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Press Notice

14 JUNE 2005

LOCAL INQUIRIES INTO CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

Public Local Inquiries are to be held into the Provisional Recommendations of the Boundary Commission. The Commission published their recommendations for new constituency boundaries on 6 May 2004 affecting 14 of the present 18 constituencies in Northern Ireland. Notice of the Inquiries is published today.

The Inquiries will be held in public and any interested person, whether supporting or objecting to the Commission's proposals may attend and be heard at the discretion of the assistant Commissioner conducting the Inquiry. The assistant Commissioner will also take into account all written representations already submitted to the Commission. The Commission urges all those interested to attend the Inquiries and make known their views. It is open to the Commission, on consideration of the evidence submitted at Inquiries and assistant Commissioner's reports of those Inquiries, to revise their recommendations. While the Commission will always invite written representations on any revised recommendations further Local Inquiries are rarely held.

The Inquiries are to be conducted by assistant Commissioners selected from a panel appointed by the Secretary of State, as follows:-

Mr James Toolan BA, Barrister at Law, of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland, Bar Library, 91 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 3JQ, will hold a Local Inquiry in respect of the Recommendations affecting the borough constituencies of Belfast East, Belfast North, Belfast South and Belfast West in the City Hall, Donegall Square, Belfast. The Inquiry will open at 10.30am on 5 September 2005.

Mr Thomas Stewart Beattie, BA, LLB, Barrister at Law, of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland, Bar Library, 91 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 3JQ, will hold a Local Inquiry in respect of the Recommendations affecting the county constituencies of East Antrim, East Londonderry, Foyle, North Antrim and South Antrim in the Adair Arms Hotel, Ballymena, Co Antrim. The Inquiry will open at 10.30am on 14 September 2005.

Mr Colin Haddick BA, Solicitor, of the Law Society of Northern Ireland, Law Society House, 98 Victoria Street, Belfast BT1 3JZ, will hold a Local Inquiry in respect of the Recommendations affecting the county constituencies of Lagan Valley, Newry and Armagh, South Down, Strangford and Upper Bann in the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle, Co Down. The Inquiry will open at 10.30am on 19 September 2005.

The Provisional Recommendations, copies of representations received by the Commission, a Statement of Reasons issued by the Commission explaining their Recommendations and a booklet outlining the purpose and procedure of the Inquiries are being made available for public inspection at all district council headquarter offices, the Electoral Office and Area Electoral Offices, the offices of the Electoral Commission in Northern Ireland and the Boundary Commission.

[View the Commission's Statement of Reasons and procedure booklet.](#)

Notes for Editors

1. The Commission are an independent and impartial body. The Chairman of the Commission is the Speaker of the House of Commons, The Rt Hon Michael Martin MP. The Deputy Chairman of the Commission is the Hon Mr Justice Coghlin, a Northern Ireland High Court Judge. The other Members of the Commission are Mr Richard Mackenzie CB and Mrs Joan Ruddock CBE.
2. The Commission's Provisional Recommendations propose no change to the present number of constituencies in Northern Ireland but changes are proposed to the boundaries of 14 constituencies.
3. Anyone or any organisation interested in the proposals was invited to make representations to the Commission by 6 June 2004. The Commission received some 30 submissions from members of the public, elected representatives, political parties, district councils and other interested bodies. All those who submitted representations are being informed of the Local Inquiries and places where they may inspect representations that the Commission have received. They are also being sent the procedure booklet and the Commission's Statement of Reasons.
4. Further information can be obtained from the offices of the Commission or from the Commission's website at www.boundarycommission.org.uk