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## 2013 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report contains details of the initial proposals from the Boundary Commission for England for new Parliamentary constituency boundaries. There is a twelve week consultation period on these proposals from 13 September to 5 December 2011.

### 2 BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND'S PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The Boundary Commission are currently conducting a review of Parliamentary constituencies on the basis of new rules laid down by Parliament. These rules involve a significant reduction in the number of constituencies in England from 533 to 502. They also require that every constituency (apart from the two covering the Isle of Wight) must have an electorate that is no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473; that is 5% either side of the electoral quota of 76,641.
- 2.2 The legislation states that, when deciding on boundaries, the Commission may also take into account:-
- (a) Special geographical considerations, including the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency;
  - (b) Local government boundaries as they existed on 6 May 2010;
  - (c) Boundaries of existing constituencies; and
  - (d) Any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.
- 2.3 However, none of the factors listed above overrides the necessity to achieve an electorate in each constituency that is within the figures specified above.
- 2.4 As a starting point the Boundary Commission have based their proposals on the nine regions used for European elections. In terms of the Eastern Region, comprising the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, there are currently 58 constituencies. Of these, only 26 have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. 27 constituencies are below the lower 5% limit and 5 constituencies are above the upper limit.
- 2.5 The Boundary Commission have taken an initial decision that the Eastern region is allocated 56 constituencies, a reduction of 2. Specifically, Essex is reduced from 18 to 17 constituencies. This is based on an Essex-wide electorate (including Southend and Thurrock) of 1,280,544, which produces an allocation of 17 constituencies with an average electorate of 75,326, which is 1,315 below the electoral quota.
- 2.6 The Boundary Commission's proposals for Essex are set out in Appendix 1.

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- 2.7 The Boundary Commission notes that the current Rayleigh and Wickford constituency is within 5% of the electoral quota, but in developing proposals in which all of the electorates in Essex are within the 5% limit, and taking account of the reduction in the number of constituencies, changes are nevertheless proposed to all but two constituencies in Essex (Colchester and Thurrock).
- 2.8 In respect of the two existing constituencies that cover the Rochford District the following is proposed:-
- (a) Rochford and Southend East Constituency – this would include the wards covering Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge in addition to the current wards of Ashingdon & Canewdon, Barling & Sutton, Foulness & Great Wakering, and the Southend wards of Kursaal, Shoeburyness, Southchurch, Thorpe and West Shoebury. This gives an electorate of 76,697. (The wards of Milton, St Lukes and Victoria in Southend are transferred into Southend West.)
  - (b) Rayleigh & Wickford Constituency – as the wards covering Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge have been placed in the Rochford and Southend East Constituency, the proposal is to include, along with all the wards comprising Rayleigh & Rawreth, and the 3 Basildon wards in Wickford, 3 additional wards of the Borough of Basildon (Pitsea North West, Pitsea South East and Vange) and the Rettendon & Runwell ward of the Borough of Chelmsford. This gives an electorate of 76,639.

Maps showing these proposed constituencies are attached at Appendix 2.

- 2.9 The Boundary Commission are consulting on their initial proposals from 13 September to 5 December.
- 2.10 The Boundary Commission have stressed that in making comments the following factors should be taken into account:-
- (a) The Commission cannot recommend constituencies that have electorates that are more or less than 5% from the electoral quota.
  - (b) The initial proposals are based on local government ward boundaries (as at May 2010) as the building blocks of constituencies and that in the absence of exceptional and compelling circumstances it would not be appropriate to divide wards in cases where it is possible to construct constituencies that meet the 5% statutory requirement without doing so.
  - (c) Constituencies have been constructed within the nine regions so as not to cross regional boundaries and again compelling reasons would be needed to depart from this approach.
- 2.11 For these reasons the Commission encourages respondents to bear in mind the impact of any counter-proposals on neighbouring constituencies.

**3 ASSESSMENT**

- 3.1 An option could be to suggest that the District boundary is used for the Parliamentary Constituency boundary. However, as at May 2010 the electorate of the District was 65,333 which does not meet the Boundary Commission criteria for the electorate being no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473.
- 3.2 The existing Rayleigh and Wickford Constituency had an electorate of 75,832 in May 2010, which does meet the Boundary Commission criteria. The existing Rochford and Southend East Constituency had an electorate of 71,467 in May 2010 which does not meet the stated criteria. A starting point for reviewing the boundaries could be retaining those constituencies within the parameters where possible and principally focusing on those that do not meet the criteria.
- 3.3 Members' views are invited on the response to be made to the Boundary Commission.

