham ward off makes sense.

Derringham ward has never been part of Hull North, it has never looked in towards the university, it has always looked towards the West of the city and Boothferry ward. The railway line that separates Derringham and Boothferry from Bricknell, is a really clear demarcation line within the city, and it does not make sense to have a constituency that straddles that railway line, when Derringham ward clearly has roads within in, which run on into Tranby ward, into Willerby and Kirk Ella and at the top end into Cottingham South. So it does not make sense to split Derringham ward off from Boothferry and Pickering.

Likewise, it does not make any sense, in what I understand are the Conservative counter-proposals, to split off Pickering from the West Hull constituency. Again, just a simple look at a map shows that the communities run down Hessle Road, many of the people who live off the Hessle Road in Hull will go up and down to Hessle. It makes no sense at all to take roads like Rokeby Park, which are currently split between Tranby and Pickering, and cut them in half between two different constituencies, again unnecessarily.

For all of those reasons I strongly support the proposals that you have already laid out as the best possible fit in the circumstances.

In terms of what happens outside the city boundary; I do think that the seat that you have proposed that you are calling Goole is the best possible configuration of the remaining parts of the East Riding and the necessary parts of North Lincolnshire. Again, I am pleased that this has been taken on board from the last review, which, whilst never implemented, there was a round of public consultation where this was very strongly the preferred option for this part of the world. I am pleased that you have taken that on board. My only point would be that I do not think the name Goole is a proper representation for this constituency, which is a series of communities in both the Isle of Axholme and the M62/A63 corridor.

There are four distinct parts of this constituency, one of them I refer to as the Hunsley area, which is South Hunsley ward, parts of Dale ward, it draws its name from High Hunsley, there is the Hunsley Beacon, there is South Hunsley School, which is that part which looks very much to Hull, a lot of people who live within Hull travel to work area. There is then Howdenshire, with Howden as its market town, which is much more rural and looks as much to Hull as it does to York and in places to Doncaster. There is the town of Goole and there is the Isle of Axholme, which is very rural and looks much more to Doncaster. The name Goole does not adequately reflect the diverse communities that make up that constituency. In fact, Goole is probably the least representative of those four different places, because it is a distinct town in a pocket. Actually, I would

ask the Commission to consider some combination of Hunsley, Howdenshire, Axholme, would better reflect the nature of that constituency than simply Goole.

Finally, just acknowledging your points around splitting wards, and I understand why you have come to that conclusion within the framework you currently have. As a general point, not just about here, the wards that you are currently using as the building blocks in Hull, I understand that for the purposes of this review you have to use them and have to stick to them, I understand that, and I am not arguing for you not to, but there will be several places in the country where the wards that you are currently using as building blocks do no longer exist as entities by 2020. Hull is one of those places. Sheffield is one of those places. Whereas Hull is not at a point in its Local Government Boundary Review where that is something that could be considered, in places like Sheffield perhaps it is. I just think it would be something that could be usefully fed back, if not for this review but for future cycles, so for the 2025 review, that in those places where ward boundaries have already changed from the start of the review process it would seem more sensible to base a review on ward boundaries that had already been changed and, in the case of Sheffield, for example, elected to already, than ward boundaries that existed in 2015 and no longer do. I understand that is a constraint of the legislation upon you, but I thought it was useful feeding back.

In summary, fully accept the Boundary Commission proposals, I think they are the best possible fit for this area. Please keep Pickering, Boothferry and Derringham wards together as a block because they work together as a community. Please keep University, Bricknell, Newland, Beverley, Avenue wards together as a block, because they are the focal point of the city's university community and they need to be kept together.

Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Mr McCobb. Just before you step down, are there any points of clarification anybody would like to ask Mr McCobb, whilst he is here, based on what he has said? (No response)

Mr McCobb, thank you very much indeed.

Mr McCobb, you will forgive me for being pedantic, it is aimed at you but it is aimed at everybody else as well. Of course we are here to listen to your views on the initial proposals from the Boundary Commission and, whilst I accept the fact that you have taken the opportunity to speak about what others may think, the only purpose of just pointing this out is to remind everybody that the consultation period runs to 5 December

and, as Tim said earlier, we will put all of that on to the website. The point I am coming to - this is the important point here - when it goes on to the website you will then have a formal opportunity to comment on the counter-proposals of others. Whilst I have heard what you said today, I can actually give that little weight because I need to concentrate on what you have had to say about what the Commission had to say, which was very clear. I do not want you to think therefore, that you have put on record your views on the counter-proposals, because that is not what I am asked to do at the moment. That opportunity will come and I am sure you will want to say something about it in due course.

Those of you who were here a little earlier will remember I said I have got a sort of a batting order, if you will. The next one on my list is Mr David Nolan. Mr Nolan, are you available? Would you like to come up, Sir, to the desk. Mr Nolan, what I said to others before you came in was that I ask everybody to give their name and address before they start and then tell me what you would like me to hear.

MR NOLAN: I am David Nolan. I live at 73 Ferriby Road, Hessle, HU13 0HU. I am a local councillor on Hessle Town Council. I have lived in the area for 30 years in the Haltemprice area. I have been a councillor for 19 years, 16 of which as an East Riding councillor, representing the Willerby/Kirk Ella area. I have also stood for Parliament for all three of the whole constituencies, unsuccessfully but it does give me some sense of how people see the areas that they live in, having both lived in the area for so long and also represented parts of it.

I start by saying I fully support the Boundary Commission proposals as published. I think they are the best - and it is a compromise - they are the best compromise that can be reached, which retains some sense of people's identity in terms of where they live. I think the A164 is a natural western boundary to what I call the Hull Western Haltemprice constituency, that is a logical boundary, and obviously the River Humber is also a major natural barrier. I think it would have been folly, for example, to have tried to put bits of North Lincolnshire in with Hull. I think that would have been seen as very silly.

In terms of the Haltemprice area, I would say it is a collection of villages and people identify with the village they live in, so they live in Analby or they live in Kirk Ella. They do not necessarily say, "I live in Haltemprice". There is, nevertheless, the sense that Haltemprice as an idea has been around, certainly in 1936 there was Haltemprice Urban District Council. That was replaced in 1974 by Beverley Borough, which again had the whole of the Haltemprice area in that sense, including Beverley. Then there was a Beverley constituency, which again had the Haltemprice area. I think in a sense

what you are doing is you are putting Hessle back with the rest of Haltemprice by your proposals, and I think there is a lot of sense in that.

Can I say also that there is quite a degree of commonality between the people who live in Haltemprice and Hull. There is a local authority boundary, and it is quite a strongly emotive issue, particularly for residents in the Haltemprice villages. Nevertheless, on a parliamentary level it does not seem to exist as an issue. People see the parliamentary side as elections to the national Parliament and, in a way the local council side of things is more of an issue for them. Certainly residents in Hessle do not have an issue at being part of the Hull West constituency, as they already are, they would have an issue about being put into Hull City Council area, for reasons I will not go into.

The boundary is an issue and if this was seen as a step towards somehow putting Haltemprice into Hull City Council, there would be a lot of upset in the Haltemprice area.

There is quite a lot of linkage though in terms of the whole travel to work area, which takes in Haltemprice settlements. A lot of people travel for work into Hull, they also travel in for sport to see Hull City Football Club and the rugby, the theatres, and all the rest of it. There is a lot of linkage into Hull. When I was a cabinet member on the East Riding Council I was very clear from the figures that there are a lot of children who are coming out of Hull, going into East Riding schools and, indeed, East Riding sixth-formers going to Wyke College in Hull, so a lot of movement between the boundaries. I think, as the previous speaker said, some of the boundaries cross streets and there are some oddities there. The local authority boundaries I would not necessarily say have to be followed, I know you need to bear them in mind but in some parts of Haltemprice and Hull they do not make that much sense, so I would not nail myself to them.

I would agree about your proposals for Hull Central. I think putting the Bricknell ward area into the Hull Central seat makes sense, that area tends to identify towards the Avenues rather than, for example, out towards Cottingham.

I would support your proposals in terms of what you are doing with the Goole constituency but I would say I think you need to look at the name. I think if people in what is now Howdenshire and South Hunsley were told they were now in Goole, they would find that very difficult because it is so far away. Maybe a constituency name that is Goole, Howdenshire and Axholme, or whatever combination of those, would I think make it more acceptable.

