COUNCIL: 19 October 2016

Report of: **Borough Solicitor**

Contact for further information: Mr Thomas Lynan (Extn. 5013)
(E-mail: thomas.lynan@westlancs.gov.uk)

SUBJECT: 2018 BOUNDARY REVIEW (PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES)

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform Council of the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) consultation on its initial proposals for the West Lancashire and Southport Parliamentary constituencies in its "Initial Proposals for the North West Region" and provide a suggested response.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Borough Solicitor provides the response to the consultation as set out at Appendix 4.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended), requires the BCE to conduct a review of Parliamentary constituencies every eight to twelve years. The Fifth Periodic Review of Westminster Constituencies was finalised for English constituencies in 2007 and was in force for the 2010 General Election.

3.2 A map of how the wards of West Lancashire Borough currently sit in the West Lancashire and South Ribble constituencies can be seen at Appendix 1.

3.3 The Sixth Periodic Review of Westminster Constituencies began in 2011 outside of the normal timescales. This was due to changes to the legislation which fixed the number of MPs to 600 (499 for England), set a target electorate amount for each constituency and also set a new five year cycle for such reviews. Due to opposition to some elements of the legislation, this review was subsequently cancelled in 2013.

3.4 This cancelled review proposed no changes to the constituency of West Lancashire and no changes to the Northern Parishes which were proposed to remain as part of the South Ribble constituency.

4.0 THE 2018 REVIEW

4.1 Under the new five year cycle, the BCE began its 2018 Review in the spring of 2016. This review is based on the Electoral Registers of 1 December 2015 and the Ward Boundaries in situ as of 7 May 2015. The minimum electorate would be 71,031 and the maximum electorate would be no more than 78,507 per constituency. No constituency may be larger than 13,000 square km.

4.2 The initial proposals from the BCE were published on 12 September 2016. For the North West, the BCE are proposing a reduction of 7 seats, from 75 to 68, with most constituencies having some sort of boundary change, either major or minor. Further descriptions of the proposals are given below.

5.0 CONSTITUENCIES COVERING WEST LANCASHIRE

5.1 The area of West Lancashire Borough is proposed to be served by two constituencies; **West Lancashire** and **Southport**. The proposed constituencies can be summarised as below.

5.2 **West Lancashire** – Covers the same 21 WLBC Wards as the current seat, but with the new inclusion of Rufford ward in the Northern Parishes (formerly of the South Ribble constituency) and Eccleston & Mawdesley ward from the Borough of Chorley. A map of this proposed constituency can be found at Appendix 2.

5.3 Based on the 1 December 2015 register, the proposed West Lancashire constituency has an electorate of 76,861. The electorate figure for this proposed constituency based on the currently published 1 September 2016 register is 79,910.

5.4 **Southport** – The Northern Parish wards of Hesketh-with-Becconsall, North Meols and Tarleton are proposed to cross County boundaries and form part of the Southport constituency. These wards are currently part of the South Ribble constituency but the BCE note (S40 of the report 'Initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries in the North West') that putting these wards with the six wards of Southport as well as Ainsdale ward in the Sefton area of Merseyside, was the only way to meet the electorate criteria whilst still maintaining community links across the North West. A map of this proposed constituency can be found at Appendix 3.

5.5 Whilst the proposal to cross County/sub-regional boundaries between Lancashire and Merseyside is unusual compared to previous reviews, the significant national change required as part of this review (the reduction from 650 to 600 seats and the fixed electorate quota) has meant that the BCE has indicated that it has had to look across County and sub-regional boundaries. Within the North West, as well as this cross County proposal between Lancashire & Merseyside, such proposals have also been made for

constituencies in the Wirral & Cheshire and also between Greater Manchester & Cheshire. Cross County/sub-regional proposals are within the remit of the BCE who are only obliged to take into account such factors '*as they think fit*', as per the 1986 Act (as amended).

