

Earth Hour 2014**Report by John Blair, Director Resources****1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the Council's plans to participate and encourage community involvement in World Wide Fund Earth Hour 2014.

2 Background**2.1 Earth Hour Movement**

Earth Hour is a worldwide grass-roots movement for the planet organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Earth Hour engages communities to be involved in a broad range of environmental issues. It started as a lights-off event in Sydney, Australia in 2007. Since then it has grown to engage more than 7000 cities and towns worldwide, and the one-hour event continues to remain the key driver of the now larger movement. The event is held worldwide annually towards the end of March. The event encourages individuals, communities, households and businesses to turn off non-essential lights for one hour as a symbol of their commitment to the planet. Earth Hour 2014 is scheduled for Saturday, March 29, from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

2.2 Midlothian Participation

To mark Earth Hour 2014 across Midlothian it is proposed to:

- Switch off Decorative Lighting across the Council's Property Portfolio where appropriate to do so;
- Encourage Community Groups and organisations to participate in Earth Hour 2014; and
- Encourage residents and business where appropriate to switch off lights for up to an hour on Saturday 29 March 2014.

3 Report Implications**3.1 Resource**

The minimal Council resources associated with this proposal and these can be accommodated via existing service arrangements.

3.2 Risk

There is a potential reputation risk if Midlothian Council does not participate in Earth Hour 2014, there could be criticism.

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 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The proposals set out in this report are also applicable to the Councils Community Planning Partners.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The proposals set out in this report do not impact on performance and outcomes.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

None

3.7 Involving communities and Other Stakeholders

The purpose of this report extends to the potential involvement of communities, business, other organisations and residents to participate.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

An Equality Assessment is not required.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

In line with the aims of Earth Hour 2014 this proposal highlights the issue of Climate change.

4 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising from this report

5 Recommendations

Cabinet are invited to:

- a) Note the purpose of Earth Hour; and
- b) Note the proposed scope of the Council's involvement for 2014.

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Background Papers:

