

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT

Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee

DRAFT BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (STRUCTURAL  
CHANGES) (SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION AND  
AMENDMENT) ORDER 2020

*Tuesday 17 March 2020*

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**Saturday 21 March 2020**

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**The Committee consisted of the following Members:**

*Chair:* SIR EDWARD LEIGH

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| † Debonnaire, Thangam ( <i>Bristol West</i> ) (Lab)  | † Mumby-Croft, Holly ( <i>Scunthorpe</i> ) (Con)                     |
| † Elphicke, Mrs Natalie ( <i>Dover</i> ) (Con)   | † Nichols, Charlotte ( <i>Warrington North</i> ) (Lab)               |
| † Hall, Luke ( <i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government</i> ) | † Phillipson, Bridget ( <i>Houghton and Sunderland South</i> ) (Lab) |
| Heald, Sir Oliver ( <i>North East Hertfordshire</i> ) (Con)  | † Saxby, Selaine ( <i>North Devon</i> ) (Con)                        |
| † Hughes, Eddie ( <i>Walsall North</i> ) (Con)   | Sharma, Mr Virendra ( <i>Ealing, Southall</i> ) (Lab)                |
| † Hunt, Tom ( <i>Ipswich</i> ) (Con)   | † Stewart, Bob ( <i>Beckenham</i> ) (Con)                            |
| Kawczynski, Daniel ( <i>Shrewsbury and Atcham</i> ) (Con)  | Stringer, Graham ( <i>Blackley and Broughton</i> ) (Lab)             |
| † McMahon, Jim ( <i>Oldham West and Royton</i> ) (Lab/Co-op)   |  |
| † McMorris, Anna ( <i>Cardiff North</i> ) (Lab)  | Ben Street, <i>Committee Clerk</i>                                   |
| † Metcalfe, Stephen ( <i>South Basildon and East Thurrock</i> ) (Con)  |  |
|  | † <b>attended the Committee</b>                                      |

# Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee

Tuesday 17 March 2020

[SIR EDWARD LEIGH *in the Chair*]

## Draft Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) (Supplementary Provision and Amendment) Order 2020

2.30 pm

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (Luke Hall):** I beg to move,

That the Committee has considered the draft Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) (Supplementary Provision and Amendment) Order 2020.

This order was laid before the House on 24 February 2020. If approved and made, it will update the membership arrangements for the conservation board of the Chilterns area of outstanding natural beauty to take account of the restructuring of local government in Buckinghamshire. We expect this to be the final statutory instrument connected to local government restructuring in Buckinghamshire.

The order bringing about local government reorganisation in Buckinghamshire came into force on 23 May 2019. It provided for a reorganisation date of 1 April 2020, when the new Buckinghamshire Council will assume the full range of local authority responsibilities and the five existing councils—the county council and four district councils—will be wound up and abolished.

That order established a shadow authority and shadow executive, which has been managing the transition to the new council. I am very pleased that all the councils have been working closely together to deliver the new unitary council, and I take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and dedication during this period. We look forward to seeing the new Buckinghamshire Council flourish and deliver the high-quality services that its residents deserve.

The conservation board of the Chilterns area of outstanding natural beauty is made up of members appointed by the relevant local councils, parish council representatives and members nominated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, following open national competition. The board's composition is set out in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Establishment of Conservation Board) Order 2004. The board is responsible for conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Chilterns and increasing the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.

Local government restructuring in Buckinghamshire will abolish all five of the Buckinghamshire councils that nominate a member of the Chiltern AONB conservation board, and some changes are needed to the membership arrangements to take account of those changes to local government. The Chilterns AONB conservation board currently has a total membership of 27: one representative for each of the 13 councils specified in schedule 1 to the 2004 order; two parish council members for each of Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire; and eight members nominated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Without this order, the new Buckinghamshire Council would be able to appoint only one member to the conservation board. However, 50% of the area of the Chilterns AONB falls within Buckinghamshire Council's boundaries. The shadow executive of Buckinghamshire Council has requested that the status quo be maintained so that the new council will nominate five members to the board, to provide adequate representation for the area. It considers that the current membership arrangements, with five board members for the area of Buckinghamshire as a whole, better reflect the extent of the AONB that falls within the new council area.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 specifies that at least 40% of the AONB board membership must be from local authorities and at least 20% from parish councils. These changes ensure that that requirement continues to be met. There are no other changes to membership of the board.

In conclusion, this order will amend the membership arrangements for the board of the Chilterns AONB to retain a total of 13 members nominated by local councils, five of which are nominated from the Buckinghamshire area. There are no changes to membership of the board otherwise. This ensures that the new Buckinghamshire Council is able to nominate a number of members that is commensurate with having 50% of the AONB within its borders and that local authority membership complies with the requirements of the 2000 Act. The order delivers on that objective and I commend it to the Committee.

2.34 pm

**Jim McMahon** (Oldham West and Royton) (Lab/Co-op): I appreciate that the Minister has a number of more pressing issues to deal with at the moment, so I do not intend to speak other than to confirm that the Opposition do not intend to divide the Committee on this issue.

**The Chair:** Right. Well, this has been a very long and difficult debate.

*Question put and agreed to.*

2.34 pm

*Committee rose.*