
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	10 April 2014
Report By:	Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	GM/LA/1155/14
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	712710
Subject:	Review of Local Government Electoral Arrangements: Proposals for Councillor Numbers		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Council to consider its response to proposals by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland to increase the number of Councillors for Inverclyde as part of a review of local government electoral arrangements.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland ("the Commission") has commenced its review of Scotland's local government electoral arrangements. The review will result in recommendations for the numbers of Councillors for each Scottish local authority and, subsequently, the number and boundaries of wards for the election of those Councillors.
- 2.2 The Commission has drawn up its recommendations for the numbers of Councillors based upon a methodology that, for the first time, takes into account both population distribution and levels of deprivation.
- 2.3 At this stage, the Commission is proposing that Inverclyde Council has an increase of Councillor numbers from 20 to 22 Elected Members. Any consultations on this proposal require to be submitted to the Commission by 23 April 2014. The timetable for the other aspects of the electoral review, thereafter, is specified within this report.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council considers the terms of this report and the proposal by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland for an increase in Councillor numbers to 22 for Inverclyde Council and that it be remitted to the Chief Executive to submit its formal consultation response by 23 April 2014.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Commission is established in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as an independent body with responsibility for keeping under review local government electoral arrangements in Scotland. The Commission is a non-departmental public body and it is required to conduct electoral reviews at intervals of between 8 to 12 years. The Commission is independent and non-political and makes recommendations for:
- The number of Councillors in each local authority
 - The number of wards for local government elections and their boundaries; and,
 - The extent of Council areas.
- 4.2 In terms of the current position, the Commission recommended the current multi-member wards which have been used for local government elections in Scotland in 2007 and 2012.
- 4.3 When reviewing electoral arrangements, the Commission is required to take account of the following issues:
- the interests of effective and convenient local government;
 - within each Council, each Councillor should represent as far as possible the same number of electors;
 - local ties which would be broken by making a particular boundary;
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable; and,
 - special geographical considerations.
- 4.4 The Commission has drawn up recommendations for the number of Councillors in each Council within Scotland based upon a methodology that, for the first time, takes into account levels of deprivation as well as population distribution. Using these factors, similar Councils are grouped together for the purpose of determining Councillor numbers.
- 4.5 This stage of the review comprises consultation with Councils on the number of Councillors. The next stage of the review will be a consultation with the public on Councillor numbers and that is expected to commence later, in May 2014. Thereafter, subsequent stages of the review will comprise consultations on proposed ward boundaries.

5.0 COUNCILLOR NUMBERS

- 5.1 The Commission believes that two factors are crucial in determining Councillor numbers for any local authority and these are (1) population distribution and (2) levels of deprivation. The Commission believes that deprivation is a reasonable indicator for a whole range of factors that impact both on Council services and on the workload of Councillors.
- 5.2 The Commission has used the September 2013 electorate data from the electoral register and has also used information from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation measuring factors of: employment, income, geographic access, crime, housing, health and education.
- 5.3 The Commission has applied this methodology and has placed Inverclyde Council and Glasgow City Council within the same categorisation. The formal, detailed categorisation criterion is "less than 30% of the population living outwith settlements of 3000 or more AND 30% or more of the population living in the most deprived areas".
- 5.4 With this categorisation in mind, the Commission has determined that there should be a ratio of 2800 electors per Councillor within Inverclyde. In formulating these recommendations, the Commission will be seeking to achieve ratios as close as possible to this average in every ward.
- 5.5 A further aim of the review is to ensure that there is a good level of electoral parity as an outcome of the review. This means that the Commission is seeking to ensure that each elector's vote within a Council area should be of equal worth and the Commission will later be seeking to achieve ratios as close as possible to the authority average in every ward. The Commission recognises that the geography and demography of the areas can be very

different which may have knock-on effects on the levels of electoral parity that can be achieved through the review.

