

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries
Consideration of responses to consultation on provisional proposals for
constituency boundaries – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council
areas

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to consider responses to the consultation on its provisional proposals and whether it wishes to make changes to its proposals for constituencies in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council areas or hold a local inquiry.

Background

2. The electorates of the nine existing Scottish Parliament constituencies within Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council areas are shown in the table below:

Existing constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Aberdeen Central	55,994	-6.5%	Aberdeen City 5(part), 6-8, 10(part), 11(part), 12(part)
Aberdeen Donside	62,531	4.4%	Aberdeen City 1-4, 5(part)
Aberdeen South and North Kincardine	61,544	2.7%	Aberdeen City 9, 10(part), 11(part), 12(part), 13 Aberdeenshire 17
Aberdeenshire East	64,217	7.2%	Aberdeenshire 4, 6(part), 7-9, 11, 12(part)
Aberdeenshire West	59,983	0.1%	Aberdeenshire 10, 12(part), 13-16, 18(part)
Angus North and Mearns	55,006	-8.2%	Aberdeenshire 18 (part), 19 Angus 2,3,8
Angus South	58,622	-2.1%	Angus 1, 4-7
Banffshire and Buchan Coast	58,442	-2.4%	Aberdeenshire 1-3, 5, 6(part) Moray 2(part), 3
Moray	63,133	5.4%	Moray 1, 2(part), 4-8

3. The provisional proposals amended the boundary between the Aberdeenshire East constituency and the Banffshire and Buchan Coast constituency by Mintlaw and renamed the Banffshire and Buchan Coast constituency, Banff and Buchan Coast.
4. The provisional proposals aimed to adhere to the principles of the review. The provisional proposals: improved variation from the electorate quota from the existing arrangements; and aimed to minimise change to the existing boundaries while considering local ties, with seven constituency boundaries unchanged.
5. This council area grouping has a total electorate of 539,472 and entitlement to 9.0 constituencies. The neighbouring council areas of Perth and Kinross and Dundee have an entitlement to 2.0 and 1.9 constituencies respectively. Highland Council area has an entitlement to 3.2 constituencies. The Commission did consider a Highland–Moray constituency design at its meeting of 9 March 2023 (Paper 37) but it offered no improvement on variation from the electorate quota and crossed a local authority boundary.
6. None of the Councils in this grouping objected to the provisional proposals or requested a local inquiry and neither did a body of 100 electors resident in any of the proposed constituencies.
7. The electorates of the nine proposed Scottish Parliament constituencies within Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Moray Council areas are shown in the table below:

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Aberdeen Central	55,994	-6.5%	Aberdeen City 5(part), 6-8, 10(part), 11(part), 12(part)
Aberdeen Donside	62,531	4.4%	Aberdeen City 1-4, 5(part)
Aberdeen South and North Kincardine	61,544	2.7%	Aberdeen City 9, 10(part), 11(part), 12(part), 13 Aberdeenshire 17
Aberdeenshire East	60,667	1.3%	Aberdeenshire 4(part), 6(part), 7-9, 11, 12(part)

Aberdeenshire West	59,983	0.1%	Aberdeenshire 10, 12(part), 13-16, 18(part)
Angus North and Mearns	55,006	-8.2%	Aberdeenshire 18 (part), 19 Angus 2,3,8
Angus South	58,622	-2.1%	Angus 1, 4-7
Banff and Buchan Coast	61,992	3.5%	Aberdeenshire 1-3, 4(part), 5, 6(part). Moray 2(part), 3
Moray	63,133	5.4%	Moray 1, 2(part), 4-8

8. A map of the provisional proposals is at Appendix A.

Representations received

9. 16 responses were received for these constituencies during the one-month consultation period. All responses have been shared with the Commission. Responses to the consultation will be available on the Commission's consultation site www.consult.boundaries.scot if the respondent gave permission to do so.

Summary of responses

10. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:

- comments regarding the proposed Aberdeenshire East and Banff & Buchan Coast constituency boundary at Longside (east of Mintlaw); and
- opposition to the proposed Banff and Buchan Coast constituency name.

11. Unless otherwise stated the maps in this paper show alternative suggestions in block colours, existing ward boundaries are red and provisional proposal boundaries are a black line.

Aberdeen City Consultation Responses and Analysis

12. There were four responses from members of the public regarding the provisional proposals for Aberdeen City council area. One response supported the proposals, the other three responses opposed them.

13. One response opposed the size of the constituencies across Scotland and in particular the proposed Banff and Buchan Coast constituency. They suggested area should be a consideration in constituency design along with electorate size.

14. The other two responses opposed the reviews and suggested there was a lack of publicity given to the consultation period.