5.6 With this proposed constituency there are no issues in terms of the chain of representation. These three wards currently each have their own Parish Council and they share between them a County Division within Lancashire (West Lancashire North). The only difference being that the proposal sees them move from South Ribble to Southport in terms of Parliamentary representation, but each elector within each parish area can vote in the same Parish, the same Borough Ward, the same County Division and the same Parliamentary Constituency.

5.7 Based on the 1 December 2015 register, the proposed Southport constituency has an electorate of 75,828. The electorate figure for this proposed constituency based on the currently published 1 September 2016 register is 76,552.

6.0 ADMINISTRATION

6.1 The proposed constituencies that cover the wards of West Lancashire Borough pose no significant administration challenges to officers in the delivery of the electoral functions.

6.2 West Lancashire – Whilst the inclusion of Eccleston & Mawdesley ward from Chorley and Rufford ward adds a new layer of complexity into the process of administering a General Election in West Lancashire, it is within the capability of the officers under current resource levels to manage process appropriately.

6.3 The two additional wards will bring with them additional costs in terms of polling stations, staffing and other costs, but it is the Cabinet Office that fund national elections such as a General Election. Funding is based on factors such as electorate size and number of postal voters with the proposed changes being reflected in the amount we would receive to administer the election. Costs are shared if other elections are held on the same day. Based on current schedules, the General Election, Lancashire PCC and West Lancashire local elections could all be held on the same day in May 2020, meaning costs would be apportioned three ways in some wards.

6.4 Southport – Whilst the major change here is giving the affected wards away to Sefton instead of South Ribble, the process of giving away is the same and is in some ways easier, given that the number of wards affected is reduced from 4 to 3.

7.0 FUTURE TIMESCALES

7.1 The consultation on the initial proposals ends on 5 December 2016.

7.2 As well as a Council response; all political groups, individual members, members of the public and other stakeholders may submit a response to the consultation if they so wish. The BCE is also hosting a number of Public Hearings across the region (details of which can be found at http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/boundary-commission-for-england-10840540288).

7.3 In early 2017 the BCE will publish all feedback received as part of the initial consultation. There will then follow a four week period of consultation on this feedback.

7.4 The BCE will then review all comments from both consultations on the proposals to revise the proposed boundaries.

7.5 In the autumn of 2017, the BCE will publish its revised proposals and a final eight week consultation period will take place.

7.6 Unless further changes are made, in September 2018 the BCE will publish its final recommendations and present these to Parliament. Parliament cannot amend the recommendations but can approve or reject them as a whole. If approved, the new constituencies will take affect at the next scheduled General Election in 2020.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

8.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder. The report has no significant links with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

9.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Funding to administer a General Election is provided by the Cabinet Office. The cost of running the election would be shared with local budgets if local elections are held on the same day, as currently scheduled.

10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1 There are no significant risks identified as a result of this report.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Article.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/or stakeholders. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal

equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

Appendices

1. Map of current Parliamentary constituencies that cover West Lancashire Borough.

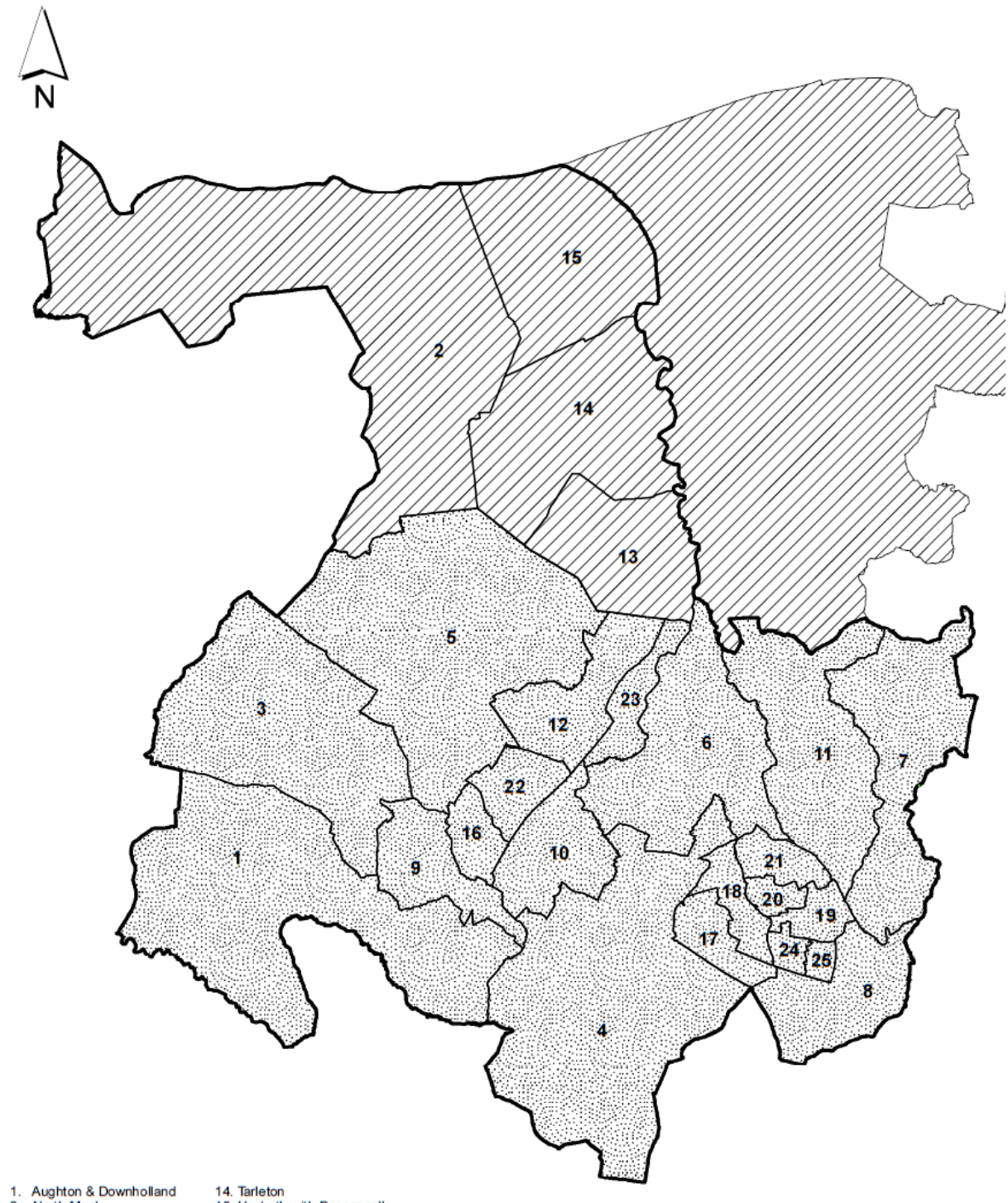
2. Map of the initial proposal for West Lancashire Parliamentary constituency.