In conclusion, I think there is a lot of commonsense in your proposals for the Hull Western Haltemprice area, I think it reflects the reality of people's local identity and I support those proposals.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Nolan, thank you very much. Does anybody want to clarify anything Mr Nolan has said? (No response)

Mr Nolan, thank you very much indeed.

You will hear me keep going back to the consultation period and when it ends and inviting you to comment because I want you to comment, that is why I keep doing that and I work on the basis if I say it enough, hopefully somebody will take note.

Both the previous speakers have spoken about the name of the, I dare not call it the Goole constituency now based on what has been said, but I think probably Goole, Howdenshire, Hunsley and Isle of Axholme does not quite roll off the tongue. It might be technically correct but I go back to the consultation period. It is no good asking me to pick it because, although my mother was from North Yorkshire, I do not know what the right answer is. I would invite you to let us know what you think the answer is and then we might get a better stab at it if Goole is not right. That is just a thought.

The next person on my list is Dr Tony McCobb. Tony, would you like to come forward please. As before, once you are settled down, name and address and off you go.

DR TONY McCOBB: My name is Tony McCobb. I live at 35 West Ella Way, Kirk Ella, HU10 7LN. Kirk Ella is in the Willerby and Kirk Ella ward of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, and it is also in the parliamentary constituency of Haltemprice and Howden. Kirk Ella is also one of the traditional Haltemprice settlements.

My comments relate almost exclusively to the proposed boundary changes north of the river and to the west of Hull.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is the River Humber?

DR McCOBB: Sort of. To the west of the River Humber. Okay?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Okay.

DR McCOBB: Okay?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Yes.

DR McCOBB: I find that the Boundary Commission's suggestion for the proposed constituency of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Haltemprice does actually suit the area. Once the criterion of electoral size is accepted it is inevitable that the two eastern most constituencies in the Humber sub-region, that is Beverley and Holderness and Yorkshire East, remain unchanged. The knock-on effect, of course, is that once the new constituencies of Hull East and Hull Central have been allocated the recommended electoral size, the present Hull Western Hessle is just too small. So, creating a third viable Hull constituency - I have put Hull in inverted commas - must obviously cross local authority borders.

Perhaps I should have said at the beginning that I was a councillor first of all on Beverley Borough Council for five years in the 1990s, and then for a further 12 years on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council and I represented Analby, Willerby and Kirk Ella at various stages due to boundary changes. For me, and for many of the residents in my former wards, it is very pleasing that the traditional Haltemprice settlements to the west of Hull are being reunited, that is Cottingham, Analby, Analby Common, Willerby, Kirk Ella and Hessle. For the last set of constituency elections Hessle has been separated off from the traditional Haltemprice Urban District Council, as it used to be, or Beverley Borough, as it was before then.

The four Hull City Council wards being proposed, that is Pickering, Derringham, Boothferry and St Andrews, are all adjacent to one or more of the Haltemprice settlements. They are also, if I remember rightly, continuous from north to south with each other. They are also generally on the same side of the railway lines, which have traditionally marked the boundaries between wards within Hull. Geographically, numerically, socially and in transport terms the proposed constituency makes sense. It unites main roads going in to Hull and out of Hull on the western part of Hull. It seems to me quite logical and the proposed name is also therefore very appropriate.

However, I am sorry to go on about Goole again ---

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Please do not apologise, the whole point of this is so that we get to know what you think.

DR TONY McCOBB: I did not want you to feel that you were being battered by anti-Goolites or something.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: No. I have been battered by much worse.

DR TONY McCOBB: I do feel that the name of Goole is utterly inappropriate for this constituency. The town of Goole may well be the kind of geographical fulcrum of the proposed constituency but there are at least three distinct areas - my son picked out four, I am just going to talk about three but there are four, or there are more. There are three distinct areas. One is the remaining wards in Haltemprice and Howden, which I will come to separately shortly, then there is the Goole area, with Goole North, Goole South and Ayrmin and the rest of it, then there is the Isle of Axholme. There are at least three separate distinct areas and the word Goole cannot do justice to the whole of the constituency. I think most voters in the remaining western areas of Haltemprice and Howden do not identify with the name Goole. For example, the electorate in Goole constitutes only some 18% of the proposed constituency total, so the name is hardly likely to be felt as representative or inclusive by the vast majority of the voters.

South Hunsley ward and Dale ward are orientated primarily towards Hull. They both have HU postcodes. The electorate of those two wards alone is 21,000, or 20,977 to be exact, whereas the electorate of Goole North and South is only 13,800. Even if you add the ward of Snaith, Ayrmin, Rawcliffe and Marshland, which is adjacent to Goole, the total still only comes to 21,367, which is only very slightly larger than just the two Haltemprice and Howden wards mentioned.

The third ward which I want to mention is Howdenshire. The Howdenshire ward includes large settlements like Holme-on-Spalding-moor, which shares a York postcode with the settlements up in the north of Howdenshire, and the north western boundary of that ward is actually adjacent to the City of York boundary. Then there is another group, including big settlements like Gilberdyke, Newport and other smaller settlements, which clearly have an HU postcode. They identify with Hull, perhaps not to the same degree as those in Dale and South Hunsley, but certainly they are on the railway line and they do look that way.

Then in the west of Howdenshire there are less populated settlements, which do have a Doncaster or Goole postcode and to that extent perhaps they do identify with Goole. If you put them together, South Hunsley, Dale and Howdenshire are the three biggest wards in the proposed Goole constituency. There is also Howden ward, which is a one member ward, a small one, which has a DN postcode as well, a Doncaster or Goole postcode, and again that has got some traditional links to Goole, but again it is not that strong as far as I could tell.

Arguably, voters' sense of identity with the proposal will be enhanced by adding something along the lines that has been suggested, like Hunsley to the name, we can

suggest further names at a later stage, that does not matter. Certainly one word cannot adequately cover all of those four, Haltemprice and Howden wards, there is no doubt about that whatsoever.

The proposed Goole constituency also includes the three Axholme wards from North Lincolnshire, which also have more voters than Goole. I do not know the area but it may well be worth enquiring how residents there feel about the name Goole.

I think if a reference to Hunsley can be added to the word Goole, and then adding Axholme is even easier, so you could have a three word title, which is not too long, which most people would be able to identify.

That is really all that I have to say. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Dr McCobb, thank you very much indeed. Does anybody want to clarify anything Dr McCobb has said? (No response) No, thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, the next speaker on my list is supposed to be at 12 noon Mr Kevin Morton, but, Mr Morton, I think you are here. Would you like to come up now, Sir?

Mr Morton, you have probably heard me say before to other speakers, when you are ready if you can give us your name and address and then tell us what you would like us to hear.

MR MORTON: I am Kevin Morton. I work for Diana Johnson MP and I am, in a very relaxed sort of way, a sort of envoy. We have a number of observations to make about the initial proposals. I think you have got the address.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: If you work for the MP that is fine.

MR MORTON: Yes. I have an address but we are a bit edgy. You are aware of the security issues that we have got at the moment.

I want to point out that the preparation for coming here was somewhat disrupted by the overhead cables at Doncaster, so bear with me a moment.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We are well aware of that, the whole of my team were delayed getting up last night. Take all the time you need. If we were chock-

a-block in here and I was having to push people on time that would be different, but we have plenty of time.

MR MORTON: I wish to point out that we have a few alternative suggestions to make but we will be developing those in a written submission in the next week or two.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Would you like a few moments to try and get your script up?

MR MORTON: It is up but in very long-hand terms because I have literally just got straight off the train.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Let us take five minutes because I need a leg stretch anyway. We will have a five minute break and then we will come back.

After a short break

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Morton then, when you are ready. Thank you very much.

MR MORTON: Okay. Having looked at the Commission's initial proposals, which we obviously welcome, and referencing that to the criteria for the review and not bringing in extraneous factors that we do not want to put on record about the individual voter registration and many issues like that, and the more local issues, there has been, for example, an ongoing issue in Hull about the tightness of the local authority boundary but, that is not within the remit for us to solve this within this review at this time.

Bringing it back to the Commission's long-established criteria about making the minimum changes necessary to achieve the required electoral size of each constituency within the parameters that are set out, we believe that there are a number of strengths to the Commission's initial proposals but there is more churning of wards than is actually necessary.

