

Agenda Item 12

**Boundary Commission for Scotland:
2018 Review of UK Parliament
Constituencies – Summary of
Revised Proposals**

Falkirk Council

Title: Boundary Commission for Scotland: 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies – Summary of Revised Proposals
Meeting: Falkirk Council
Date: 6 December 2017
Submitted By: Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report (a) provides Council with a summary of the revised proposals for UK Parliament constituencies for the Falkirk Council area following the Boundary Commission for Scotland's review of its initial proposals, and (b) seeks to gauge the views of Council for submission to the Boundary Commission for Scotland by the consultation deadline of 11 December 2017.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- (1) notes the implications of the proposals, as outlined in the body of the report, and**
- (2) considers whether to accept the proposals or to make representations to the Boundary Commission for Scotland within the timescale identified above.**

3. Considerations

- 3.1 The Boundary Commission for Scotland (the Commission) started its 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies in February 2016, with the objective of reducing Scotland's current 59 constituencies to 53. The electoral quota, which is the average electorate per constituency across the UK, was 74,769, with the aim being to have every constituency within 5% of this figure, ie between 71,031 and 78,507.
- 3.2 The Falkirk Council area currently comprises the Falkirk constituency in full, with an electorate of 82,240 at the time of the UK Parliamentary General Election held on 8 June 2017, and the Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency in part, shared with West Lothian Council, with the Falkirk share of the electorate being 35,388 in June 2017.
- 3.3 The initial proposals produced by the Commission suggested putting Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling Council areas together to contain three constituencies in the Forth Valley area. This proposal would retain one Falkirk constituency but would remove the shared working with West Lothian Council, introducing instead a shared constituency with Stirling Council, namely Stirling South. The proposed Falkirk constituency had a suggested electorate of

73,839 (in February 2017) with the remainder forming Falkirk's share of the Stirling South constituency, which had a suggested electorate of 71,150.

- 3.4 The Commission then carried out a second consultation allowing for comments and alternative suggestions on its initial proposals. The timing coincided with local government election preparation and no submission was made by Falkirk Council at that time.
- 3.5 The Commission circulated its revised proposals on 17 October 2017 for consultation, inviting comments by 11 December 2017. The revised proposals present a change to the initial proposals with the suggestion of a Falkirk South constituency and a shared constituency with Stirling, to be named Stirling and Falkirk North. The map attached at Appendix 1 refers.
- 3.6 The proposed Falkirk South constituency has the fewest electors in Scotland at 71,118. The proposed Stirling and Falkirk North constituency has a combined electorate of 71,177 of which Falkirk's share is currently around 44,124. Stirling Council has the smaller share at approximately 27,053.
- 3.7 The Commission used the 2007 Ward boundaries to aggregate up to the proposed electoral quotas. The map attached at Appendix 2 refers.
- 3.8 The proposed Falkirk South constituency would contain electoral Wards 1 – Bo'ness and Blackness; 2 – Grangemouth; 6 – Falkirk North; 7 – Falkirk South (in part); 8 – Lower Braes, and 9 – Upper Braes, based on the 2007 Ward boundaries as mentioned above.
- 3.9 The proposed Stirling and Falkirk North constituency would contain electoral Wards 3 – Denny and Banknock; 4 – Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst; 5 – Bonnybridge and Larbert, and 7 – Falkirk South (in part). This constituency would also contain three full and one part Stirling Council Wards (Wards 4 – Castle; 5 – Stirling West (in part); 6 – Stirling East, and 7 - Bannockburn).
- 3.10 One specific area of interest is Camelon (Ward 7 – Falkirk South, using the 2007 Ward boundaries) which would be divided by the boundary between the proposed constituencies. The map attached at Appendix 3 refers. The Commission's proposals show the former Ward 7 – Falkirk South boundary following the train line, along the back of the commercial units on the Glasgow Road and include the properties at Centurion Way. The proposed Stirling and Falkirk North boundary follows Stirling Road (A9) along Main Street, Camelon, then along Union Road, joining the existing Falkirk South Ward boundary. There are currently 77 postcodes and around 2,974 electors in this area, with the remainder of the former Ward 7 – Falkirk South being in the proposed Falkirk South constituency.
- 3.11 If the Commission included the 2,974 electors noted in paragraph 3.10 above in the proposed Falkirk South constituency, the number of electors in that constituency would increase to around 74,902, which is still within the recommended electorate quota range. However, the impact on Stirling and Falkirk North constituency would be an electorate of around 68,203 which is below the minimum quota allowance.
- 3.12 As the Commission used the 2007 Ward boundaries for its calculations, Council is reminded that Skinflats is included in the former Ward 2 – Grangemouth and would sit within the proposed Falkirk South constituency.

