

**UPDATE ON BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
ELECTORAL WARDS**

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report provides an update on the ongoing review of Local Government electoral wards currently being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland in light of the requirements of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Members are asked to consider and note the update on the review of electoral wards by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland.

**3.0 DETAIL**

3.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland are undertaking a review of the six council areas which contain inhabited islands as soon as practicable in terms of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

3.2 The Commission commenced reviews of Argyll and Bute, Highland and North Ayrshire council areas in late 2019 with the aim that the reviews would be completed in time for the 2022 local government elections.

3.3 Officials from the Boundary Commission met with the Council Leader, Chief Executive, Executive Director – Customer Services and Head of Legal and Regulatory Support in October 2019 to have a preliminary discussion on their approach and any initial thoughts the Council may have.

3.4 Since the meeting with the Boundary Commission, the Council have provided information, as requested by them, in regard to house building and population projections, community councils and school catchment areas amongst other things.

3.5 Issues for consideration in the review include:

Councillor numbers

Use of the power to create wards of between 1 and 4 members where these contain inhabited islands

How they define islands communities

Any other ward design considerations

Electorate forecasts

Effective consultation arrangements.

3.6 The Council also suggested in terms of public awareness that the Commission could attend a Community Planning meeting and details of future meetings have been provided to them to facilitate this. There may also be an opportunity for them to attend a future Members' Seminar.

3.7 The timescales for the review are broadly as follows, although uncertainty around the progress of the Scottish Elections (Reform) Bill means that at the moment firm timescales cannot be set.

- November 2019 – February 2020 – preparation of Initial Proposals
- March-June 2020 – formal 2-month consultation with the Council
- August-November 2020 – 3-month public consultation

3.8 It is intended that recommendations will be submitted to Scottish Ministers no later than May 2021 so that they can come into force for the local government elections in May 2022.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

4.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland is currently undertaking a review of Local Government boundaries in the six Council areas which have inhabited islands in terms of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. This report provides an update on the progress of the review in relation to Argyll and Bute.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Policy           None at present

5.2 Financial       None at present

5.3 Legal           None at present

5.4 HR              None at present

5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: at present

5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics       None at present

5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty                           None at present

5.5.3 Islands:- there could be impact in relation to island communities dependent on the outcome of the review and if recommendations are accepted.

5.6. Risk               None at present

5.7 Customer Service   None at present

**Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support**

**Policy Lead – Councillor Robin Currie**

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