The strengths first of all, or potential strengths. The Commission did have in the review that took place in the 1990s, a realisation that even for 650 MPs Hull did not quite justify having three complete constituencies. In the review that took place in the 1990s, prior to the 1997 election, there was a crossing of the local authority boundary established through the suburban West Hull corridor creating Hull West and Hessle. The initial proposal was keep what I will as a shorthand call the single crossing intact in this review as well. Fair enough, that is consistent with the minimum change criteria.

It has a number of other strengths as well, historical ones and community ones, it keeps the identity of the East Hull constituency, which has existed since about 1885, which is

a positive. It maintains the unity of the North Hull Estate in the constituency with which I am most familiar, which in various other reviews at different times there have been proposals that split that, which just did not work. This covers the Orchard Park and the University ward area.

You are probably going with the grain of the response you are likely to receive from many people, not all, in the Cottingham area. Because of the tight boundaries of Hull in the Bricknell and Orchard Park area, the two wards of Cottingham are actually quite close to parts of Hull North. There is an irony that the halls of residence of the university are actually, or many of them, the main one, is actually in Cottingham at the moment, so there is a link between the areas. However, when opinion has been tested in the past there has been a resistance to people in the Cottingham area of having a linkage some with Hull generally but certainly with the part of Hull, which as the crow flies, they are nearest, i.e. the Orchard Park and the North Hull Estate. That has come out in previous reviews. Obviously you will be doing the review again and we will see what opinion is like then, but it is fair to acknowledge that.

Of course, there is an argument for linking parts of Hull North with Cottingham, which was rejected in the past. To embrace that would be a second crossing and would arguably be out of line with the minimum change criteria. There are those, to recap the strengths as we see them, other people have highlighted more.

The weaknesses: the most glaring weakness that we can see in the initial proposals from the Commission, concern the moving away of the use of the River Hull as a boundary within Hull. The Commission is arguing because of one new river crossing in the City Centre this somehow overcomes physically the divide. That is contentious to say the least. I do not think there has been in the City Centre any greater feeling of oneness between the East and West banks of the River Hull in the city, than there was, say, ten years ago. The important thing to understand about the River Hull boundary is that in Hull people regard themselves as either West Hull or East Hull, which sometimes causes an element of confusion in North Hull because I am familiar with a constituency that spans both sides of the river, although we would argue that as the river flows away from tributary with the Humber it becomes thinner and arguably less important. However, whatever the people's views about the physical geographical boundary of the River Hull and whether it should be used, the fact is it is the East/West divide in Hull is a cultural one, it is expressed by the rugby league teams, Hull FC and Hull Kingston Rovers. It is deeply ingrained. My familiarity with Hull does not go back as far as many people, including quite a few in this room, but it is deeply ingrained in the city. Wherever you go people regard themselves as East Hull and West Hull. They are united by the football team, which spans both. It is a cultural divide, which we would argue is perhaps at least, if not more than, a consideration as the physical geography. Of course, we regard the physical geography as not having changed that much anyway.

By not using the River Hull in the City Centre, where we think it is most significant as a boundary, and including in the proposed Hull Central seat, the Drypool and Southcoates West, we think there is the most glaring weakness in the initial proposals. Although you are going to be taking into account the local authority wards as they existed on 7 May 2015, it is worth having the background knowledge that the local authority is currently reviewing that. I know that arguably the Southcoates East/Southcoates West boundary - it might not even be a ward boundary under some of the proposals that are being considered - is a very weak boundary for a constituency as we go down a fairly minor road. I would argue that in the centre of Hull, you have just got to look at Google Earth from above and any map that shows the actual housing, it is quite a densely populated area and in that sense by having weak boundaries in areas like that you do divide communities in a way that moves away from the criteria. Southcoates West and Drypool have long been very much at the heart of the East Hull community. I think there is a problem, in a sense, dragging the west of the river into another constituency, which is predominantly west of the River Hull. I think that is the main weakness in what the Commission is proposing initially.

I do argue that although it is a cultural boundary, the River Hull as it becomes thinner and travels up out of the City Centre and past Beverley Ward and between Beverley and Kings Park Ward, although it is a factor as rivers thin they do become less significant and there has been long-established road crossings in the north of the city in the past.

The counter-proposal that we would suggest would keep Drypool and Southcoates West in an East Hull seat where they have mostly been for many decades. Essentially, all you need to do to give the Hull East constituency the required number of electors is take Bransholme East and add it to it. Going across the River Hull in the north of the city is consistent, we would argue, with the minimum change criteria. Dividing also the Bransholme area, there is one observation about that, that you can look at Google Earth and see, whatever the socioeconomic factors you have, the area of Bransholme is more suburban, as it were, in its density, it is a number of clusters of housing developments. As such, there are distinct areas within it, like Bransholme North, which basically constitutes the Bransholme East area. Adding more of a suburban density of population in Bransholme, it does give planners and people drawing boundaries for the local authorities and parliamentary constituents is a certain flexibility in the sense that it is criss-crossed by a number of major roads and waterways, which give you a number of different options.

I would also point out that the area known as Bransholme already lies in two parliamentary constituencies, Hull East and Hull North. So, again you are not breaching any minimum change criteria there. There is quite a jagged local authority boundary going along the north of Sutton ward and with Kings Park, then Bransholme West and Bransholme East, which contains areas of housing, which is considered Bransholme. That is no great change.

By topping up the East Hull seat by simply adding Bransholme East, all we would then suggest is that you can give the seat, which is predominantly Hull North as at present, the required number of electors by going through Bricknell and adding the Derringham and Boothferry areas to it. Again, there are a number of ways, there are railway lines and it is arguably a fairly suburban density in some areas. You can, depending on what major road or railway line, or some of them from the Beeching era, you do have a certain flexibility in the way you cut the boundaries there in those areas. When you have the flexibility and can make the minimum change necessary, go for it in our view.

In terms of the existing Hull North seat, by taking off Bransholme East but adding Derringham and Boothferry you would get the required numbers. I would also point out that the size of the seat, because of the restoration of people who went missing and the changes to voter registration, some of them started coming back, albeit after your freeze date, just before the EU referendum. Of course, that constituency will also continue to have Kings Park in it, which has got continuing housing development, and I suspect that by the time such a seat would be constituted it would be very much bang on the bull's eye of the required range.

So the only change I would consider in terms of the Hull North area on top of that would be basically the name. It would be a little harder to carry on calling it Hull North, which has existed over 66 years, apart from a brief break in the 1970s when the previous Hull Central constituency lived for a decade, that was quickly got rid of before the 1983 general election. Hull North has existed continually since I think 1950, as I say, apart from the 1970s. What we would suggest, what we are proposing would move the footprint of Hull North in a slightly more westerly direction in terms of the weighting of where it lies, we would suggest calling it Hull North West, which was the constituency name that existed from 1918 until 1950, which was the immediate predecessor of Hull North, that we have had for most of the time in more recent years.

As I say, you might well get submissions asking for a second crossing and there will be an interesting debate about that, but if you are going with your proposal of maintaining the single crossing between the two local authority areas, and if you are going to continue doing it through the Hull West corridor that was pioneered in the Hull Western Hessle seat prior to 1997, as I say the proposal that we put forward would simply suggest marrying the Cottingham wards with some of the East Riding wards that are proposed for that constituency, and the sort of suburban corridor into Hull through the west.

By maintaining the River Hull boundary, the West Hull and Haltemprice seat that we are suggesting would continue to have the waterfront with the Humber in that seat, as it does at the moment, minimum change again, but we would stop it at the river. We would also respect the River Hull boundary and Drypool would remain, the East Hull seat would also maintain its existing waterfront stretch as well.

As I say, we will be writing up the proposals and submitting them in the next couple of weeks, but that is essentially where we are coming from, recognising the strengths and the weaknesses of the initial proposals.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Does anybody wish to ask for any clarification of what Mr Morton has suggested to us today? Can I have a microphone to the back? Although I can see you, the camera cannot so if you can give us your name and ask your clarification, please.

MR DAVID McCOBB: Dave McCobb. Just a point I was not quite clear about in what you said, Kevin. Are you arguing that Cottingham should or should not be put with Hull North? I am sorry, I did not quite follow you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are we saying that Cottingham should or should not be put with Hull North?