Aberdeenshire Consultation Responses and Analysis

15. A member of the public suggested that the proposed Banffshire and Buchan Coast constituency did not recognise the links shared by Fraserburgh and other coastal towns in the north east with other non-coastal towns such as Turriff and Mintlaw. They went on to suggest that these links are stronger than those with other coastal towns further west along the Moray Coast.
16. A member of the public opposed extending the proposed Banffshire and Buchan constituency boundary southwards to Mintlaw / Fetterangus. They believe the Aberdeenshire coastal area has different needs and requirements to the towns and villages inland and should not be represented by the same MSP.
17. A member of the public opposed the review and the proposals.
18. Two members of the public opposed changes to the constituency name from Banffshire and Buchan Coast to Banff and Buchan Coast. One cited the fact that the constituency covers a significant part of the historical county of Banffshire rather than just acknowledging the town of Banff itself. They were also concerned with the use of the name Banff – which has almost half as many electors as Buckie – over other towns in the constituency would be a negative factor. The other response suggested retaining the existing constituency name.
19. Aberdeenshire Council supported the provisional proposals where there was no change. They noted that the proposed boundary between the Aberdeenshire East and Banff and Buchan Coast constituencies divided the village of Longside between two constituencies. They made a preference for Longside sitting within the Aberdeenshire East constituency. They also opposed the proposed Banff and Buchan Coast constituency name. They wish to retain the Banffshire and Buchan Coast name because the constituency covers a significant part of the historical county of Banffshire rather than just acknowledging the town of Banff itself.
20. The alternative suggestion from Aberdeenshire Council to amend the proposed constituency boundary by Longside is presented in Appendix C. It would have little impact on the variation from electoral quota for the constituencies involved, as it would affect approximately 400 electors.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Aberdeenshire East	61,078	2.0%	Aberdeenshire 4(part), 6(part), 7-9,11,12(part)

Banff and Buchan Coast	61,581	2.8%	Aberdeenshire 1-3, 4(part), 5,6(part) Moray 2(part),3
------------------------	--------	------	--

21. The advantages of this suggestion are:

- it would minimise change from the existing arrangements and provisional proposals; and
- avoid Longside being split between two constituencies.

22. The disadvantages of this suggestion are there was some opposition to the proposed Banff and Buchan Coast constituency which included both coastal and rural Aberdeenshire communities.

Angus Consultation Responses and Analysis

23. There were two responses from members of the public regarding the provisional proposals for Angus council area. One response sought no change to the existing arrangements and the other suggested that Monifieth be included in the proposed Dundee East constituency.

24. The proposed constituency boundaries in both Angus and Dundee City council areas are unchanged from the existing arrangements. The impact of the town of Monifieth, with approximately 7,500 electors, being added to the proposed Dundee East constituency is shown in the table below. Dundee East would remain within $\pm 10\%$ variation from electoral quota but the loss of the town of Monifieth would lead Angus South to be nearly -15% variation from electoral quota. This suggestion did not provide any supporting argument or reasoning for their suggestion.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Angus South	51,067	-14.7%	Angus 1, 4(part),5,6,7
Dundee City East	63,585	6.1%	Angus 4(part), Dundee City 4-8

25. There are no obvious advantages to this suggestion.

26. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:

- breaks council area boundaries disrupting the longstanding historical boundaries;

- it worsens the variation from electoral quota in Angus South; and
- proposes significant changes with no support from the wider public.

Moray Consultation Responses and Analysis

27. There were two responses from an officer at Moray Council. They responded to suggest the proposed boundaries for the Banffshire and Buchan Coast and Moray constituencies were acceptable and they also suggested an alternative boundary in Moray by Arradoul (south of Buckie) to align the proposed constituency boundary with the ward boundary in that area. This change would only affect 10 electors but would ensure the ward and constituency boundaries were better aligned. A map of the suggested boundary by Arradoul can be found at Appendix B.

All Scotland Consultation Responses

28. Over 60 responses made general comments opposing the review or made comments out-with the legislation.

29. Six responses made general comments supporting the review.

30. A further 18 responses commented on more than one area. This included the Scottish Liberal Democrats who supported the Commission's approach for this grouping and the Scottish Conservative and Unionists who noted the amended boundary and new constituency name.

Summary

31. The existing constituencies within this grouping are all within 10% variation from the electoral quota.

32. The Commission's provisional proposals amended the existing boundary by Mintlaw to better reflect local community ties there. The Commission also renamed the existing Banffshire and Buchan Coast constituency name as Banff and Buchan Coast.

33. There were few responses to the provisional proposals for constituencies in Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Angus and Moray council areas.

34. There were no objections from any of the Councils and none of the Councils requested a local inquiry. Fewer than 100 members of the public responded to the consultation.

35. Most of the responses to the consultation opposed the provisional proposals, two responses supported them.
36. Three responses wished to retain the existing Banffshire and Buchan Coast constituency name to reflect its history and identity. The existing Banffshire and Buchan Coast constituency name has been in place since 2011. Prior to that a constituency was named Banff and Buchan. Since 1983 there has been a Banff and Buchan UK Parliament constituency.
37. There were suggestions to amend the proposed boundaries by Arradoul and Longside as shown in Appendix B and C.
38. The suggestion by Arradoul would align the constituency and ward boundary. The suggestion by Longside would avoid the village being split between two constituencies. Both suggestions affect few electors and would have minimal effect on variation from electoral quota.
39. There was a suggestion to amend the constituency boundary by Monifieth but it would cross a council area boundary and no supporting arguments were provided with the suggestion.

Recommendations

40. Taking into account all of the evidence arising from the public consultation on the provisional proposals for constituencies, the Secretariat invites the Commission to decide whether to:
- adopt the published provisional proposals as its final recommendations subject to satisfactory design in other groupings being agreed;
 - amend its proposals for constituency boundaries or names and consult upon them again; and
 - hold a local inquiry.

Secretariat
August 2023

Appendix C

Alternative suggestion by Aberdeenshire Council – Longside