3. Map of the initial proposal for Southport Parliamentary constituency.

4. Draft Council submission to the consultation.

5. Equality Impact Assessment.

APPENDIX 1 – Current Parliamentary constituencies covering West Lancashire

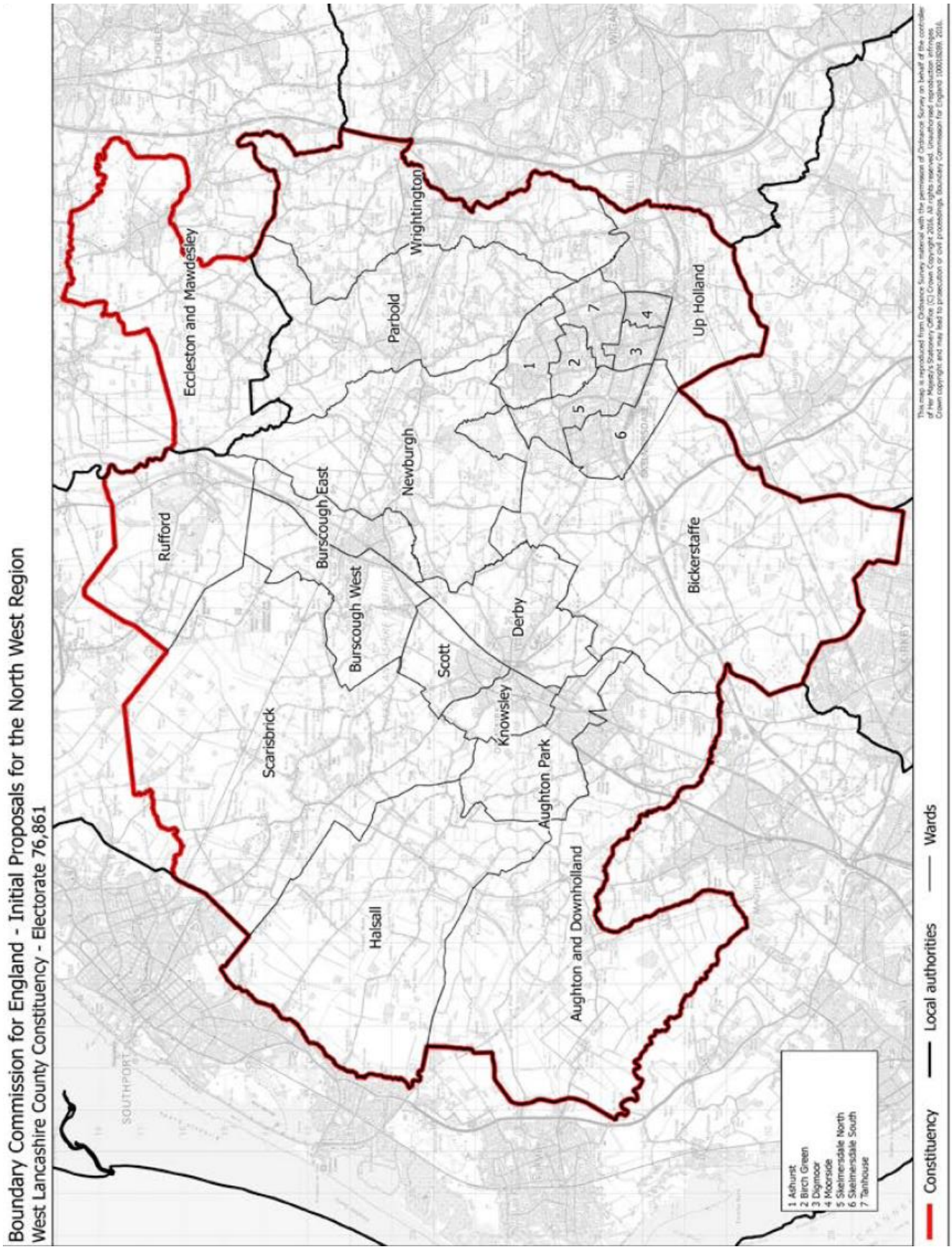


1. Aughton & Downholland
2. North Meols
3. Halsall
4. Bickerstaffe
5. Scarisbrick
6. Newburgh
7. Wrightington
8. Up Holland
9. Aughton Park
10. Derby
11. Parbold
12. Burscough West
13. Rufford
14. Tarleton
15. Hesketh-with-Becconsall
16. Knowlsey
17. Skelmersdale South
18. Skelmersdale North
19. Tanhouse
20. Birch Green
21. Ashurst
22. Scott
23. Burscough East
24. Digmoor
25. Moorside

