

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries Draft Provisional Proposals for City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Council areas

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to consider its Provisional Proposals for City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Council areas for its Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries.

Background

2. The Commission previously considered Provisional Proposals for City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Council areas at its meeting of 9 February 2023, see BS Paper 35.
3. At the February 2022 meeting the Commission considered the five options presented and preferred Option 3 but asked the Secretariat to refine the boundaries in Option 3 in a way that better recognised Rule 3 of the legislation at Fountainbridge and to the south of Edinburgh airport. Option 3 is presented again in this paper as Option 1 and Option 2 is a refined version of the original Option 3.
4. The electorate quota for the Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries is 59,902 electors per constituency.
5. The constituency entitlement for City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian council areas is 11.9 constituencies, rounded up to 12 constituencies.
6. The electorates of the 11 existing Scottish Parliament constituencies within City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Council areas are shown in the table below. Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale includes electors from Scottish Borders Council area :

Existing constituency	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota
Almond Valley	70,119	17.1%
East Lothian	67,523	12.7%
Edinburgh Central	65,240	8.9%
Edinburgh Eastern	72,512	21.1%
Edinburgh Northern and Leith	74,827	24.9%
Edinburgh Pentlands	59,274	-1.0%
Edinburgh Southern	62,786	4.8%
Edinburgh Western	65,827	9.9%
Linlithgow	76,337	27.4%
Midlothian North and Musselburgh	70,498	17.7%
Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale	64,697	8.0%

7. The existing Scottish Parliament boundaries have been in use since 2011.
8. Six of the existing constituencies are out-with 10% of the electoral quota, with three constituencies in excess of 20% variation from the electoral quota.

9. The constituency names in this paper are provisional. The Commission will have the opportunity to review all constituency names and designations prior to the publication of its Provisional Proposals.

Options

10. Two options are presented for consideration.

Option 1

11. Option 1 (Option 3 from Paper 35) aims to improve variation from the electorate quota and minimise the number of split wards.

12. A map of Option 1 can be found at Appendix A.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota	Wards
Almond Valley	61,257	2.3%	West Lothian 6,7,8,9
East Lothian	59,385	-0.9%	East Lothian 2(part),3(part),4,5,6
Edinburgh Central	59,203	-1.2%	City of Edinburgh 11,12(part),15
Edinburgh Eastern	64,870	8.3%	City of Edinburgh 14,16,17(part)
Edinburgh Pentlands	53,601	-10.5%	City of Edinburgh 2,7,9(part)
Edinburgh Southern	58,121	-3.0%	City of Edinburgh 8,9(part),10
Edinburgh Western	63,152	5.4%	City of Edinburgh 3,5,6
Edinburgh Northern and Leith	59,650	-0.4%	City of Edinburgh 4,12(part),13
Linlithgow	56,798	-5.2%	West Lothian 1,2 City of Edinburgh 1
Livingston	56,009	-6.5%	West Lothian 3,4,5
Midlothian North and Musselburgh	55,122	-8.0%	East Lothian 1,2(part),3(part) Midlothian 3 City of Edinburgh 17 (part)
Midlothian South	64,424	7.5%	Midlothian 1,2,4,5,6

13. The advantages of Option 1 are it:

- addresses the variation from electoral quota across the grouping. All 12 proposed constituencies have variation from the electoral quota within 10%; and
- splits only five wards across 12 constituencies.

14. The disadvantages of Option 1 are:

- there is little to connect north west of Edinburgh neighbourhoods such as Muirhouse or Silverknowes with communities in West Lothian such as Linlithgow; and
- it proposes a Midlothian North and Musselburgh constituency that contains parts of three council areas.

