

# **Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland**

## **Corporate Plan 2012 - 2015**

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# Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland Corporate Plan 2012-2015

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## **1 Introduction**

This Corporate Plan sets out the main activities to be undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during the period 2012-13 to 2014-15 and forecasts the required resources and expenditure. The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for the latter years covered by this Plan will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

## **2 Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland**

### **2.1 Duties and Powers**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland was established by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. Our duties and powers are detailed in the 1973 Act and Schedule 1A to the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978. We are responsible for:

- reviews of local authority areas in Scotland;
- reviews of electoral arrangements for local authorities; and
- advising on electoral wards for elections to Health Boards.

We are an advisory Non-departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored and wholly funded by the Scottish Government. We are an independent and non-political body.

### **2.2 Membership**

Our membership comprises a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and up to four further Commissioners.

#### **2.2.1 Chairman**

Our Chairman is Peter Mackay who was appointed on 1 November 2007 for a 3 year term, and reappointed for a further 3 years until 31 October 2013.

#### **2.2.2 Deputy Chairman**

Our Deputy Chairman is William Magee who was appointed on 1 September 2008 for a 4 year term ending on 31 August 2012.

#### **2.2.3 Commissioners**

In addition to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, up to 4 further Commissioners are appointed on a term basis and posts are filled through open competition using the procedures laid down by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland. Appointments are made by Scottish Ministers.

There are currently 3 such Commissioners who are:

- Brian Clark, appointed until 31 October 2013, having been initially appointed on 1 November 2007 for a 3 year term, and reappointed for a further 3 years;
- Kenneth McDonald, appointed until 23 May 2012, having been initially appointed on 24 May 2004 for a 4 year term, and reappointed for a further 4 years;
- Paula Sharp, appointed until 31 October 2013, having been initially appointed on 1 November 2007 for a 3 year term, and reappointed for a further 3 years.

## **2.3 Secretariat**

We are supported by a small Secretariat. The work of the Secretariat includes:

- facilitating boundary reviews;
- dealing with the everyday administrative matters relating to our business such as finance, purchasing and accommodation;
- liaising with other UK Boundary Commissions and government departments with an interest in boundary matters;
- maintaining contact with Ordnance Survey and other relevant bodies on boundary related issues;
- maintaining links with organisations involved with electoral matters;
- improving and extending published information explaining our work;
- responding to correspondence on our work and local government boundary issues;
- providing ongoing training as appropriate to meet staff and review requirements; and
- continuing to meet all financial and other requirements of our Financial Memorandum and other key sponsorship documents.

The Secretariat also supports the Boundary Commission for Scotland which is responsible for reviews of United Kingdom Parliament constituencies in Scotland and Scottish Parliament constituencies and regions. The Secretariat is funded separately by the Scotland Office for that work. The staff of the Secretariat are assigned from the Scottish Government.

The number of staff assigned to support us is dependent on the volume of review activity and the need to develop, maintain and update information systems and respond to enquiries etc.

## **3 Scottish Government guidance**

### **3.1 Direction from Ministers**

Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Scottish Ministers are able to direct us on what reviews of administrative area boundaries we should or should not undertake.

Section 14(1) of the 1973 Act requires us to carry out a review of all administrative area boundaries every 8 to 12 years after 1996. Scottish Ministers have issued a Direction to us instructing us not to carry out any such reviews in the period to 31 March 2017. Previous Directions have prevented us from carrying out any reviews under section 14(1) since 1996.

### **3.2 National Performance Framework**

Scottish Government intends that public bodies should align the outcomes of their activity with the Government's National Performance Framework and the associated National Outcomes, last updated in December 2011. We have concluded that our work should contribute to the following National Outcomes:

- *We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.*
- *We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.*
- *We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.*

- *Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.*

The first and second of these reflect the desired result from successful definition of local government boundaries where access to services is supported, and communities feel that boundaries support and reflect their communities of interest.

The third reflects the environmental desirability of effective use of resources.

The fourth reflects the way in which well-designed administrative boundaries support the effective delivery of local government services. In addition, it reflects our aspiration to conduct our work efficiently and effectively, and in a way which involves the public.

Further information on the National Performance Framework is available at <http://www.scotlandperforms.com>.

## **4 Planned activities**

### **4.1 Year 2012-13**

#### **4.1.1 Review activity**

##### **Administrative area reviews**

We will conduct minor reviews of administrative areas as required. At the time of writing, we are not aware of any cases where such a review will be required.

