

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration****West Dunbartonshire Council: 28 June 2023**

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**Subject: Consultation on the Second Review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries****1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to ask Council to consider the implications of the Second Review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries and in particular the impact on the two existing Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies administered by West Dunbartonshire Council, namely Dumbarton and Clydebank & Milngavie.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Council agrees to inform Boundaries Scotland that it supports the position detailed in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of the report: that the status quo is maintained i.e. both existing constituencies remain intact, subject to a minor adjustment to the Scottish parliamentary boundary line as described in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

**3. Background**

- 3.1** Boundaries Scotland, which has responsibility for reviewing the Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries, published its provisional proposals on the review for public consultation on Wednesday 17 May 2023. The consultation period, which was opened for one month, is due to close on Saturday 17 June, 2023 but Boundaries Scotland has agreed to accept a late submission by this Council due to the timing of the Council meeting. Copies of the provisional proposals together with maps have been published on the Council's website and in the Dumbarton Library.
- 3.2** Following the consultation period, Boundaries Scotland will hold local enquiries in the autumn of 2023, dependent on responses to the first consultation. Thereafter, a further one month of consultation will be held on the revised recommendations in relation of the proposed constituencies. In early 2024, there will be a further one month consultation on any further recommendations on the constituencies, if required. After the consultations on the constituencies have concluded, there will be a month consultation on the region provisional proposals and later in 2024, a one month consultation on the revised region recommendations, if required. A report will be presented to Scottish Ministers on 1 May 2025, for approval by the Scottish Parliament in May 2025. If approved, the new boundaries will be effective at the next Scottish Parliamentary Election, expected in May 2026.

## **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** When publishing its provisional proposals, Scottish Boundaries outlined the criteria that it applied when carrying out the review. The Scotland Act 1998 states that the electorate of proposed constituencies must be as close to the electorate quota as practicable. Based on data provided by Electoral Registration Officers in September 2022, the electorate quota to be used as the basis of this review is 59,902. This increase on the previous quota is mainly due to an increase in the Scottish electorate as a result of the inclusion of 16 and 17 year olds.
- 4.2** In addition to the quota, Boundaries Scotland must also take other factors in account, such as: local authority areas, special geographical circumstances, maintenance of local ties and any inconvenience caused by alteration of the existing boundaries. However, it is important to note that Boundaries Scotland will only consider changes to the regional boundaries after the conclusion of the constituency consultations.
- 4.3** At present, West Dunbartonshire is divided equally over two Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies: Dumbarton Constituency (56,120 electors), which includes three West Dunbartonshire Council wards – Lomond, Leven and Dumbarton plus three Argyll and Bute wards; and Clydebank & Milngavie Constituency (comprising 55,121 electors) which covers three West Dunbartonshire Wards – Kilpatrick, Clydebank Central and Clydebank Waterfront plus two East Dunbartonshire Council wards. Boundaries Scotland has proposed that the Dumbarton Constituency be re-named as Dumbarton and Helensburgh Constituency (Appendix 1 refers) and the Clydebank & Milngavie Constituency be renamed as Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North Constituency (Appendix 2 refers). The proposed Dumbarton and Helensburgh Constituency will lose one of the Argyll and Bute wards (Ward 9 - Lomond North, comprising 6,202 voters) but gain part of Clydebank Waterfront (excluding Polling District CW16C – Whitecrook, comprising 3834 electors) resulting in a total electorate of 57,666. The proposed Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North constituency will gain one ward from East Dunbartonshire Council (ED3 - Bearsden South, comprising an electorate of 11,042) and the remaining part of Clydebank Waterfront (Polling District CW16C - Whitecrook) resulting in a total electorate of 58,415. These provisional proposals will result in increases to the electorates of both areas which will bring them closer to the quota.
- 4.4** Following the Review of Local Government Ward boundaries conducted in 2016 and implemented in 2017, an anomaly arose between the two existing Scottish Parliamentary boundaries and the new Dumbarton ward/Clydebank Waterfront ward boundary resulting in the formation of a small polling district, namely DU23C, to resolve the issue (see Appendix 1). One benefit of the proposed boundary change by Boundaries Scotland is that it removes this anomaly and would allow DU22D and DU23C to merge into one single polling district (DU22D) for the Bowling area.

**4.5** The Returning Officer, having considered the provisional proposals and having analysed the significant impact of the changes on the effective administration of future elections in both these constituencies, is of the opinion that the status quo is maintained i.e. both existing constituencies remain intact, subject to a minor adjustment to the Scottish parliamentary boundary line as described in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

**4.6** This position can be justified on the basis that the existing electorate figures for both constituencies (56,120 and 55,121) are within acceptable parameters of the new quota and are similar to numerous other constituency electorate figures proposed by Boundaries Scotland in this review. Furthermore, the splitting of the Clydebank Waterfront ward from the rest of Clydebank does not fit well with the criteria of maintaining local ties. It is also equally arguable that the electors residing in the Lomond North ward will see their local administrative centre as being Helensburgh and not Lochgilphead, which is some considerable distance away. Evidence of this can be found in the education structure where all of the primary schools in Lomond North feed into Hermitage Academy High School in Helensburgh. Maintaining the status quo will maintain these local connections in both constituencies.

## **5. People Implications**

**5.1** There are no direct implications for employees of this Council. However, the additional work created by Boundaries Scotland's proposed changes will put an additional administrative burden on the election team prior to the next Scottish Parliamentary elections.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

**6.1** There are no financial or procurement implications arising from the consultation as Scottish Parliamentary elections are funded centrally by the Scottish Government.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

**7.1** There are no risks associated with this report.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

**8.1** There are no equality impacts arising from the Council's response to the consultation.

## **9. Consultation**

**9.1** Officers from legal and finance have been consulted on the content of this report.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** This report does not have a direct impact on the Council's Strategic priorities.

**Alan Douglas**  
**Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration**

**Date: 24 May 2023**

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**Appendices:**

1. Map of proposed Dumbarton and Helensburgh Constituency.
2. Map of proposed Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North Constituency.

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All