

Summary of Money Resolution Debate: 16th October 2018

Most bills pass through this stage more or less as a formality, but in this case the Labour Opposition tabled an amendment that would limit expenditure to £10,000 per annum. This would have prevented implementation of the bill which is estimated to cost £10m per annum to administer. The amendment was described by the Government Minister for the Constitution Chloe Smith as a 'shameful wrecking amendment'; she criticised the 'highly unusual' use of this device, not used since 1912, 'to block an important matter of principle'.

It transpired from the debate that Labour's tactic was motivated by the Government's refusal to grant a Money Resolution to another Private Member's Bill sponsored by the Labour MP for Manchester Gorton, Afzal Khan. You can read Afzal Khan's account of this [here](#).

His bill seeks to maintain the number of parliamentary constituencies at 650 which is a direct challenge to the Government's proposal to reduce the number to 600. You can read the Opposition's view of the Boundary Commission recommendations [here](#)

Following a two-year review, the Boundary Commissions submitted their final reports to the Government in September 2018 and the Government must now lay a single draft Order in Council; Chloe Smith has said that this would take several months to prepare. You can read more about the Boundary Commissions and their reports [here](#)

Chloe Smith explained that as set out in the Impact Assessment, the approximate cost to an administrator to register a British national who lives in the UK is £1.76 per application, while under the current system it costs £3.82 to process an overseas application. That is because the process is subject to higher international postage costs, and more staff time spent on verifying and processing applications. For those who left the UK more than 15 years ago, and who will be enfranchised under this policy, there will be a small additional expense owing to the need to manually check evidence of a previous residency or registration, and to review any attestations. She insisted that the Government are committed to funding the additional costs that derive from the Bill under what is called the 'new burdens doctrine': in other words, that burden would not fall on local authorities. Central Government want to assist, and will therefore also face upfront implementation costs, for IT changes and the administering of polls, which will total about £0.9 million.

At the end of the debate the Government won the Division: you can see how the parties voted in the debate [here](#)