

AGENDA ITEM NO 3(b)

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SPECIAL SUB-COMMITTEE** of the **POLICY and RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held remotely on Wednesday 17 November 2021 at 9.15am.

Present: Councillors DAVID FAIRWEATHER, ANGUS MACMILLAN DOUGLAS OBE, BILL DUFF, BEN LAWRIE AND BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor FAIRWEATHER, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

There were no apologies for absence intimated.

Councillor Lawrie joined the meeting during the following item.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Duff declared a non-financial interest in Item 3 Report No 349/21 as the Campaign Manager for an Angus Parliamentary Candidate at the last General Election. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Lawrie declared a non-financial interest in Item 3 Report No 349/21 as a General Election Candidate for Angus in 2019. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Macmillan Douglas, OBE, declared a non-financial interest in Item 3 Report No 349/21 as an Executive Member of the Angus Conservative Association. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on the item.

3. 2023 REVIEW OF UK PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 26 October 2021, there was submitted Report No 349/21 by the Chief Executive advising members of the Sub Committee of the Boundary Commission for Scotland provisional proposals for revised UK Parliamentary constituencies which were published on 14 October 2021. Representations and any counter proposals required to be made to the Commission no later than 8 December 2021.

The Report indicated that under the 2023 Review, the total number of constituencies in Scotland would reduce from 59 to 57 with each constituency to have an electorate of not less 69,724 and no more than 77,062.

The Commission's initial proposals for the new constituencies covering the Angus local government area were contained in Appendices 1 to 6 of the Report.

Councillor Duff suggested a counter proposal that would meet the requirements of the review of the UK Parliamentary constituencies that would maintain as much integrity of the Angus Council area, as possible. The counter proposal was to include Wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 giving an electorate total of 76,102 which was within the electorate range as detailed in the Report. This would also provide for 7 complete wards of Angus Council within the Angus parliamentary constituency, excluding Monifieth, which would remain within the Dundee East and Dundee West constituencies. He intimated that this would retain Arbroath within the Angus constituency and that the proposal would also avoid splitting wards and take into account the strong historic links.

Councillor Fairweather suggested that the status quo should be retained, thereafter Councillor Whiteside intimated her support to Councillor Duff's counter proposal.

Councillor Macmillan Douglas also highlighted his preferred option was to keep the county together and that the status quo position should remain. He also suggested that questions be referred back to the Boundary Commission in terms of the reasoning behind their initial proposals.

Councillor Myles whilst in support of Councillor Duff's counter proposal, sought clarification regarding the Monifieth and Sidlaw constituencies, and in response, Councillors Duff and Whiteside provided an update.

Following discussion and having heard from the Chief Executive and the Manager - Elections, Commercialisation and Facilities, including to the effect that status quo did not comply with the new minimum population requirements for parliamentary constituencies, and also having heard members comments and proposals, the Sub Committee agreed:-.

- (i) to note the Commission's initial proposals for the revised UK Parliamentary Constituencies;
- (ii) to authorise the Chief Executive to prepare a draft response to the Boundary Commission in the following terms:-
 - (a) to raise objections to the initial proposals outlined by the Commission which would split the Angus local authority area across two other local authority areas and split three Angus local government wards;
 - (b) to submit an alternative Angus constituency counter proposal consisting of Angus council wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8, a total electorate of 76,102 with Ward 4 Monifieth and Sidlaw remaining as part of the amended Dundee East and Dundee West constituencies; and
 - (c) that the Commission be requested to note the preference to retain the "status quo" position albeit mindful that this did not comply with the new minimum population requirements for parliamentary constituencies.