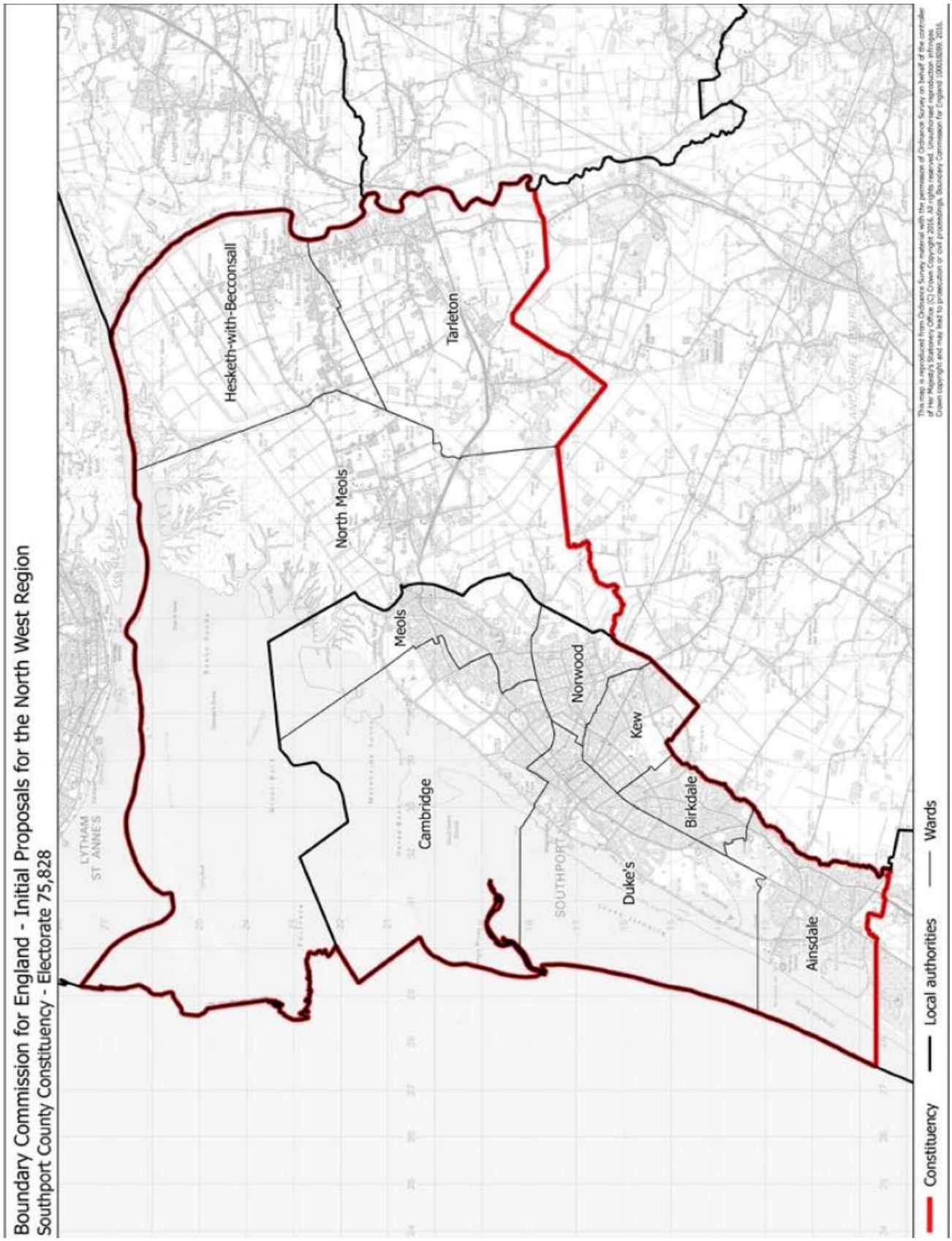
West Lancashire Borough Boundary
West Lancashire Constituency
South Ribble Constituency

1:150,000

APPENDIX 2 – Initial proposal for West Lancashire Parliamentary constituency



APPENDIX 3 –Initial proposal for Southport Parliamentary constituency



APPENDIX 4 – Draft Council submission to the consultation

Please note that the BCE have requested that submissions to the consultation are made primarily through the Review website. As such the below response has been drafted using the BCE's Review Consultation layout.

Your details

First name: *
Terry

Last name: *
Broderick

Type of respondent:
On behalf of a Local Authority

Address line 1: *
52 Derby Street

Address line 2:

Address line 3:

Town/City: *
Ormskirk

Postcode: *
L39 2DF

Email:
terry.broderick@westlancs.gov.uk

Where did you hear about us?
Other

I understand that the Boundary Commission for England will publish my comments and personal details. I have read the Commission's Data protection and privacy policy.