MR MORTON: It is not in the proposal that we have put, but that does have its strengths. There are links between the Cottingham area and Hull which are going to have to be exploited to meet the necessary criteria. It is whether you do that by having a second crossing and developing a crossing with the existing Hull North area, linking it with basically Orchard Park and Bricknell if you look at the way the roads go, or funnel it down south and westwards and picking up the Hull West corridor. There are linkages between Cottingham and Hull North, for example the University one, the halls of residence are in Cottingham, which is significant. Doing that, all that we are pointing out is a very technocratic point and by establishing a second crossing you are perhaps arguably moving away from the minimum change criteria, when you have achieved the numbers by not doing that. It might well be that some people will suggest that and it is certainly worth considering. There is this wider debate about how tight the boundaries are in Hull, which has social and economic effects. You might come to the conclusion, having considered those issues, that it is not within your remit to solve that problem.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Any other points of clarification? (No response) Mr Morton, thank you very much indeed.

Ladies and gentlemen, some of you will recall that I said earlier on today that I have a list of people scheduled to come and speak to us. The next speaker is scheduled for 1 pm, which is a little over an hour away. Of course, anybody can speak at these hearings, and I know there are some people in the room who said they just want to come and observe, and that is absolutely fine, but if anybody did want to come and speak I would just put that invitation out to you now. (No response)

Nobody is rushing forward. I do not propose to ask you to sit here until the next speaker is due at 1 pm. I will adjourn for an hour until 12.50 pm. Why 12.50 pm? Because if

somebody turns up in the meantime we can hear them before the next speaker that is due at 1 pm. Then after the 1 pm speaker I have a considerable gap for the afternoon but I will explain how we are going to manage that just before lunch.

We are going to adjourn now for just an hour until ten to one. Thank you very much.

Time noted: 11.50

After a short break

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are we back on again? Entirely my fault, forgive me for that. I did want to say this to everybody else in the room as well because I have said it elsewhere at Leeds and Sheffield and Northallerton as well.

Typically the first morning is reasonably well attended, people have come along to say what they say and then we get some observers, then you go on to do other things that you need to do. I want to just make this important point if you are going to disappear. This consultation period is open until 5 December, I think I said that a little bit earlier on, so everything that has been said today will end up as a verbatim transcript on the BC website, the Boundary Commission website, in the spring, as Tim mentioned earlier on, and there will be that opportunity to comment on counter-proposals.

Notwithstanding that people have spoken today, I really do commend the Boundary Commission's guidance to you. The reason for that is it tells you what Collette Rawnsley and I can take account of when we are having a think about boundaries. A number of you have recognised that the electoral quota number is fixed. Please do not - how can I put this - waste my time and yours - that might be a bit strong but you know what I mean - telling me that it is the wrong number. It might be, but I cannot do anything about it, so leave any arguments around that. It may be that we have not got all the appropriate voters registered in Humberside that you would want to be registered. Well, that might be the case as well but I cannot do anything about that either.

Look also at what we can do things with. We have said we have tried to stop cutting across wards; that is our starting point. Unlike the electoral quota, which cannot be changed, the wards bit can, given certain levels of evidence. All of the material that is in here that tells you what we can and what we cannot do, community ties are very, very important. Collette and I will consider everything that comes into the website right up to 5 December, notwithstanding anything that has been said today. I cannot commend this high enough to you.

I am sorry for not putting it on the record before I stood down a moment ago. I really am going to stand down for an hour now. Thank you very much.

After a short break

Time noted: 12.55 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Welcome back to Day One of the hearing in Hull. I adjourned a little over an hour ago and said we would come back at 12.50 pm. Our next scheduled speaker was due at 1.00 pm. It is 12.55 pm now, nobody else has been in in the meantime so we will move back on to the list. The next speaker I have on my schedule is Mr Mark Crane. Mr Crane, would you like to come up to the desk, please?

I know you were not here earlier on, so just to reiterate what I said to everybody else earlier on, if you can give your name and address and then tell us what it is you would like us to hear. Thank you very much.

MR CRANE: Thank you. My name is Mark Crane. My address is 7 Templar Way, Brayton, Selby, North Yorkshire. I am here both in the capacity as a private individual but, perhaps more importantly, as leader of Selby District Council. The area I would like to speak about, you will not be surprised to learn, is about Selby itself - that is the district not the town.

I have seen the proposals and read through them and, clearly my mind was focused on the impact on Selby district. The impact on Selby district I have concern with is taking some of the southern end of Selby district potentially out of Selby and Ainsty constituency and into the Pontefract constituency.

My concern is that we are breaking up North Yorkshire. My concern is that people who are part of Selby district and then part of North Yorkshire will find they have a different MP to the rest of us. We are fortunate I accept, at the moment, in that the whole of the district is represented by one MP, that makes life easier for myself and whoever else is on the Council, whoever else may be leader of the Council in the future. Previously that was a Labour MP and currently it is a Conservative MP. I represent the Conservative Party, I am happy to say that to avoid doubt. In both cases I have managed to work very well with John Grogan and currently with Nigel Adams. All the issues in my district directly affect the one MP. If we had a change, as the one suggested now, then clearly we would be in two separate constituencies and issues may no longer just relate to the one MP. I know you will tell me that is not insurmountable and I will not be the only council leader in the country in that position, but I just want to make it clear, life is easier by just having the one MP to go to whatever the issue is in the district, and also easier by having just the one MP coming and speaking to me, whatever the issue is in the district.

At the moment in the constituency we do have part of Harrogate district in, which is the Ainsty part of Selby and Ainsty. That in itself causes us some issues, not from a district

council point of view, but certainly from a vote counting point of view. You will be aware that the proliferation of postal votes in recent years has made it more difficult to count at parliamentary level. If we are going to have part of Harrogate in and part of Selby out we will be servicing Pontefract, so that is Wakefield Council, and also in discussions with Harrogate Council for people who live in Harrogate but vote in Selby. Both of those make the counting process slower, make it more difficult for us to organise officers and check out signatures, et cetera, and I am sure these are issues you will hear not just in Yorkshire and Humber but elsewhere. It makes life more difficult for us, takes us longer to count.

Those things, to my mind mean that in an ideal world we would have a situation where the whole of Selby district was in the one constituency area and, indeed, that is happening at the moment and I hope that the Commission will consider whether or not that could continue to happen in the future.

My first point is probably the stronger one. I feel that it is far easier for representation to have everybody who lives in the district in the one constituency. I also fear in the longer term that having some people outside of the constituency would make the break-up of Selby district a greater possibility, which I personally think would be a shame, and also importantly, the break-up of North Yorkshire County Council, which again would be a shame.

I repeat, I understand the Commission did not have a problem with the number of people living in North Yorkshire and the MPs, but this move was in order to satisfy issues in West Yorkshire and not in North Yorkshire.

Thank you. I will draw breath now.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Crane, thank you very much indeed. Does anybody want to ask any matters of clarification of Mr Crane? (No response)

First of all, an apology from me, it was rude not to introduce myself before you started so let me correct that. My name is John Feavours. I am an Assistant Commissioner for the Boundary Commission for England and, it is my responsibility to Chair proceedings in Leeds, Sheffield, Northallerton and here today. Also, alongside my fellow Assistant Commissioner, Collette Rawnsley, it is our responsibility to consider all of the matters that are put to us orally at those hearings and in addition, any matters that are put to us through the Commission's website, up until the end of the consultation period, which is 5 December. Mr Crane, you are quite right, some of the matters that you have pointed us towards have been raised elsewhere, you and I would expect that to be the case. Collette and I have already begun to look at some of the responses and obviously we will do our best to try and help meet the concerns that people are putting forward.

The only thing that I would just reiterate for you to think about when you go away is I just commend this document to you, which is the guidelines, it is all on-line, the guidelines that the Boundary Commission has put forward, not least because, in simple terms, it sets out the “must” and the “may”. The “must” is the electoral quota, you have understood that and I get that from what you have said, and the “may” talks about what else we might have consideration to in terms of coming up with outstanding proposals. I have said this to audiences before, it is not just to you. Whilst Collette and I fully understand the bit about “please do not do that” or “ please do this” we have to consider what the knock-on effect is. The only point I am reiterating to you now is that if there is something you would like us to consider and you can help us understand a potential solution further out, that is helpful because we are not – I say we are not of Yorkshire, actually she is and my mother is. The point is, you know better than we do, particularly in relation to Selby in your case. If you want us to modify what those initial proposals are, and you have an eye to what we might do as well to make the numbers work, because the electoral quota bit I cannot do anything about, please use the time between now and 5 December to have a think about that, and let us have those thoughts because we will want to see what local people have said to us as to how we might manage it.