- 5.6 The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 specifies that each ward will return either 3 or 4 Councillors. The Commission will design each ward so that its number of electors justifies either 3 or 4 Elected Members. The choice of the number of Councillors for each ward will depend on the overall pattern of wards the Commission feels is appropriate for the area and which achieves good electoral parity.
- 5.7 The current proposals for Councillor numbers are attached as **appendix 1** and indicate that for Inverclyde Council the existing Councillor number of 20 will be increased by 2 to 22 Elected Members (subject to the outcome of the review). At the present time, the Council is only requested to respond to the proposed Councillor numbers by the consultation deadline of 23 April 2014.
- 5.8 Thereafter, there will be subsequent proposals and consultations on ward boundaries and the timescale from the Commission is as follows:

Stage	Description	Start (approx)	Finish (approx)
	Reviews commence	February 2014	
1	Commission meets separately with all 32 councils to provide a background to the Reviews	February 2014	April 2014
1A	2 month statutory consultation period with councils on council size	February 2014	April 2014
1B	12 week public consultation period on council size	May 2014	August 2014
2A	Commission considers responses and agrees on council size	September 2014	December 2014
2B	Commission develops proposals on ward boundaries	September 2014	December 2014
3A	2 month statutory consultation period with councils on ward boundaries	January 2015	March 2015
3B	12 week public consultation on ward boundaries	April 2015	Early July 2015
4A (Optional)	Development of Revised Proposals for wards	September 2015	September 2015
4B (Optional)	Consultation of Revised Proposals for wards, local inquiry	October 2015	December 2015
5	Commission considers all representations and develops its final recommendations before submitting its Reports to Scottish Ministers	September 2015	May 2016

From the above, it will be noted that the consultation with Councils on ward boundaries will commence in January 2015.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 The proposed increase in Elected Members will result in increased costs for members' salaries plus travel etc. It is not clear at this point how much of these cost will be funded by the Government.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Services to Members	Salaries and Travel	16/17	45		Represents gross cost which could be partially offset by Government Funding.

Legal

- 6.2 The review is a statutory process which requires to be completed during appointed intervals all as specified in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The present electoral review is part of this statutory process. The review only affects electoral arrangements for local government. Constituencies for the Scottish Parliament or the United Kingdom Parliament are not affected by the present review (those reviews are undertaken by the separate Boundary Commission for Scotland).

Human Resources

- 6.3 There are no HR implications.

Equalities

- 6.4 The population and the electorate of any local authority area are constantly changing with migration into or out of the Council area (as well as within the wards of the Council area itself). It is important to ensure that Elected Members are not representing considerably more or fewer electors than their colleagues and the review will ensure that there are fair levels of representation throughout Inverclyde.

Repopulation

- 6.5 There are no direct implications for repopulation within Inverclyde.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 This report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 At the present time, the Council is being asked to comment on the proposed increase of Councillor numbers to 22 Elected Members for Inverclyde. Subsequently, the Commission will issue any consultation papers affecting ward boundaries and this will be reported to the Council in early 2015, according to the review timetable.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland – Fifth reviews of electoral arrangements – www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk.

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

Proposed councillor numbers

council area	existing councillor numbers	proposed councillor numbers	change
Aberdeen City	43	45	2
Aberdeenshire	68	70	2
Angus	29	27	-2
Argyll & Bute	36	33	-3
Clackmannanshire	18	18	0
Dumfries & Galloway	47	43	-4
Dundee City	29	31	2
East Ayrshire	32	32	0
East Dunbartonshire	24	22	-2
East Lothian	23	21	-2
East Renfrewshire	20	18	-2
Edinburgh, City of	58	63	5
Eileanan an Iar, Na h-	31	28	-3
Falkirk	32	30	-2
Fife	78	75	-3
Glasgow City	79	85	6
Highland	80	72	-8
Inverclyde	20	22	2
Midlothian	18	18	0
Moray	26	25	-1
North Ayrshire	30	33	3
North Lanarkshire	70	77	7
Orkney Islands	21	21	0
Perth & Kinross	41	40	-1
Renfrewshire	40	43	3
Scottish Borders	34	32	-2
Shetland Islands	22	22	0
South Ayrshire	30	27	-3
South Lanarkshire	67	64	-3
Stirling	22	23	1
West Dunbartonshire	22	22	0
West Lothian	33	34	1
	1,223	1,216	-7