

## Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries Local Inquiries

### Action Required

1. The Commission is invited to note the arrangements for its Local Inquiries following the consultation on its provisional proposals for constituencies.
2. At its meeting of 5 October 2023 the Commission considered Paper 74 and agreed to hold six Local Inquiries. Paper 59 (meeting of 29 August 2023) provided information from the Local Inquiries held during the First Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries.
3. The Commission also agreed to hold single-day Local Inquiries. Each Local Inquiry will have two separate sessions running from 2pm - 4pm and 6pm - 8pm. Each session may be concluded early if no-one wishes to make a comment.
4. The schedule for the Local Inquiries is shown in the table below.

<b>Constituencies concerned</b>	<b>Reason for holding Local Inquiry</b>	<b>Date, Venue, Sheriff Principal (SP)</b>
Midlothian North and Musselburgh	East Lothian Council objected to the proposals to trigger a Local Inquiry	7 December 2023 Musselburgh race course SP Ross
Cunninghame South. Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley.	East Ayrshire Council objected to the proposals to trigger a Local Inquiry	12 December 2023 Park Hotel, Kilmarnock SP Murphy
Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North. Dumbarton and Helensburgh.	Commission's discretion - large responses	13 December 2023 Clydebank Leisure Centre SP Murphy
Renfrewshire South. Glasgow Priesthill and Giffnock.	East Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Council objected to the proposals to trigger a Local Inquiry	14 December 2023 Lynnhurst Hotel, Johnstone and Parklands Hotel, Newton Mearns SP Murphy
Edinburgh Forth and Linlithgow	Commission's discretion - large responses	9 January 2024 Village Hotel, Ferry Road, Edinburgh SP Ross
Clyde Valley and Tweeddale	Scottish Borders Council objected to the proposals to trigger a Local Inquiry	11 January 2024 Peebles Hydro Hotel SP Ross

### **Venues**

5. The venues have been chosen as locations within the opposed constituency or constituencies.
6. Accessibility to public transport was also considered as a factor when choosing venues.

### **Speaker Booking**

7. Attendees will be invited to contact the Secretariat beforehand to book a time slot to speak at each hearing. Such an attendee booking system will allow the Secretariat to manage numbers and enable last minute changes being made to the schedule and to inform the Sheriff Principals of attendees beforehand.

### **Publication of responses received during initial consultation**

8. All responses to the initial consultation will be redacted and published on the Commission's consultation site, four weeks prior to the first Local Inquiry. This will allow public scrutiny of the responses and may encourage participation in the hearings. It will also be helpful to those attending to see the views of others.

### **Secondary Consultation publicity**

9. A general news release will be issued four weeks before first Local Inquiry. At this time consultation responses will also be published.
10. A local news release will then be issued two weeks before each Local Inquiry, see Appendix A (final version to be published on website [www.boundaries.scot](http://www.boundaries.scot)).
11. Stakeholders such as MSPs, MPs, Councils, political parties, community councils or community groups will be contacted directly. The Secretariat will write to consultation respondents who permitted them to contact them.

### **Sheriffs Principal**

12. Sheriff Principal Ross as Sheriff Principal for Lothian and Borders and Sheriff Principal Murphy as Sheriff Principal for North Strathclyde will conduct three Local Inquiries each. A formal letter from Scottish Ministers will be drafted confirming their appointments as Assistant Commissioners for the Local Inquiries.
13. The following materials will be sent to each Sheriff Principal beforehand:
  - Second Review Guidance Booklet (includes legislation regarding the Review);
  - Provisional Proposals Summary Booklet;
  - relevant Meeting Papers and Minutes;

- Local Inquiry Guidance Booklet;
- Provisional Order of Business;
- representations submitted (print and PDF files) filtered by council area and designation;
- maps of provisional proposals and alternative suggestions;
- Commission statement to the Local Inquiry; and
- information on claiming expenses.

14. The Secretariat have offered to meet with the Sheriffs Principal to discuss any concerns they may have and agree what they would find helpful.

### **Local Inquiry Statements**

15. When conducting the Local Inquiries during the First Review, each Sheriff Principal provided some brief background information to the review and read out a statement prepared by the Commission explaining the provisional proposals and responses received and described how the Inquiry would be conducted. The statement will be tailored for each specific grouping of constituencies.

16. A draft opening statement for the Kilmarnock Local Inquiry is attached at Appendix B (final version to be published on website [www.boundaries.scot](http://www.boundaries.scot)).

17. At the First Review, the statement was published before the Local Inquiry.

18. The statements will be tailored for each Local Inquiry and will include: explanations on how and why the provisional proposals were developed; summary of responses received during the initial consultation; aim to correct misinformation and misconceptions regarding the Review and its impact on other local boundaries.

19. The Sheriff Principal may wish to consider whether the statement will be repeated at the second session of each Local Inquiry.

### **Verbatim Reporters**

20. Larking Hodge Pollock will provide a transcription service at each Local Inquiry. They have provided transcripts at previous Local Inquiries and public hearings for the Boundary Commission for Scotland.

### **Display materials**

21. Branded banners will be on display along with copies of the materials shared with the Sheriff Principal.

22. Leaflets, Second Review Guide Booklet and other materials will be available for members of the public.

23.No revised proposals will be displayed at the Local Inquiries as this may pre-judge .

**Assistant Commissioner Report**

24.The Assistant Commissioner will send a report to the Commission after the inquiry. Apart from commenting on various objections received, the Assistant Commissioner is at liberty to suggest amendments or alterations to the proposals, or to substitute completely different proposals if these appear to command wider acceptance than the original proposals and meet the legislative requirements. A copy of the Assistant Commissioner’s report will be published on the Commission’s website.

**Recommendation**

25.The Commission is invited to note the general approach outlined above for the Local Inquiries and make any further suggestions regarding the administration of the Local Inquiries as it sees fit.

**Secretariat  
November 2023**