Other than that, thank you very much indeed.

MR CRANE: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Gentlemen, it is now 1.00 pm and I would ordinarily think about lunch at some stage in the near future. We have nobody else booked in a slot until 5.00 pm this afternoon. At previous hearings I have been very clear that I will not adjourn for more than an hour because if somebody turns up and wants to speak I think it is not unreasonable to ask them to wait for a short time but it is unreasonable to ask them to wait for a much longer time and I have arbitrarily come to an hour as a measure of that. Equally, I do not want to sit here unproductive and my staff being unproductive all afternoon if nobody is going to come. I am going to invent a new term now, I am going to have a soft adjournment, and I am now going to define what that means. Formally, I am not coming back until 4.50 pm, because the next speaker is scheduled at 5.00 pm. However, if somebody comes in in the meantime there will be a member of staff here all afternoon and, if that person wishes to speak I do not think it is fair to ask them to wait until 5.00 pm, particularly if they come in within the next hour or so. If that is the case I will hear them but I will give you all 15 minutes notice, so that if you are in the lobby or if you have popped into town, you will get 15 minutes to come back and I undertake not to start again and hear any other matters without giving you that notice. I am doing that because I know I certainly have the three major parties, Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrats, here as observers and I do not want to hear anything without giving you the chance to come back and hear it yourselves. It is a matter for you, but if you give us your mobile telephone numbers

before you step out for lunch, I undertake to give you a call if anybody comes along on spec this afternoon. Otherwise, I shall be back at 4.50 pm. Thank you very much.

Time noted: 1.00 pm

After the luncheon adjournment

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon and welcome back to the first day of our public hearing in Hull in relation to the Boundary Commission's initial proposals for the Yorkshire and the Humber Region. I adjourned just after 1.00 pm and said we would not come back until 5.00 pm unless somebody came along and somebody has come along. You are very welcome, Mr Robinson.

My name is John Feavoyour. I am an Assistant Commissioner for the Boundary Commission and it is my responsibility to Chair the hearings in relation to this region, the Yorkshire and the Humber region. I was in Leeds a couple of weeks ago, Sheffield and Northallerton last week, the Humber this week. It is also my responsibility, together with my colleague, Assistant Commissioner Collette Rawnsley, to consider all of the oral representations and all of the written representations to decide whether or not to make representations to the Boundary Commission itself as to whether the initial proposals should stay, should be amended and, if so, to what extent. Because we are capturing all of that it will all end up on the Boundary Commission's website in the spring next year. We are taking a recording of today's proceedings, which will be converted into a verbatim transcript in due course so anybody else can comment on what it is you have got to say, for example. As a consequence of that, I would like you to come to the front if you would please, take a seat, give us your name and address and then tell us what it is you would like us to hear.

CLLR ROBINSON: My name is Cllr John Robinson, I am a local authority councillor for Hull City Council and I live in the city at 92 Park Avenue, Hull, which is actually in Avenue ward and it is also the ward I represent.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to comment on the proposals. There are two issues I want to cover, which are really actually to support the proposals, two particular aspects of the proposals as they stand, and they refer to two of the proposed new constituencies, that is the Kingston-Upon-Hull Central constituency and Kingston-Upon-Hull West and Haltemprice. They are observations based on how I feel personally about the proposals. I will leave the statistics to other people.

In the new proposed Central constituency, it is my understanding that amongst other wards, Avenue ward, Bricknell and Newland form part of that constituency. I actually think that makes a lot of sense from one particular aspect of the population, which is to do with the university population. I speak as someone who actually came to the city 30 years ago as a student and have always lived in that area and, for the time that I have

been a councillor, I actually represented part of that area, Avenue ward. I think, although students do live elsewhere, who come to the university, those wards in particular have a large concentration of students. That in itself is not a reason on its own that they should be part of one constituency, but I think it makes sense in terms of the relations between students and the local population and how they interact with the city that actually you have got a proposed new constituency where I would think that a very large number of the students at Hull University are actually in one area. There are actually of course, halls of residence up at Cottingham, although, interestingly, you may be aware that Hull University has got very, very serious proposals to build new halls of residence actually on the Cottingham Road Campus, which would reaffirm this idea that the student area in Hull is actually in the proposed new constituency. As I said, looking at the map obviously University ward, in a sense the university is already in that ward but, Bricknell, Newland and Avenue, I think it makes a lot of sense that they would actually be part of this new constituency. That deals with the Kingston-Upon-Hull Central aspect.

I would like to make an observation on the West and Haltemprice proposed new constituency. This is very much to do with personal experience and the fact that, as I have said, I have lived in the area for 30 years. I came to the city as a student and was a student at the University, but actually lived in Cottingham for three years. Since that time, 1986 to 1989 and afterwards I have worked in the Cottingham area, I have large numbers of friends who still live in Cottingham and, indeed, I have friends who live in some of the other villages. My whole experience over 30 years is that although the council boundary is in some ways is quite a contentious topic and I understand that people in the villages, as we refer to them, like Cottingham and Kirk Ella, feel very strongly that they do not want to be part of the City Council - I totally respect their views if that is how they feel about it - in terms of parliamentary representation where a Member of Parliament looks to represent a particular area, it does actually seem to make sense. Anecdotally, I have spoken to friends of mine who, although they would maintain that they want to stay separate from Hull City Council, do not really have an issue in terms of parliamentary representation. It is very difficult for anybody to draw up boundaries that will satisfy everybody. When I look at the map and the proposals as they stand at the moment, including specifically Cottingham, which I know very well, and the other villages to a lesser extent, it does make sense that they are in this Hull Central and Haltemprice area.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is Hull West.

CLLR ROBINSON: Hull West and Haltemprice. I think it makes sense in terms of parliamentary representation. The council boundaries are another discussion for another day.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Robinson, thank you very much indeed. Anything you need to clarify from that? (No response) Thank you very much.

The only other thing to mention before you move on, one of the other things I did do was I said to observers who were here at lunchtime, if I get anybody else come in I will ring you and give you the chance to come back. In fact, we have had one of the observers come back in as a result of that and the other one chose not to return. I just need to put that on the record.

I will now adjourn until 4.50 pm. Thank you very much.

Time noted: 4.20 pm

After a short break

Time noted: 4.55 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Hello and welcome back to the first day's hearing in Hull of the Boundary Commission's hearings into the initial proposals for the Yorkshire and the Humber region. We adjourned at about 4.20 pm and I said I would not start again until 4.50 pm. It is 4.55 pm now and our next speaker has arrived.

My name is John Feavoyour. I am an Assistant Commissioner with the Boundary Commission for England. It is my responsibility to Chair the hearings in relation to the Yorkshire and the Humber region, both at Leeds, Sheffield, Northallerton and here today in Hull and tomorrow in Hull. Alongside my fellow Assistant Commissioner Collette Rawnsley, it is our responsibility to consider all of the representations, whether they are oral ones to the hearings or written ones through the Boundary Commission's website, and to decide whether to go to the Commission itself and suggest changes to the initial proposals and, if so, what changes they ought to be.

In the spring of next year all of the representations that are made to us will be published on the Commission's website, that is why we are recording what is going on here today, and everybody who speaks to us will be asked to give their name and address and then tell us what it is they want they are going to do.

If you would like to come up? As I said before, it is name, address and then off you go.

MS THOMAS: My name is Claire Thomas. I live at 8 Lynwood Grove, Goddard Avenue in Hull and I have come today to support the recommendations, thinking particularly about the three constituencies that include Hull and partly for the community, which I represent, which is Pickering ward,. I am a councillor in Pickering ward in Hull.

I think probably most people would say that in an ideal world they might not want to have any constituencies crossing the border of Hull, but in reality obviously the criteria

mean they have to cross somewhere. I think that if they need to cross somewhere it is preferable for that to be in one place only and, seeing as there is a precedent for already crossing in Hull West and Hessle, with Hessle being outside the border, that it makes sense to be in the Hull West and Haltemprice constituency that is proposed.

I also think that there are two groupings of wards that make sense that they need to stay together, that is the Boothferry, Pickering and Derringham wards in Hull and Haltemprice villages in the East Riding.