**4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES** to make a response to the 2013 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies.

Sarah Fowler

Head of Information & Customer Services

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**Background Papers:-**

Boundary Commission for England Initial Proposals for the Eastern Region.

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**Extract from Boundary Commission for England 2013 Review  
Initial Proposals for Essex**

50. There are currently 18 constituencies in this sub-region, only five of which (Chelmsford, Colchester, Rayleigh and Wickford, Saffron Walden, and Thurrock) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. Of the remaining constituencies, all 13 have electorates that are below the 5% limit. We propose to reduce the number of constituencies to 17.

51. We considered whether we could leave unchanged any of the five existing constituencies that had an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which all of the electorates are within the 5% limit, and taking account of the reduction in the number of constituencies in this sub-region, we propose changing all but two constituencies (Colchester and Thurrock).

52. In south-east Essex, the existing Castle Point constituency, at 64,562, does not contain sufficient electors. In seeking to increase the electorate of this constituency, we noted that there was no direct transport link between Canvey Island and the East Thurrock area to the west. Nor did we want to divide the town of Rayleigh between constituencies by including any wards of the District of Rochford in our proposed Castle Point constituency. We therefore propose including two wards from the Borough of Southend-on-Sea (Leigh and West Leigh), because there are continuous development and close transport links between Leigh and the Borough of Castle Point. This also avoids dividing the Borough of Castle Point between constituencies.

53. We propose to include three wards of the Borough of Southend-on-Sea (Milton, St Luke's, and Victoria) in our Southend West constituency. This requires the inclusion of the towns of Hawkwell and Hockley in an enlarged Rochford and Southend East constituency. We propose to include three additional wards of the Borough of Basildon (Pitsea North West, Pitsea South East, and Vange), and the Rettendon and Runwell ward of the Borough of Chelmsford, in the Rayleigh and Wickford constituency.

54. We propose a Basildon and Thurrock East constituency that contains the six wards of the Borough of Basildon that incorporate the town of Basildon, and five wards of the Borough of Thurrock, including the towns of Corringham and Stanford-le-Hope. We propose retaining the existing Thurrock constituency

55. We noted that the electorate of the existing Epping Forest constituency is too small and we propose to include the Lambourne ward of the District of Epping Forest (which has direct road links into the rest of the constituency) from the existing Brentwood and Ongar constituency. To compensate for this change, we propose that the existing Brentwood and Ongar constituency be extended southwards to include the Orsett ward of the Borough of Thurrock.

56. We noted that the electorate of the existing Harlow constituency is also too small. By not altering the boundary between the Harlow constituency and the Brentwood

and Ongar and Epping Forest constituencies, we decided to extend the Harlow constituency by including three wards (Broad Oak and the Hallingburys, Hatfield Heath, and The Rodings) from the south west of the District of Uttlesford.