Skinflats now sits within Ward 4 – Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst and the remainder of this Ward is proposed to sit within the Stirling and Falkirk North constituency.

3.13 The current UK Parliamentary constituency of Linlithgow and East Falkirk requires joint working with West Lothian Council and Lothian Valuation Joint Board and Electoral Registration Officer. The Commission's proposals, notwithstanding the issues raised above, remove this joint working arrangement and involve, instead, joint working with Stirling Council and continued working across the Forth Valley Area with the Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board and Electoral Registration Officer. The proposals also sit well with existing links such as NHS Forth Valley, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

3.14 The Commission's revised proposals provide a closer match between the Falkirk Council Wards and the proposed UK Parliamentary constituencies which, in turn, simplifies the links between elected Members and MPs across the Falkirk Council and Forth Valley areas.

4. Consultation

4.1 The revised proposals were raised firstly with Group Leaders and circulated to all elected Members in October 2017. In addition, they have been published on the Council website for the duration of the consultation period and have been publicised through the Council's social media channels.

5. Implications

Financial

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations.

Resources

5.2 There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations.

Legal

5.3 The Boundary Commission for Scotland is tasked by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) to undertake a review of UK Parliament constituencies in Scotland. Final recommendations will be submitted by the Commission to the Secretary of State in September 2018, in accordance with legislation. A report will subsequently be laid before Parliament.

Risk

5.4 There are no known risk implications arising from this report.

Equalities

5.5 No equality and poverty impact assessment was required.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 5.6 No sustainability assessment has been completed as part of compiling the report.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 In the absence of alternative proposals which would meet the strict criteria of the legislation, the proposals present workable UK Parliamentary constituencies reflecting recognised boundaries and ensuring continued partnership working across the Forth Valley area.

Chief Executive

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Date: 15 November 2017

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Map outlining the proposed Falkirk South and Stirling & Falkirk North constituencies
- Appendix 2 – Map outlining the Falkirk Council area, proposed boundaries and the 2007 Wards
- Appendix 3 – Map outlining the implication of the proposals on the Camelon area, formerly Ward 7 – Falkirk South (2007)

List of Background Papers:

- 1 Letter dated 13 October 2017 from the Boundary Commission for Scotland containing summary of revised proposals, maps and associated documentation