In terms of those Hull wards that I think represent a community that need to stay together, Pickering, Boothferry and Derringham naturally go together, partly because they already sit together as West area in the council structures, so the Area Committee that looks at local issues is made up of Pickering, Boothferry and Derringham wards, so they already have a natural relationship to each other. Also there are lots of links in terms of community groups so, for example, Analby Park Library, which is run by a voluntary group, is on the border between Pickering and Boothferry and people are part of that community group from both of those wards. Peter Pan Park is also on the border of the two and the Friends Group that is active in the park has traditionally always had people from both wards represented on the committee and doing some of the work. Pickering Park is used by communities across the area, and places like Sirius Academy, which is on the border, it is in Pickering ward but really close to the border of Boothferry ward so, spans both communities.

I also think there is a strong identity along Hessle Road, which incorporates both St Andrews and Pickering wards and so that makes some logical sense as well.

Thinking about the wider communities, thinking about Hessle and Analby and Cottingham; if I think about the ward I represent in Pickering ward, all along the edge of that there are people, for example, on Boothferry Estate, there will be people who live on Boothferry Estate, who will go to the shops in Hessle, who will go to the local doctors in Hessle and go to the pub there as well and in places like Summergroves as well. People that live in West Hull use a lot of the facilities in Hessle, on the south side of my ward, and if you go to the north side, so the north part of Boothferry Estate, they will shop in Analby. St Thomas Moore School is technically in the East Riding but you can only drive to it by driving through Hull. What I call Elgar Road Playing Fields some people call St Thomas Moore Playing Fields, again half of it is in Hull, half of it is in the East Riding, but it is used as one big playing field.

There are different communities. There are places where people who live in West Hull will naturally go over the border into the East Riding for different community activities and shopping, and all that sort of thing.

There is also a link to the business community. Priory Park, which is along by the A63, there is a Priory Park East and a Priory Park West, which again makes sense to be one

business community, but at the moment they are split between two different local authorities. Sainsbury's, for example, is split in half, it is half in our ward and half in the East Riding.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are the prices the same both sides?

MS THOMAS: I hope so! I think a really good example is Analby Park Library where a couple of years back there was a really big campaign about it and the residents in Analby and residents in Hull, Boothferry and Pickering wards all joined together to make that library work for the local community.

I think another really good example is, we have got Analby Park Methodist Church, which is in Tranby ward in the East Riding and Analby Park Library, which is in Boothferry ward in Hull, but they are still called the same thing because it is Analby Park area and it broadly serves the same communities.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Can I just check if I have got this right; on my map I have got Analby Park in Pickering.

MS THOMAS: Yes, there is Analby Park Playing Fields, which I would call Costello Playing Fields because it has got Costello Stadium in it, that is technically in Pickering ward, but the houses just to the north of it called Southern Drive, that is in Boothferry ward, and Analby Park Library is just north of Southern Drive houses, in a little green space in the centre, and that is in Boothferry ward.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Is that near to the church?

MS THOMAS: The church is just on the opposite side of the road in Tranby in East Riding. It is really complicated.

I think the other complicated thing is that there are lots of roads that are split in half. For example, in Pickering ward we have got Rokeby Park, which is a big circular road in the northern part of Pickering ward, three-quarters of the circle is in Hull and the final little quarter of the circle is in the East Riding. Obviously they are all one community, the neighbours do talk to each other, I promise. There are some community links between all of those areas. There are lots of other examples of split roads. Delius Close, for example, has got Hull owned council houses on it, it is technically in Tranby ward, you can only drive to it if you drive through Hull, you cannot drive to it if you drive through the East Riding. From the Hessle point of view there is a stretch of houses on Hessle Road in Hull that have Hessle postcodes, which links on to Hull Road in Hessle. People who live there see themselves as living in Hessle and shop in Hessle, because that is what makes sense for them.

That is from the Hull West and Haltemprice constituency point of view. I think there are some clear community links across the boundary but also really clear between Pickering, Boothferry and Derringham and really clear for the Haltemprice villages to stay together.

On a wider Hull basis, I do think that the Bricknell, Newland, Avenue, University and Beverley wards, are a very clear university community. That is the area that I actually live in, I live in Newland ward, and there is a really strong university community, which spans all of those wards and I think it is important that they stay together.

On the East Hull proposals, I do think it is important that as much as possible of the East Hull constituency stays east of the river because obviously, as I am sure you will have heard many times today, there is a clear east/west divide split by the river in Hull.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much, Ms Thomas. Has anybody got any questions of clarification of anything that has been said? For the record, if you can say what your name is and then ask the point of clarification please.

MR MORTON: Kevin Morton, I am here from the office of Diana Johnson MP. Just one small clarification, and it is not in any way a hostile question because I was wrestling with the same problems myself.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: If it was a hostile question I would not be allowing it.

MR MORTON: Well, there are hostile questions and there is that which is perceived as hostile. I was wrestling with the same issues east of the river when I was staring at this for hours, like any geek would, and in particular the problem with Southcoates West and Myton, which is just a real weak point of the existing proposals.

Do you accept that where we may have to, all of us have to make compromises if you keep those two wards within Hull East, it is overwhelmingly for the same community ties reasons that we have been articulating in other points across West Hull and into the East Riding, it does mean that we perhaps may have to make compromises, such as us in Hull North the way we split Bransholme and it does then go anti-clockwise into the Derringham and Boothferry areas as well. I think you are right that the West Hull corridor up to the River Hull is salvageable in terms of Pickering and St Andrews up to Hessle. Do you accept somewhere along the line, in order to achieve the fundamental electorate numbers, we are probably going to have to compromise a little bit about how far we push the community ties issues?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Morton, actually that is a matter for me, not a matter for Ms Thomas. Whether we accept it or not is a responsibility that falls to me and Collette Rawnsley. The purpose of Ms Thomas here is to put forward what her

proposals are. I will come back and make another comment on that in just a moment. Is there anything else about clarification? (No response) Ms Thomas, thank you very much indeed.

MS THOMAS: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: For those of you who were here a little bit earlier on, you will know that I am running to a list of people who have asked to come and speak and I have nobody else on my list now until 6.20 pm, unless anybody who just walked in the room wants to speak. I have got a no. Thank you very much.

Let me finish by saying this then, before I adjourn until the next speaker is listed. There is a guide to the 2018 Review, and it is called the 2018 Review because the Boundary Commission has to report to Parliament in September 2018, so we need to go back from that to get to where we are now to give us time to work our way through and get stuff done for that. The reason I commend this to you is because it contains the rules, it contains the things that I cannot do anything about and it contains the things I can do something about, and when I say "I", I mean myself and Collette Rawnsley, who are responsible for having a look at this. The thing we cannot do anything about is the electoral quota - I think most people have got that by now - there is a number that is fixed, please do not ask me to change that because I cannot. There are other things as to how that number was got to in the first place. There have been numerous comments made to us so far, which may or may not be right, but again I cannot do anything about it, so it is what it is.

Things I can do things about are also set out here in the rules: we may take account of existing wards; we may take account of community ties and the like. Those are the sort of things that I am looking to try and hear about.

Mr Morton, to come on to your point in particular, because it is an important point, it just was not for that speaker to answer the point. The reason we are recording all of this evidence is because, once it is transcribed and once the whole country has been transcribed and all of the representations have been received up until 5 December, and there is an amount of that we are into the thousands already, so you will forgive the team if it takes them more than a day or two to put that together, which is why we say next spring, keep an eye out for it with the website, we will put all of that online. That is the point where you then have four weeks if you wish to make any observations on the counter-proposals or observations on anything else that has been said, particularly - a point for you Mr Morton I think, entirely relevant to your question - that is the time to submit that in writing and then Collette and I will know what it is that you are asking us to think about before we come up with any revised proposals. So 5 December, I commend that to you.

With that, we will adjourn for an hour until 6.15 pm.

Time noted 5.15 pm

After a short break

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Welcome back to Day One of our hearing here in Hull, of the Boundary Commission's hearings in relation to the initial proposals for the Yorkshire and the Humber region. My name is John Feavyour. I am an Assistant Commissioner for the Boundary Commission, and it is my responsibility to Chair the hearings in relation to representations for the region. I was in Leeds a couple of weeks ago, Sheffield and Northallerton last week and then Hull today. Along with my colleague, Assistant Commissioner Collette Rawnsley, it is our responsibility to consider all of the representations made for the Yorkshire and the Humber region, both the oral representations at the hearings and the written representations, and then decide what needs to be said to the Commission itself as to whether those initial proposals stand, need changing and, if so, to what extent. That is our responsibility. I will say a little bit more about that before we wind up this evening.

With that, and because everything needs to be published in due course on the website, proceedings here are being recorded today - you may have seen the camera as you came in. Therefore, when I call you forward to give your commentary I would be grateful if you give your name and address before you say what it is that you would like me to hear.

I have got a batting order, if you will, there is nothing in the order it is just how people were booked in when they booked on to the system. The next one on my list is Mr John Fareham. Mr Fareham, would you like to come up please. As I say, name and address and then tell me what you would like me to hear.

MR FAREHAM: (Conservative and Unionist Party) Thank you, Assistant Commissioner. John Fareham, 7 Earl Street, Hull, HU5 3AH. I do not want to do a Gilderoy Lockhart and give a long list of my community titles, I will settle for being a councillor and a Conservative group leader - yes, we do actually have one - on Hull City Council.

I am here in particular to support the proposals, you will not be surprised to know, the counter-proposals of the Conservative and Unionist Party, for which I am directed here to speak as I am one of the Association Officers as well.

We are particularly exercised by the proposals for Kingston-Upon-Hull West and Haltemprice. These proposals, it seems to us, are very long headed. They seem to reflect the Boundary Commission's original proposals of 2013 before they were shelved. It is hardly for me to second guess what excellent reasons the Boundary Commission had in their head at 2013, but it seems to us here on the ground, looking particularly at

Her Majesty's official opposition's counter-proposals as well as ours, there is a broad consensus of agreement around Hull West and Haltemprice, apart from four wards. Those four wards, interestingly enough, are Cottingham North, South and Bricknell and Derringham. I think it is very sensible that both political parties see them as a block; they are united by a number of factors.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Can I just check those four wards; Cottingham North, Cottingham South ---

MR FAREHAM: Bricknell and Derringham.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

MR FAREHAM: Those four wards have much in common in terms of community. Indeed, I represent the Bricknell wards. Nobody can accuse me of political engineering, the majority at the moment stands at seven, so I do not think anybody can accuse us of that. The community with Derringham is very close, separated only by railway line, but united by the fact that in the Hull City Council Transport Plan that is currently alive we are trying to campaign to get a rail halt. This rail halt is vital because the people of Bricknell and Derringham live nearer Cottingham than they actually do Hull City Centre. If you actually wish to get your services, like libraries and convenience shopping, it is actually quicker to go to Cottingham, which incidentally would be the next stop on the railway line as well.

Secondly, we support the block of four being treated as one and going into West and Haltemprice because it reduces the number of constituency MPs forced to deal with two councils. The joys of dealing with East Riding for a Hull MP may be many and varied but at the moment the experience is only in West Hull and any other proposals that would suggest that at least two MPs would have to deal with two council leaders do not seem to me to reflect the interests of the community particularly well.,

Thirdly, our estate, as I said, is united with Boothferry Estate in terms of architecture and social cohesion, but it is also important to realise that we contain Wyke Sixth Form College. Wyke Sixth Form College largely serves the children of the East Riding and most of the people who attend there are actually drawn from the East Riding, which is one of the reasons why they support our rail halt. This demonstrates a close tie with Cottingham including, I am amused to say, the amount of people from Hull who actually send their children to Cottingham schools, particularly if you happen to live in Bricknell ward or the Avenues.

Next, the key point I think that unites much of Hull is flooding. This is something that really brings together communities and is a very important point. The East Riding usually floods and the water comes running into Hull and it would seem to me that taking this block of four - the two Cottingham seats, Derringham and Bricknell as one -

would assist in terms of dealing with the inevitable next increase in flooding, which would reflect community interest, and by giving us just one MP to speak on the topic rather than two would give a clear political lead, which clearly would be to the benefit of the wider community.

So, for those reasons we support the eminently sensible proposals of the initial Boundary Commission in 2013 for what would now be called Kingston-Upon-Hull West and Haltemprice seat. We have no wish to comment as a Conservative Party on the Boundary Commission's proposals for East Hull, which we think are eminently sensible and reasonable and reflect the existing situation on the ground. Whether they will later I do not know in terms of the new boundary changes that we are currently discussing in local government.

The counter-proposal for Kingston-Upon-Hull Central, as we have it in our submission to you, Sir, makes eminent good sense because it keeps Myton and St Andrews together, which is absolutely vital, along with Pickering, in terms of reflecting the fishing past and indeed the emerging Conservative Party proposals, which I have just drawn up, to the Local Government Boundary Commission, which actually put all the riverside wards together so that we can powerfully reflect the key economic regenerator for this city. If there is to be any economic regeneration it will be culture and using the docks.

So our proposals for Kingston-Upon-Hull Central, keep Myton and St Andrews and Pickering together. The rest of our proposals I think can stand without any further need of any stuff from me. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Fareham, thank you very much. Just to make sure I have got this absolutely right; for all of the reasons that you have covered, the only difference in the line, if I can be as simplified as that, compared to the initial proposals, is to put Bricknell in the West and Haltemprice.

MR FAREHAM: I am certainly here to say that that is what I believe would be right because it ties us in with Cottingham.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Yes, you made the reasoning very clear, but I am just making sure.

MR FAREHAM: You are quite right, yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I am looking at the ward boundaries and I want to be really clear about what you are saying.

MR FAREHAM: I can think of nothing better than for Bricknell to be in Kingston-Upon-Hull West and Haltemprice.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Does anybody else need any clarification of what Mr Fareham has said? (No response) Mr Fareham, thank you very much indeed.

I have two more speakers listed for this evening. I have Mr Kay and Miss Davison in that order, but, with your permission, I am going to suggest that we do it in the other order on the basis that I think you are going to talk about Hull, and I think you are not. Just because I had programmed my brain to listen to what Mr Fareham has just said, Miss Davison, can I ask you to come up next, please? Name, address and then off you go.

MISS DAVISON: I am Dehenna Davison of 44 Newland Park, Hull and I am also here to talk about the proposals for Kingston-Upon-Hull West and Haltemprice.

I, at the moment, am a resident of Bricknell Ward, the ward that Cllr Fareham, who spoke before me, represents. Really it is quite clear as a resident that there is a real link between Bricknell ward and the Cottingham South ward. From my understanding, the point of a boundary review is not really to maintain the status quo. Whilst the parliamentary boundary at the moment chops up a particular street right down the middle, I really do think that moving Bricknell ward and Cottingham South together within the same constituency would be really beneficial for residents.

As it stands at the moment, one of the streets, which is Strathcona, has five houses, which currently sit in the Bricknell ward and the other 42 are in Cottingham South. If these residents have issues about their local area about which they would like to speak to their Member of Parliament, obviously it is going to be quite difficult on who they actually go to; do they go to the member for the East Riding seat or would they go to the member for the Hull Central seat?

I have just lost track of where I was going, but I will pick it up right now. As a resident of Bricknell, myself, like many others who live particularly on Bricknell Road, there is a pub right on the corner called the West Bulls, which is used very much by residents of both Cottingham South and by Bricknell ward, so I would say there is a real sense of community there. It is a pub that draws an awful lot of residents.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: What is the name of the pub?

MISS DAVISON: It's called the West Bulls.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: West Bulls?

MISS DAVISON: That is right. There is a very good carvery on a Sunday if you are ever around.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I will bear that in mind the next time I am in the area.

MISS DAVISON: Indeed. I am also a member of the West Hull Ladies Running Club. One of our running tracks actually goes across both wards; it goes right down by the West Bulls, takes a u-turn and comes back into Bricknell ward. For groups such as this, I mean obviously a running club is a bit of a niche one anyway since, depending what distance you run, thankfully I am short distance so I do not cover too many constituencies.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Not as short a distance as I run, I assure you.

MISS DAVISON: Being able to contact one person about any issues that we did have on a parliamentary level would be much easier than talking to a number of MPs and trying to keep the communication level clear. That is really it. I just think that really the sense of community between Cottingham South and Bricknell, it would make so much more sense to put the two wards together within one constituency, so moving Bricknell into the West Hull seat I feel really would be beneficial for the residents.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Any clarification from what Miss Davison said from anybody? (No response) Thank you very much indeed.

Returning to my list - thank you for allowing me to reorder that, I think it just helped me keep things in the right order - Mr Kay, can I ask you to come up please? As before with the other speakers, your name and address and then what you would like me to hear, please.

MR KAY: My name is Matthew Kay. I live at 2 Copperfield House in Barton, DN18 5DJ, but I am originally from Hull. I work in Scunthorpe and between 2006 and 2015 I was the Parliamentary Assistant to Austin Mitchell the MP for Grimsby at the time, so I think I have got a pretty good range of Humberside, and it is to Grimsby that I want to talk about today.

I am quite envious of all the other speakers talking about just the movement of individual wards whereas Grimsby is proposed to be completely split in two by the current proposals, and I think that is quite a bad idea. Grimsby is of a very separate entity to the rest of the countryside that surrounds it, very different issues. It has got urban issues, the decline of the fishing industry, regeneration, things like that, as opposed to the more rural issues of the Cleethorpes constituency.

Back in 2011, when the very first proposals came out, Grimsby did remain as one seat and was expanded by taking two wards, the Sydney Sussex and the Croft Baker ward, from the Cleethorpes seat, which was then compensated by getting three wards from

the Brigg and Goole seat, I think those were Burton-Upon-Stather, Brownton and Appleby and Brigg and the Wolds, so both of those seats would meet the criteria.

Then after the first consultations that time round, only two of the three wards that were going to compensate the Cleethorpes seat ended up going into what became two new seats of Grimsby North and Grimsby South. The reason why Grimsby had to be split then was because the Cleethorpes seat only had two new wards, the population was not enough to make two seats. I looked over the configurations myself, like a general over a map and, yes, there was no way to keep a united Grimsby with those wards.

The obvious solution would be to argue for a return for the Cleethorpes seat gaining three wards from the Brigg and Goole seat, but I know that will have knock-on implications throughout the entire region coming to Hull. Rather than argue for that, I would propose that a ward was split, and I know that the Boundary Commission did not want to do this unless it was absolutely necessary, I think you are a little bit more open to it now than ---

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The guidance is clear; it needs compelling evidence.

MR KAY: Compelling evidence. Okay. Well, I would say that retaining one seat in Grimsby would be compelling evidence, and the way you would do this would be for Grimsby to keep its current wards to get the whole of the Sydney Sussex ward from the existing Cleethorpes seat, but only part of the Croft Baker ward, it is on the map there. Obviously Cleethorpes would be getting the two other wards, the Brigg and the Wolds and the Brownton and Appleby wards from the current Brigg and Goole constituency. The numbers would be extremely tight and I know that the polling districts have changed somewhat since I last looked at this, but I believe you would be able to split the Croft Baker ward in such a way that both the constituencies would meet the minimum requirements. Back in 2011 there were some complaints from Cleethorpes, when there was the initial proposal to keep Grimsby and expand it by taking two wards from Cleethorpes. There were some complaints that you were splitting Cleethorpes at the expense of keeping a united Grimsby. I would argue that that is more important, as it were anyway however, I think the main concerns were to do with the naming of the constituency because the Cleethorpes completely disappeared from the new constituency title. I think that needs to be changed, that would need to go in it.

Also, the Sydney Sussex ward currently, mainly is Grimsby anyway. Grimsby Town Football Club play their games in Sydney Sussex, that is essentially Grimsby, and if any split of Croft Baker were to happen I would hope that it would happen in such a way that it took the most Grimsby-ish areas of the ward, if that makes sense, and I think that would alleviate any concerns about a split of Cleethorpes. I do think it is absolutely imperative that Grimsby remains as one constituency.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Kay, thank you very much. Any questions of clarification for Mr Kay on what he has said?

Name and then the clarification, please.

MR FAREHAM: John Fareham. What are the compelling reasons for the split of the Croft Baker Ward?

MR KAY: I have looked at various configurations for splitting wards. I was thinking you could go to Immingham way and have a Grimsby and Immingham seat, but that is cut off by another ward and you would not be able to split that ward in such a way that you could retain the constituencies. As far as I can see, if you want to keep a united Grimsby that is the only way to do it, to split the Croft Baker ward. Now, I suppose it depends whether you think there is compelling enough reasons for keeping Grimsby as one seat. I certainly think there would be. I think it is imperative that it has one MP fully dedicated to the issues facing Grimsby, which are very different to the issues facing the current Cleethorpes seat. That would be my compelling reasons, because it is the only configuration as far as I can see.

If the Boundary Commission decides to split wards, and maybe you guys could look into it in more depth than me and have more resources than I have, that is the only configuration that I could work out of retaining a united Grimsby with the wards that are allocated to the Grimsby North and Grimsby South seats. If the Cleethorpes seat was given the three wards from the Brigg and Goole area then you would not need to split it, you could put the whole of it in, but I think that probably would cause more issues than splitting it.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Any other clarifications? (No response) Mr Kay, thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, that brings us to the end of the list that I have of people who have booked. That does not necessarily mean that nobody else is going to come and speak because we have had somebody walk in today and give me some evidence without booking, and you are allowed to do that.

Let me just say this to all of you, if I may, before you go. You have heard me say this before but I make no apology because other people need to hear this. I have listened very carefully to what you have said and, as I have said, that will all be transcribed and go into the bundle anyway in due course. This consultation period is open until 5 December, so any written submissions through the Boundary Commission website, and the details are on the packs just by the table there, by the door, up until 5 December Collette Rawnsley and I will have a think about because we need to take all that into account.

I commend to you the guide to the 2018 review. It is called the 2018 review because we have to report to Parliament in September 2018, and if you do a sort of a backwards thing, we need to be here today in order to get there then. The reason I am commending it to you is because the rules are in here, so the bits that we cannot change, and some of you will have got your heads around this already, is the electoral quota. We cannot do anything about that. You might not like the way it got there, you might not like the number itself, but please do not write to me and ask me to change it because you are wasting your time and mine frankly.

The rest is “may”. As a for instance you have referred to splitting wards. The Boundary Commission’s starting point, before I ever became part of the Boundary Commission, was that we do not split wards. You are not the first person to suggest to us that we need to do that. I mentioned the need for compelling evidence, and that is written in there as well. It does not mean we will not do it, but, if we were to do it - let me just say that again for the avoidance of doubt – if we were to do it where to split them is not something that Collette and I are going to be very good at. We might be very good but you would be better. If you are suggesting that we split a ward, please help us and tell us where you would split it and why. Then when we sit down and have a think about that, if the conclusion we come to is, do you know what, we are thinking about splitting the ward, we then need help with the next bit. Does that make sense? It is interesting to know that. Are you the only person here from Grimsby?

MR KAY: I am from Hull, but, yes, from Grimsby.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I was just going to say I did not realise Grimsby had got a football team, but that is probably dangerous territory.

The fact that they are in that ward begins to tell a story that you would want us to know more about. I go back to my previous caveat: if we are to split them, help us to understand where you would like us to split them. I know you also made reference to resources. On the website you can drill right down to ward level, all the numbers are there for you to have a play around with in exactly the same way as they are for Tim’s staff at the Commission, so that is there for you to do. The whole point of the website is to try to give you the opportunity to go down to whatever level you need to and do the numbers.

I am commending the guide to you. I am commending the tools to you. The initial proposals were developed before I was involved in the Commission. All of the Assistant Commissioners are clearly of the Commission, but we are independent of the initial proposals, they are of as much value to me as any other ideas. Collette and I will have to sit down in spring and work out where we are going to go with that.

With that, pointing to the guide, pointing to the tools, we are now on 6.40 pm. I am going to adjourn momentarily. I am going to hang around for another 10 or 15 minutes

or so and if nobody else is here by then, although we said we would be open until 8 pm, on the basis I have had one person come through the door on spec today and we have now dealt with all the bookings, I do not propose to sit here until 8 pm necessarily, as I say, unless somebody else comes through.

I have not formally finished yet for the day, probably another ten minutes or so, but then after that we will close for the day until 9 am tomorrow morning. Thank you very much.

Time noted 6.40 pm

After a short break

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We are just coming towards the end of the first day hearing in Hull. We have had all of our booked speakers come and speak to us today, and we had one person come in, in the middle of the afternoon, although he had said he was going to book he just had not got round to it. On that basis, and in the absence of anybody else waiting to speak, we are just coming up to 7.00 pm, I propose to adjourn for the day and we will resume at 9.00 am in the morning.

Time noted 7.00 pm

Adjourned until 9 am on Tuesday 25 October 2016

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