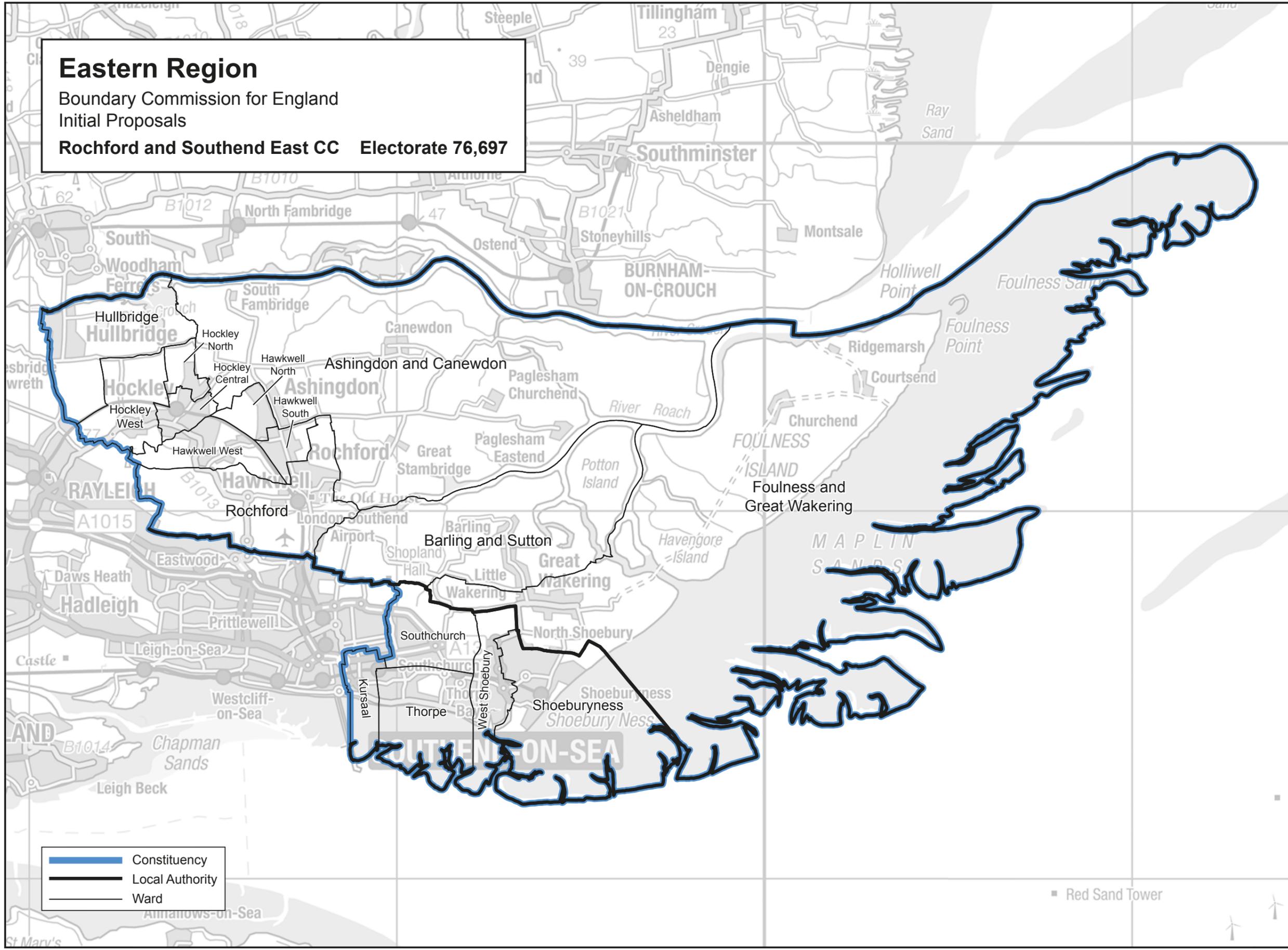
57. As a consequence of our changes elsewhere, we propose a new Billericay and Great Dunmow constituency that contains four wards of the Borough of Basildon, six wards of the Borough of Chelmsford and five wards of the District of Uttlesford. By doing so, we are also able to make only a minor change to the existing Chelmsford constituency, which is reduced by including the Galleywood ward of the Borough of Chelmsford in the Billericay and Great Dunmow constituency. Our proposed Maldon constituency does not extend as far to the west as the existing constituency. It contains the whole of the District of Maldon, four wards of the Borough of Chelmsford, including the town of South Woodham Ferrers, and the Tiptree ward of the Borough of Colchester.

58. We propose retaining unaltered the existing Colchester constituency. We also propose a Braintree and Witham constituency containing 17 wards from the south of the District of Braintree. This constituency respects the district boundaries of Chelmsford, Colchester, and Uttlesford to the south, east, and west respectively. The remaining 13 wards of the District of Braintree, and 19 wards of the District of Uttlesford, from the existing Braintree and Saffron Walden constituencies, form our proposed North West Essex constituency. Our proposed North East Essex constituency contains 13 wards of the Borough of Colchester and ten wards of the District of Tendring, thereby entirely surrounding the Colchester constituency. The remaining wards in the District of Tendring form our Harwich and Clacton constituency.

