

## **2019 Reviews of Electoral Arrangements Final Report Template**

### **For decision**

1. At its 11 March 2021 meeting, the Commission considered a revised draft of a final report for Orkney Islands council area, to be used as the template for producing all six reports for the 2019 Reviews of Electoral Arrangements (LGBCS Paper 2555).
2. Following comments made at the meeting, and subsequently received from Commissioners by email, the Secretariat have produced a revised template and this is at Appendix A. This version of the template has been sent to Harper Macleod solicitors and a response is expected by 9 April. It will be forwarded separately to Commissioners once received.
3. One particular issue the Commission may wish to consider further relates to how to cover the factors that can and cannot be taken account of in considering consultation responses. Paragraph 35 of the template offers a short reference to this as general text. This question may be more significant in other council areas where there were a greater number of comments that concerned the legislative framework.
4. The Secretariat is in discussion with Scottish Government officials about the implications of the commencement of sections 7–10 of the Islands (Scotland) 2018 Act on December 2021. These require a relevant authority, such as the Commission, to have regard to islands communities in carrying out its functions and to carry out an Island Communities Impact Assessment in certain circumstances or publish reasons for not doing so. The relevant sections are at Appendix B for reference. An oral update will be given at the meeting.
5. Once the Orkney template is finalised it will be used as the basis for preparation of the other five review reports which the Commission will have an opportunity to consider and sign off at its May meeting. Advance copies can be circulated as each is complete if that would be helpful. It is intended that all 6 reports be sent to Scottish Ministers on 28 May.

### **Conclusion**

6. The Commission is invited to provide any final comments before agreeing the template report for Orkney Islands council area which will then be used as the basis for writing the reports for all council areas covered by the Islands Reviews.

Secretariat  
April 2021