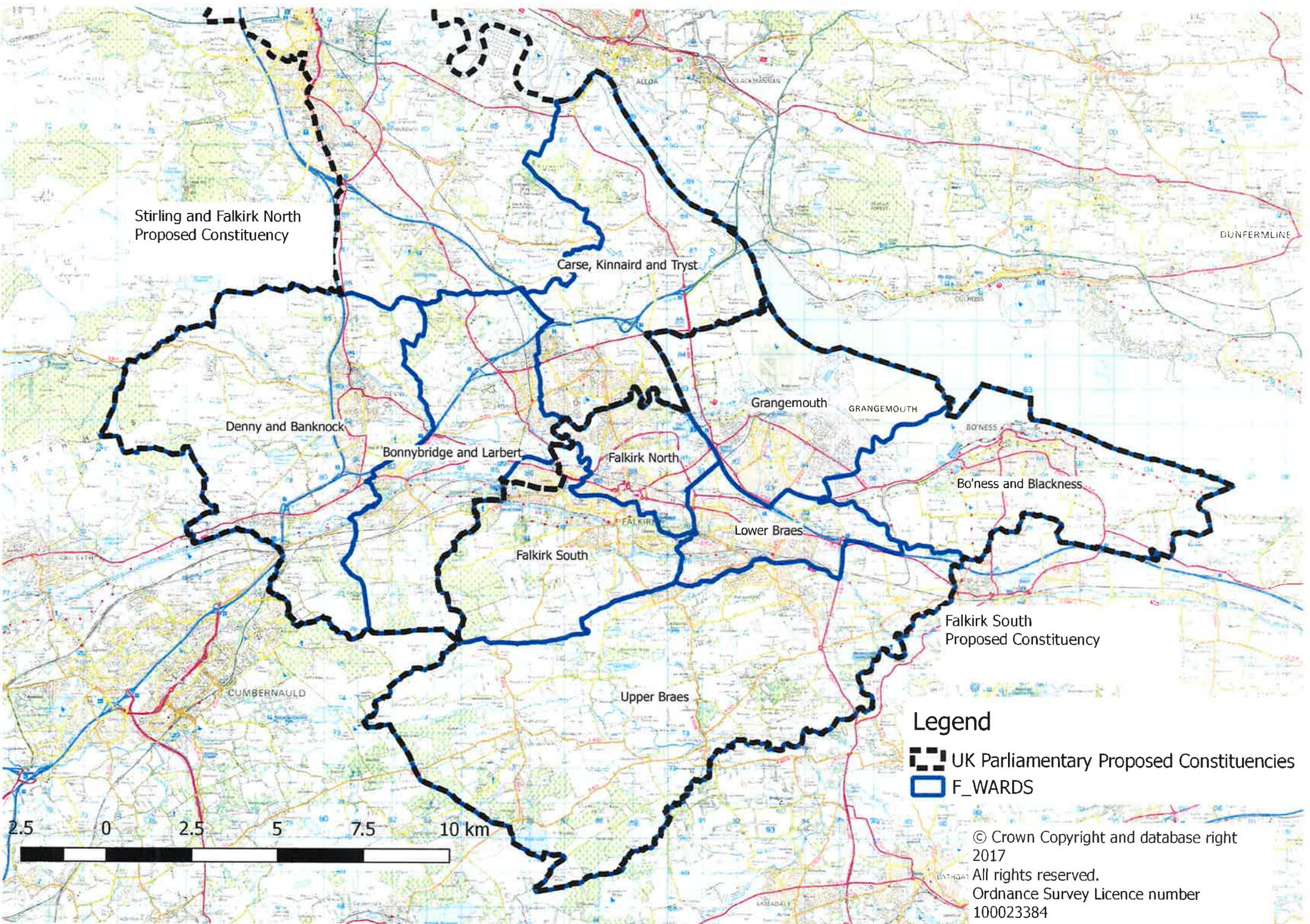
Stirling and Falkirk North
71,177 electors

Stirling and Falkirk North

Falkirk South

Falkirk South
71,118 electors





Stirling and Falkirk North
Proposed Constituency

Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst

Denny and Banknock

Bonnybridge and Larbert

Falkirk North

Falkirk South

Lower Braes

Upper Braes

Grangemouth

Bo'ness and Blackness

Falkirk South
Proposed Constituency

Legend

-  UK Parliamentary Proposed Constituencies
-  F_WARDS



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Proposed
Stirling and Falkirk North
UK Parliament Constituency

Proposed
Falkirk South
UK Parliament Constituency

Bonnybridge and Larbert

Falkirk South

Falkirk North

2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituency

- Area of Interest
- ▬ Proposed UK Parliament Constituency
- ▬ 2007 Ward Boundaries (Falkirk)

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