

2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies Announcement of the Review

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to comment on the attached draft News Release to be used to announce the forthcoming 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies and the attached draft Q and A.

Background

2. It is expected that the Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency will publish on 24 February 2016 electoral data based on the 1 December 2015 electoral registers. The Secretariats will have advance notice of the data on 22 February.
3. Once electorate figures have been determined the Secretariats of the 4 UK Boundary Commissions will be able to apply the requirements of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) to determine:
 - the allocation of constituencies to each of the home countries;
 - the electoral quota for the Review;
 - the range of electorates permitted for constituencies.
4. There are clear benefits if the 4 UK Commissions announce these figures in a coordinated manner, and the Secretariats have provisionally agreed, subject to views from the Commission, that this should take place on 24 February 2016.
5. It is not intended that the Commissions will issue a single joint News Release, but rather that each Commission will issue its own News Release.
6. Appendix A contains a draft News Release for the Commission to issue on the announcement of the Review.
7. At Appendix B is a draft Q and A to support the announcement of the start of the 2018 Review and which will be placed on the BCS website.

Conclusion

8. The Commission is invited to agree:
 - that an announcement of the allocation of constituencies and the electoral quota should be made on 24 February 2016;
 - any changes to the draft News Release at Appendix A;
 - any changes to the draft Q and A at Appendix B; and
 - that the Secretariat should continue to liaise with the other Commission Secretariats on future communications.