##### **Local government electoral reviews**

We will consider any requests for interim reviews and respond. We will continue planning for our Fifth General Reviews of electoral arrangements, which are due to start in 2013-14.

##### **Health Board ward reviews**

No activity expected.

#### **4.1.2 Membership**

Kenneth McDonald's current term of office is due to end on 23 May 2012, and William Magee's on 31 August 2012. The Secretariat will support the Scottish Government in their consideration during the year of our future membership.

#### **4.1.3 Finance and staffing**

The overall costs of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2012-13 are expected to be:

- £172,288

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2012-13 is expected to be:

- 1.80 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A.

#### **4.1.4 Performance indicators**

Success in the year will be judged by the following indicators:

- achieve agreed timetable of preparations for Fifth Reviews of electoral arrangements;
- progress any interim reviews which may be necessary;
- delivery within budget;
- continuing to meet all financial and other sponsorship requirements as required under our Financial Memorandum and other key sponsorship documents.

#### **4.1.5 Changes from previous Corporate Plan**

There have been no significant changes in the plan for the year 2012-13 since the publication of the previous Corporate Plan.

### **4.2 Year 2013-14**

The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for 2013-14 will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

#### **4.2.1 Review activity**

##### **Administrative area reviews**

We will conduct minor reviews of administrative areas as required. At the time of writing, we are not aware of any cases where such a review will be required. From October 2013 we expect to be conducting general electoral reviews, and therefore from that time we will only conduct administrative area reviews if we judge that there is an urgent need to do so.

##### **Local government electoral reviews**

We conducted our Fourth Reviews of electoral arrangements for local government during the period 2004-06. Such reviews are required to take place every 8 to 12 years. We currently expect to start our Fifth General Reviews of electoral arrangements around October 2013. We anticipate that the reviews will cover all 32 local authorities in Scotland, and will be completed by May 2016 in order to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers in time for the local government elections scheduled to take place in May 2017.

##### **Health Board ward reviews**

No activity expected.

#### **4.2.2 Membership**

The current terms of office of Peter Mackay, Brian Clark and Paula Sharp each end on 31 October 2013. The Secretariat will support the Scottish Government in their consideration during the year of our future membership.

#### **4.2.3 Finance and staffing**

The overall costs of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2013-14 are expected to be:

- £376,249

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2013-14 is expected to be:

- 3.46 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A.

#### **4.2.4 Performance indicators**

Success in the year will be judged by the following indicators:

- achieve agreed timetable for Fifth Reviews of electoral arrangements;
- progress any interim reviews which may be necessary;
- delivery within budget;
- continuing to meet all financial and other sponsorship requirements as required under our Financial Memorandum and other key sponsorship documents.

### **4.3 Year 2014-15**

The planned activities, resource forecasts and performance indicators for 2014-15 will be expanded and refined in subsequent Corporate Plans.

#### **4.3.1 Review activity**

##### **Administrative area reviews**

Since during 2014-15 we expect to be conducting general electoral reviews we will only conduct administrative area reviews if we judge that there is an urgent need to do so.

##### **Local government electoral reviews**

We will continue to progress our Fifth General Reviews of electoral arrangements in order to complete them by May 2016 and make recommendations to Scottish Ministers in time for the local government elections scheduled to take place in May 2017.

##### **Health Board ward reviews**

No activity expected.

#### **4.3.2 Membership**

No changes to the membership of the Commission are expected during 2014-15.

#### **4.3.3 Finance and staffing**

The overall costs of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2014-15 are expected to be:

- £399,757

The overall staffing assigned to the Secretariat to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland during 2014-15 is expected to be:

- 5.10 Full Time Equivalent Staff

A breakdown of costs is given in Appendix A.

#### **4.3.4 Performance indicators**

Success in the year will be judged by the following indicators:

- continuation of Fifth Reviews of electoral arrangements;
- delivery within budget;
- continuing to meet all financial and other sponsorship requirements as required under our Financial Memorandum and other key sponsorship documents.

## **5 Long term outlook**

We do not anticipate that we will be required to undertake reviews of the external boundaries of administrative areas, other than any localised reviews of cases where development has taken place across an existing administrative area boundary.

We will be conducting a set of general reviews of local government electoral reviews during from 2013 to 2016 as detailed in this Corporate Plan. The legislation requires that such reviews take place every 8 to 12 years.

We are required to give advice to Scottish Ministers on electoral wards for Health Boards, but only if elections to Health Boards are to use multiple wards. Pilot Health Boards elections took place in June 2010, but did not use multiple wards, and will run for a minimum of 2 years. After the completion of the pilots, and their evaluation, a decision will be made on whether future Health Board elections will use multiple wards.

