

## **Pre-Election Publicity Guidance**

### **Report by Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive**

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

This report invites the Council to approve guidance on publicity in the approach to the General Election on 7 May 2015.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1** On 5 November 2013, the Council approved updated Pre-Election Period Guidance. This guidance was designed to cover all elections, including UK Parliament elections.
- 2.2** This guidance has been updated to incorporate lessons learned from the European Parliament election, the Independence Referendum and the Midlothian East by-election all held last year. The guidance also seeks to distinguish the actions of councillors as elected members and as candidates in the general election. The amended guidance is attached hereto ( **Appendix 1** )
- 2.3** The notice of election will be published on 31 March. Given the number of elected members standing as candidates in the forthcoming General Election, it is suggested that the Council enters the pre-election period in advance of that date. Accordingly, it is proposed that the pre-election guidance be effective from the date of today's meeting.

#### **3 Report Implications**

##### **3.1 Resource**

There are no financial or human resource implications in this report.

##### **3.2 Risk**

There are risks in relation to the Council's governance arrangements and reputation if up-to-date pre-election guidance is not in place and fully adhered to during the pre-election period.

##### **3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation**

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ✓ ☐ None of the above

### **3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

Approval of the guidance will enhance the Council's governance arrangements and thereby help to achieve best value.

### **3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Having approved guidance will provide certainty for both candidates and Council staff in their actions and prevent dispute thereby ensuring internal resources are used in a more efficient and effective manner.

### **3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

The proposed Midlothian Council guidance is an updated version of the guidance previously approved by the Standards Committee and the full Council

### **3.7 Ensuring Equalities**

An EqlA is not required

### **3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

This report does not contribute to sustainable development

### **3.9 IT Issues**

There are no IT implications arising from the report

## **4 Recommendations**

The Council is invited to approve the Pre-Election Publicity Guidance shown at **Appendix 1** and that such Guidance take effect from the date of today's meeting.

**Date 11 March 2015**

### **Report Contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

Representation of the People Act 1973  
Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000