Please note that the paragraph numbers relate to those in the Boundary Commission consultation document.

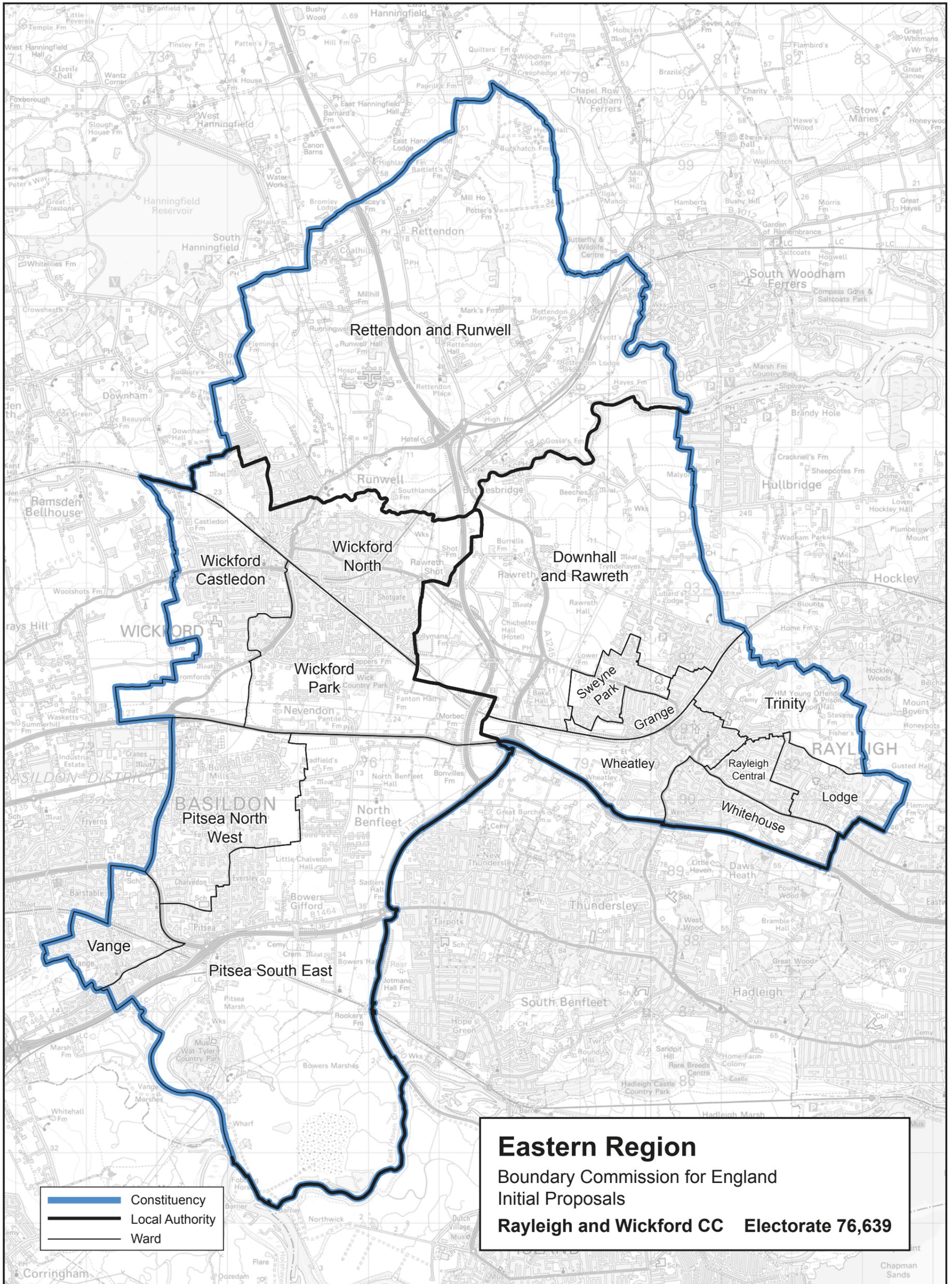
October 2011

**Eastern Region**  
 Boundary Commission for England  
 Initial Proposals  
**Rochford and Southend East CC Electorate 76,697**



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**Rochford and Southend East CC**



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