## Appendix A – Costs

### Overall Costs

The overall costs of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland are expected to be as follows

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Staffing costs	73,788	131,344	189,305
Commissioners' fees and expenses	8,000	16,000	20,000
Accommodation, rent and rates	10,000	11,000	12,100
Administration	19,000	19,665	20,353
Mapping	40,000	41,400	42,849
Travel and Subsistence	2,000	2,590	2,900
Review costs	19,500	154,250	112,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,288</b>	<b>376,249</b>	<b>399,757</b>

### Staffing costs

The allocation of staff by grade, and the salary ranges for each of those grades is as follows:

Grade	FTE 2012-13	FTE 2013-14	FTE 2014-15	Salary range (£)
C1	0.50	0.50	0.50	43,736 to 52,595
B2	0.10	1.10	1.80	25,165 to 30,267
B1	0.70	1.36	2.30	22,173 to 25,165
A3	0.50	0.50	0.50	15,792 to 17,882
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>5.10</b>	

Overall staffing costs include National Insurance and Pension contributions, in addition to the salary in the listed range.

The substantial increase in staff numbers and associated costs during the period of this Corporate Plan is due to us starting work on a set of general local government electoral reviews in 2013 for completion by May 2016.

### Commissioners' fees and expenses

These are approximately £2000 per meeting, and the figures are based on monthly meetings during a review, and quarterly meetings otherwise.

### Accommodation

Accommodation costs cover rent and utility bills, and are divided equally with the Boundary Commission for Scotland.

### Administration

Covers training, IT costs, postage, telephones etc.

### Mapping

This item covers licence fees for use of Ordnance Survey data through the One Scotland Mapping Agreement (OSMA), a collective agreement negotiated on behalf of public bodies in Scotland by Scottish Government. OSMA lasts until 31 March 2013, and the fee is increased in line with the Retail Price Index in that period. This item is assumed to continue in future years on the same basis, and is divided equally with the Boundary Commission for Scotland.

### Travel and subsistence

Covers travel and subsistence costs for Commissioners and staff excluding travel costs specifically related to a Review.

### Review costs

The substantial increase in review costs during the period of this Plan is due to us starting work on a set of general local government electoral reviews in 2013 for completion by May 2016. We also assume for planning purposes that we will conduct 2 local administrative area reviews in 2012-13. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, when we will be conducting general electoral reviews, we assume that we will conduct 1 local administrative area review in each year, although we will only do so if we judge that there is an urgent need. It is possible that such local administrative area reviews will not be required.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Advertising	16,000	100,000	100,000
Professional fees	0	50,000	10,000
Local Inquiry costs	2,000	2,000	0
Travel	1,000	2,000	2,000
Report publication	500	250	250
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,500</b>	<b>154,250</b>	<b>112,250</b>

**Advertising** – We publicise our proposals as part of our public consultation at certain stages of a review. It costs around £4,000 to place the relevant public notice in relevant newspapers for a local review.

2013-14 and 2014-15 include provision for advertising costs associated with General Reviews of electoral arrangements in each council area. In 2012-13 provision has been made for advertising on 2 occasions in connection with the completion of each of 2 local reviews. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, provision has been made for advertising on 2 occasions in connection with the completion of 1 local review in each year.

This item also covers the cost of providing web-based consultation facilities during our reviews.

### Local Inquiries

In 2012-13, we have made financial provision to cover 1 Local Inquiry lasting one day. In 2013-14 and 2014-15 combined, we have made financial provision to cover 1 Local Inquiry lasting one day, with the budget recorded against 2013-14. Such Local Inquiries are conducted by an Assistant Commissioner appointed for the purpose, to whom a fee may be payable. Other costs associated with Local Inquiries are:

- **Venue hire and facilities** – Venues are arranged in conjunction with local authorities. Some local authorities provide facilities free of charge, while others charge a commercial rate for use of premises. The average cost per day is £200.
- **Transcription service** – full verbatim transcripts of Local Inquiry proceedings are prepared in order to help the Assistant Commissioner in writing his report, and in order to form part of the public record of our decision making. Transcription services cost around £1800 per day.

**Travel** – During a review, there is an increased requirement for Secretariat staff to travel to meet officials from local councils.

**Report publication costs** – At the conclusion of a Review, we submit a report to Scottish Ministers. Although the predominant means of disseminating findings is electronic, there is still a requirement to produce a limited number of hard copy reports. Provision has been made of £250 per review for this.