

Fifth Review of Local Government Electoral Arrangements by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Report by Chief Executive

1 Purpose of Report

The Fifth Review of Local Government Electoral Arrangements by the Local Government Boundary Review Commission for Scotland commenced in February 2014. On 29 May 2014 the Review entered a 12 week public consultation period to allow local people and organisations to comment on the proposals. The Review will result in the Commission making recommendations to Scottish Ministers for the number of Councillors on each Council and the number and boundaries of wards for the election of Councillors.

2 Background

- 2.1** As the first part of the Review process representatives of the Boundary Commission - Mr Ronnie Hinds (Chairman) and Mr Colin Wilson (Commission Secretariat) – met on 24 March 2014 with the Council's Political Leaders viz:- Councillor Thompson, Councillor Russell (substituting for Councillor Milligan) and Councillor Baxter. The Review process and methodology processes were explained with reference to the Commission's Guidance Booklet (which had been previously circulated to all members of the Council).
- 2.2** At that meeting the view was taken that Midlothian would not be making a formal response to the Commission at that stage. However, it was noted that the formal 12 week period of consultation would commence on 29 May 2014 and that the Council would, if it was so minded, make representation during that part of the Review process. This stance was communicated by letter to the Commission.
- 2.3** At the start of the public consultation period the Commission published the attached Notice and press release as detailed at the **Appendix** hereto. These show that the Commission proposes that the number of Councillors for Midlothian should remain unchanged - ie 18 Councillors.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The Boundary Commission proposals are that the *status quo* subsist in Midlothian in regard to the number of Councillors. This would mean that there would be no additional resource implications.

3.2/**3.2 Risk**

There are no additional risks arising from the proposals.

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

Not relevant.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Maintaining the *status quo* would have no impact.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not relevant.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The Local Government Boundary Commission are carrying out a public consultation on their proposals via their interactive consultation portal and also have invited email/written submissions.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The Commission is carrying out the Review to ensure as far as possible electoral parity and to take into account of deprivation and population distribution.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not relevant.

3.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues.

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4 Recommendations

The Council is invited to comment on the Local Government Boundary Commission's proposals for Midlothian in respect of their "*Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements*".

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Background Papers:-

- Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland – "*Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements*" – Guidance Booklet.

Note: The public consultation Review Documents are available for inspection at:-

- Library at The Penicuik Centre
- Library at The Lasswade Centre
- Gorebridge Library
- Loanhead Library
- Mayfield Library
- Midlothian House Reception