Comment

Have your say below:*

West Lancashire Borough Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Commission's initial proposals for the North West Region.

The Council believes that whilst the proposed changes to the constituencies which cover West Lancashire Borough add a new layer of complexity into the process of administering a General Election, the proposals do not present any administrative challenges beyond the capability of officers at current resourcing levels.

Yours faithfully,

Terry Broderick
Borough Solicitor

Content limited to 10000 characters, remaining: 9485

Supporting documents

You can upload up to five documents per comment. Each should be smaller than 10 MB and can be in any major file and shape file format. If you wish to submit a larger document or file in a different format, please contact us

+ Add files...

Submit

APPENDIX 5 – Equality Impact Statement

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Service: Legal and Democratic Services	
Completed by: Thomas Lynan	**Date: 20/09/2016**
Subject Title: 2018 Boundary Review Report	
1. DESCRIPTION	
Is a policy or strategy being produced or revised:	No
Is a service being designed, redesigned or cutback:	Yes – Changes to Parliamentary constituency boundaries.
Is a commissioning plan or contract specification being developed:	No
Is a budget being set or funding allocated:	No
Is a programme or project being planned:	No
Are recommendations being presented to senior managers and/or Councillors:	Yes
Does the activity contribute to meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty **(Eliminating unlawful discrimination/harassment, advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations):**	No
Details of the matter under consideration:	Considering the changes to current Parliamentary constituencies following publication of the BCE's initial proposals for the North West region.
*If you answered **Yes** to any of the above **go straight to Section 3*** *If you answered **No** to all the above **please complete Section 2***	
2. RELEVANCE	
Does the work being carried out impact on service users, staff or Councillors (stakeholders):	-
If **Yes,** provide details of how this impacts on service users, staff or Councillors (stakeholders): *If you answered **Yes** go to **Section 3***	-

If you answered **No** to both Sections 1and 2 provide details of why there is no impact on these three groups:	N/A
3. EVIDENCE COLLECTION	
Who does the work being carried out impact on, i.e. who is/are the stakeholder(s)?	There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and or other stakeholders.
If the work being carried out relates to a universal service, who needs or uses it most? (Is there any particular group affected more than others)?	All groups are equally affected.
Which of the protected characteristics are most relevant to the work being carried out?	Does not affect any protected characteristics.
Age	No
Gender	No
Disability	No
Race and Culture	No
Sexual Orientation	No
Religion or Belief	No
Gender Reassignment	No
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	No
4. DATA ANALYSIS	
In relation to the work being carried out, and the service/function in question, who is actually or currently using the service and why?	Members of the public, employees, elected members and or other stakeholders currently use the service because it is a universal service.
What will the impact of the work being carried out be on usage/the stakeholders?	Changes to which electoral area certain members of the public will vote within.

What are people's views about the services? Are some customers more satisfied than others, and if so what are the reasons? Can these be affected by the proposals?	All relevant stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to express their views through several consultations.
What sources of data including consultation results have you used to analyse the impact of the work being carried out on users/stakeholders with protected characteristics?	No protected characteristics are affected.
If any further data/consultation is needed and is to be gathered, please specify:	The BCE will offer two further periods of consultation at a later date.
5. IMPACT OF DECISIONS	
In what way will the changes impact on people with particular protected characteristics (either positively or negatively or in terms of disproportionate impact)?	Does not affect protected characteristics over any other group.
6. CONSIDERING THE IMPACT	
If there is a negative impact what action can be taken to mitigate it? (If it is not possible or desirable to take actions to reduce the impact, explain why this is the case (e.g. legislative or financial drivers etc.).	N/A
What actions do you plan to take to address any other issues above?	N/A *If no actions are planned state no actions*
7. MONITORING AND REVIEWING	
When will this assessment be reviewed and who will review it?	This assessment will be reviewed before any further report on this issue is released.