BCS Paper 2022/01

2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies
Initial Consultation responses

For information

1. This paper sets out a preliminary summary of the responses received during the Initial Proposals public consultation stage of the 2023 Review.

2. The consultation took place over an eight-week period from 14 October to 8 December 2021.

3. The Commission undertook social media advertising on a number of platforms to publicise the Review. Adverts were also placed in newspapers – at a national and local level - at the commencement and conclusion of the public consultation period.

Summary of responses received during initial consultation period

4. Overall 1,100 responses were received, approximately 980 via the consultation site and a further 120 were submitted by email or post.

5. The type of respondent to the consultation is broken down below:
   - 1022 responses from members of the public;
   - 27 responses from councillors;
   - 15 responses from councils;
   - 12 responses from community groups;
   - 8 responses from MPs;
   - 3 responses from national political parties (Scottish Liberal Democrats, Scottish Labour and Scottish Conservative and Unionist;
   - 5 responses from local political parties;
   - 4 responses from MSPs; and
   - 3 responses from other organisations.

6. Details of the source of respondents visiting the consultation site are listed in the table below.

Visit Source	Responses
Facebook	434
Other	194
Twitter	71
Local Newspaper	70
Other Social Media	69
Web	39
National Newspaper	33
TV	6
In a Local Place of Deposit	5
Radio	4
None given	180
Total	1105

7. A table with responses broken down by council area is shown in Appendix A.

8. All individual responses will be considered but the main issues to have emerged from the responses are:
   - opposition to the proposals in Perth and Kinross, Dundee, Angus and Fife council areas generally;
   - the proposed boundary in the town of Musselburgh;
   - the geographical size of the Highland constituencies;
   - Moray being split between three constituencies; and
   - the proposed change of name for the predominantly Argyll and Bute council area based "Argyll" constituency.

9. Approximately 10% of all responses supported the Initial Proposals with support for the proposed Perth and Tay constituency and for retaining the existing West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine constituency and East Renfrewshire constituency.

10. Approximately 90% responses opposed aspects of the Initial Proposals. Of those, about 15% generally opposed the review and legislation governing it whilst not making any specific comment on the proposals.

11. Approximately 25% of respondents made alternative suggestions. Many of these were alternative names - particularly the retention of Argyll and Bute as a constituency name and Perth and West Perthshire instead of Perth and Tay. Very few suggested multiple council area or all-Scotland alternative constituency designs.

Issues raised during public consultation

12. A summary of responses is provided below, by council area grouping.

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Argyll and Bute, Highland and Moray council area grouping

13. This grouping proposed nine constituencies. Ten constituencies currently cover this area. The existing West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine constituency boundary is unchanged.

14. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:
    - Opposition to the proposed boundary in Moray because it splits the existing Moray constituency and council area between three constituencies. Responses cited the fact that the existing Moray constituency is currently within quota;
    - Opposition to the proposed Argyll constituency name. Respondents stated Bute should be included in the constituency name;
    - Opposition to the proposed Highland North constituency with respondents claiming the geographical extent of the constituency would make it challenging to represent effectively; and
    - There were a number of alternative suggestions for this grouping that dealt with parts of the grouping in its entirety or suggested alternative arrangements for part of the grouped council areas.

East Renfrewshire council area grouping

15. This single constituency was retained and followed the same boundary as East Renfrewshire council area.

16. There were few responses and all but one were in support of the Initial Proposals.

Ayrshire council area grouping

17. This grouping proposed no change to the four existing constituency boundaries.

18. There were a very small number of responses from East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire council areas combined.

19. The responses in opposition to the Initial Proposals included suggestions that the Ayrshire towns of Ayr, Troon and Prestwick sit within a single constituency.

Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian council area grouping

20. This grouping proposed no change to the overall number of constituencies and retained seven constituencies. The existing Midlothian constituency and Edinburgh South West constituency boundaries were unchanged and as such there were very few responses regarding City of Edinburgh and Midlothian.

21. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:
    - Minor changes to ward boundaries in Edinburgh West and Edinburgh North and Leith to avoid breaking local ties;
    - An all-Edinburgh alternative suggestion that reduced the number of wards split to two;
    - There were very few comments and no alternative suggestions for the unchanged Midlothian constituency;

- Opposition to the proposed boundary in Musselburgh as it was deemed to split the town between two constituencies;
- Despite the levels of opposition to this proposals there were few alternative suggestions regarding the Musselburgh boundary.

Glasgow City, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire council areas grouping

22. This grouping proposed nine constituencies. Ten constituencies currently cover this area.

23. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:
    - Opposition to parts of Glasgow City council area being part of constituencies that include other council areas, namely West Dunbartonshire and Renfrewshire;
    - Number of responses taking issue with the areas contained within Glasgow Central constituency but unclear if this could be solved with a change of name or a redrawing of boundaries;
    - In Glasgow suggestions included constituencies running west to east in Glasgow rather than north to south as seen in Glasgow Central, Glasgow North and Glasgow South West;
    - Breaking local ties in Strathbungo;
    - Issues regarding pairing of parts of Renfrewshire with Inverclyde; and
    - Alternative suggestions for the proposed Inverclyde and Bridge of Weir constituency and to link Inverclyde with Ayrshire.

Dumfries and Galloway, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and Scottish Borders council areas grouping

24. This grouping proposed no change to the overall number of constituencies and retained 12 constituencies.

25. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:
    - A varied response perhaps typical of such a large grouping with no single issue prompting a large number of responses with suggestions including, linking Dumfries and Galloway with South Ayrshire and linking Lockerbie with Dumfries;
    - Views that local ties are being broken in Cumbernauld and Kilsyth, Bishopbriggs and Kirkintilloch, and also in Dumfries and Galloway in various locations;
    - Alternative suggestions in North Lanarkshire by Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch; and
    - Opposition to the proposed Kelvin North and Kelvin South constituency names.

Angus, Clackmannanshire, Dundee City, Falkirk, Fife, Perth and Kinross, Stirling and West Lothian council area grouping

26. This grouping proposed no change to the overall number of constituencies and retained 13 constituencies. The existing Stirling constituency boundary was unchanged.

27. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:
    - Opposition to the proposals in Kinross-shire because they split Kinross-shire between constituencies and there are no ties between Kinross-shire and Fife;
    - Opposition to the proposed boundary in Carse of Gowrie where some respondents stated there are stronger local ties with Perth rather than Dundee;
    - Opposition to the proposed boundaries in Angus, Perth and Kinross and Dundee council areas as it is believed they break local ties;
    - Opposition to the proposed Mid Forth Valley constituency because it covers both sides of the Forth;
    - Suggestions for alternative boundaries in Falkirk and West Lothian;
    - Some support for the proposed Perth and Tay constituency although suggestions for an alternative name – Perth and West Perthshire; and
    - A number of suggestions calling for Dunfermline to be in the West Fife constituency name.

Next steps

28. The Commission will look forward to receiving further comments and feedback on the Initial Proposals during the secondary consultation stage of the 2023 Review.

29. The Secretariat will then analyse all responses received during the consultation stages and develop revised proposals for consultation later in 2022.

Conclusion

30. The Commission is invited to note this summary of responses to the initial consultation period.

Secretariat
January 2022

Appendix A

Responses to initial consultation by Council Area

Council Area	Number of Comments
Aberdeen City	5
Aberdeenshire	27
Angus	56
Argyll and Bute	43
City of Edinburgh	14
Clackmannanshire	5
Dumfries and Galloway	17
Dundee City	12
East Ayrshire	1
East Dunbartonshire	19
East Lothian	45
East Renfrewshire	12
Falkirk	33
Fife	49
Glasgow City	35
Highland	97
Inverclyde	5
Midlothian	1
Moray	45
North Ayrshire	3
North Lanarkshire	32
Perth and Kinross	297
Renfrewshire	33
Scottish Borders	9
Shetland Islands	1
South Ayrshire	5
South Lanarkshire	20
Stirling	5
West Dunbartonshire	1
West Lothian	11
General/All Scotland	165