EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

THE NORFOLK CORONERS' DISTRICT ORDER 2007

2007 No. 737

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Constitutional Affairs and is laid before the House of Commons by Command of Her Majesty.

2. Description

2.1 This instrument seeks to amalgamate two of the three coroner's districts in the county of Norfolk (Norwich and Central Norfolk; and King's Lynn) into one district to be named Greater Norfolk.

3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

3.1 None.

4. Legislative Background

4.1 Under section 4(2) of the Coroners Act 1988 local authorities have powers to submit to the Secretary of State, draft orders for alterations to coroners' districts within England and Wales, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Coroners (Orders as to Districts) Rules 1927 as to advertising their intentions. The coroners' districts within Norfolk were last established in 2001 (SI 2001 No 666) when the number of districts was reduced from five to three. The Secretary of State has power under section 4(2) of the 1988 Act to make such changes to the draft order submitted by the Council as he thinks fit and has done so in making this order.

5. Extent

5.1 This instrument applies to England and Wales.

5.2 It affects only the County of Norfolk.

6. European Convention on Human Rights

6.1 As the instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

7. Policy background

7.1 The Home Office was responsible for coroner law and policy until the transfer of these responsibilities to the Department for Constitutional Affairs on 1 June 2005. It was a long established Home Office policy that coroners' districts should be amalgamated in order to create larger part-time or full-time districts. This was both to enable the coroners' service to benefit from any economies of scale and to give the coroner concerned greater experience in dealing with sudden deaths. The Department for Constitutional Affairs intends to continue this policy. The new district of Greater Norfolk is expected to have about 3,200 reported deaths a year.

8. Impact

8.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument as it has no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

9. Contact

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