Option 2

15. Option 2 is similar to Option 1 but seeks to avoid oddly shaped constituency boundaries in central and west Edinburgh. In doing so Option 2 retains eight constituencies from Option 1 and makes changes to four constituencies: Edinburgh Pentlands; Edinburgh Southern; Edinburgh Western; and Linlithgow.
16. Option 2 adds the eastern part of Gorgie and all of the Dalry part of ward 7 (Sighthill/Gorgie) to an Edinburgh Southern constituency. The proposed boundary follows a railway line. Due to the high density of electors in Gorgie and Dalry, (approximately 9,000 electors), it is necessary to balance this change by adding electors to Edinburgh Pentlands from the western side of ward 8 (Colinton/Fairmilehead). The proposed boundary follows Colinton Mains Drive, the Braid Burn as it traverses Redford Road and then the eastern side of the Dreghorn “Polo-fields” development before following the Howden Burn south to the council area boundary on the Pentland Hills.
17. Option 2 also amends the northern edge of the proposed Edinburgh Pentlands constituency boundary where approximately 900 Newbridge and Gogar electors from Edinburgh ward 1 (Almond) are added to the proposed Edinburgh Pentlands constituency. In order to further improve the variation from electoral quota across the grouping the proposed Edinburgh Pentlands constituency also now includes approximately 3,000 South Gyle electors from Edinburgh ward 3 (Drum Brae/Gyle). The proposed boundary between the Edinburgh Western and Edinburgh Pentlands constituencies in the area follows the main railway line as it passes through the Gyle area.
18. A map of Option 2 can be found at Appendix B.

Constituency Name	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota	Wards
Edinburgh Pentlands	55,498	-7.4%	City of Edinburgh 1 (part),2,3(part),7(part),8(part),9(part)
Edinburgh Southern	60,424	0.9%	City of Edinburgh 7(part),8(part),9(part),10
Edinburgh Western	59,884	0.0%	City of Edinburgh 3(part),5,6
Linlithgow	55,866	-6.7%	West Lothian 1,2 City of Edinburgh 1
Almond Valley	61,257	2.3%	West Lothian 6,7,8,9
East Lothian	59,385	-0.9%	East Lothian 2(part),3(part),4,5,6
Edinburgh Central	59,203	-1.2%	City of Edinburgh 11,12(part),15
Edinburgh Eastern	64,870	8.3%	City of Edinburgh 14,16, 17(part)
Edinburgh Northern and Leith	59,650	-0.4%	City of Edinburgh 4,12(part),13
Livingston	56,009	-6.5%	West Lothian 3,4,5
Midlothian North and Musselburgh	55,122	-8.0%	East Lothian 1,2(part),3(part) Midlothian 3 City of Edinburgh 17 (part)
Midlothian South	64,424	7.5%	Midlothian 1, 2, 4-6

19. The advantages of Option 2 are it:

- also proposes all 12 constituencies with variation from the electoral quota within 10%;
- splits only nine wards across 12 constituencies; and
- seeks to address the possible issues seen in the proposed Option 1 by improving the boundaries of four constituencies by making their boundaries more coherent.

20. The disadvantages of Option 2 are:

- as with Option 1 there is little to connect north west of Edinburgh neighbourhoods such as Muirhouse or Silverknowes with communities in West Lothian such as Linlithgow; and
- it proposes a Midlothian North and Musselburgh constituency that contains parts of three council areas.

Summary

21. The only difference between Option 1 and Option 2 are the boundaries of four constituencies: Edinburgh Pentlands; Edinburgh Southern; Edinburgh Western; and Linlithgow.

22. Option 1 splits five wards. Option 2 splits nine wards.

23. Both options propose constituencies within 10% variation from the electoral quota.

24. Option 2 may propose more recognisable boundaries in Gorgie and South Gyle. Although it could be considered that this is at the expense of boundaries in Edinburgh Southern that partly follow recognisable ground features and community council boundaries as well as existing or historical electoral boundaries.

25. Both Option 1 and Option 2 propose two constituencies which cross council area boundaries. The proposed Midlothian North and Musselburgh constituency is the same in both options and contains parts of East Lothian, Midlothian and City of Edinburgh Council areas. Linlithgow contains parts of West Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council areas.

26. Due to changes in the distribution and size of electorates in the constituencies in this grouping it is not possible to retain any of the existing constituencies.

Conclusion

27. The Commission is invited to agree its Provisional Proposals for public consultation, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in other groupings.

Secretariat
March 2023



