

MW/SDC/1/12/10

23 November 2021



Isobel Drummond-Murray
Secretary
Boundary Commission for Scotland
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Margo Williamson

Dear Isobel

2023 Review of UK parliament constituencies – Initial proposals

I refer to your letter dated 13 October 2021 regarding the publication of the Boundary Commission's initial proposals for UK parliament constituencies and have been asked by our elected members to write to you outlining our objections to these proposals and to offer a counter proposal.

Our objections to the Commission's proposals are as follows:

1. The initial proposals set out by the Commission splits the Angus local authority area across not only one but two other local authority boundaries and splits three of the eight Angus local government wards, Monifieth & Sidlaw, Carnoustie and District and Arbroath West, Letham and Friockheim.

Your own policy document notes "that the Commission will aim to make proposals for constituencies which are wholly within a council area but where this is not practicable, the Commission will propose constituencies which are each wholly within two neighbouring council areas. Only where there are compelling circumstances will the Commission make proposals which contains parts of three or more council areas". We can see no compelling circumstances for the Commission to propose that Angus should be split across three local government areas other than to help meet the electoral quota in other areas.

2. The initial proposals do not take account of the strong local ties to Arbroath which is the largest town in Angus and a popular tourist attraction. Arbroath is also of significant historical importance to the people of Angus as the site of Arbroath Abbey where the Declaration of Arbroath, one of the most famous documents in Scottish history was signed in 1320.

3. The city of Dundee is a highly populated urban area where Arbroath and the surrounding area sits within the largely agricultural rural area of Angus.
4. The proposed "Angus and Strathmore" constituency is approximately 2891km², which is a significant area to cover, with a lack of good roads to traverse the proposed constituency on an east, west axis.
5. The areas of Blairgowrie, Coupar Angus and Scone have historically been linked to Perth. Scone in particular is a suburb of Perth and sits approximately 1 mile from the Perth city boundary.

After due consideration, Angus Council would offer the following counter proposal:

- An amended "Angus" constituency consisting of Angus council wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with a total electorate of 76,102. Ward 4, Monifieth and District would remain as part of the amended Dundee East and Dundee West constituencies.

This counter proposal meets the following factors:

1. The total electorate is within the agreed electoral quota.
2. Takes account of existing council and ward boundaries with the new constituency contained wholly within the Angus local government area. This proposal also does not split any council wards.
3. Takes account of the existing UK parliamentary constituency. The only amendment to the current constituency would be the Carnoustie and District Ward being wholly contained within the new Angus constituency.
4. Takes account of strong local ties which would be broken moving Arbroath and the surrounding area to the proposed Dundee East and Arbroath constituency.
5. This counter proposal would minimise the disruption to voters. The Commission's proposals would see approximately 17,500 electors being placed in a new UK parliamentary constituency.
6. No changes to the name of the constituency.

The Council notes that the "status quo" cannot be maintained due to the required reduction in UK parliamentary constituencies, and the resulting constituency of Angus must be larger than at present. While our counter proposal would impact on the proposed constituencies which surround Angus, we believe that the Commission's proposals should take account of the strong ties and commuter links between Dundee, Newport, Tayport and surrounding villages which sit across the Tay from Dundee and the strong local ties of Blairgowrie, Coupar Angus and Scone with the city of Perth.

Yours sincerely

Margo Williamson
Chief Executive