

2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies Public Hearings

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to note the progress of arrangements for the holding of Public Hearings and to agree:
 - A news release for publicising the hearings;
 - Approach to start and finish times for hearings; and
 - The statements to be given by the Secretariat at the beginning of each hearing.

Background

2. At its meeting of 18 July 2016, the Commission considered Paper 2016/24 on arrangements for the Public Hearings which form part of this review.
3. At its meeting of 5 September 2016, the Commission agreed to hold Public Hearings in Ayr, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness.
4. At its meeting of 3 October 2016, the Commission considered all aspects of the arrangements for Public Hearings for the 2018 Review and asked the Secretariat to take forward the following action points:
 - Make clear that there are alternative ways of commenting on proposals if someone is unable to attend a public hearing;
 - Make clear that all constituencies in Scotland can be commented on at any hearing, despite each hearing having a geographical focus;
 - Request that those commenting in Gaelic submit a written comment;
 - explain how we consider new ward boundaries when designing constituencies; and
 - Highlight the lack of political considerations and the independence of the Commission.
5. The schedule of public hearings is at Appendix A.

News release

6. The Scotland Office Media Office has offered assistance to the Secretariat in the development of a media strategy for publicity for the public hearings. As part of that strategy, it is proposed to issue a news release, a copy of which is attached at Appendix B.

Start and finish times of hearings

7. The Commission agreed at its July meeting that hearings should last a single day. All of the venues booked for the hearings can accommodate a hearing until 6pm.

8. On 24 October, the Secretariat met with the Sheriffs Principal who are to chair the hearings. They have also indicated their availability to sit past 5pm and are happy to start the hearings from 9:30am onwards.
9. The Commission will want to consider its approach to start and finish times. One option is to await requests to make representations and plan each hearing accordingly. Alternatively a start time can be agreed and the finish time left open, or as a “no later than” time, again to await assessment of the level of response from interested parties.
10. If a start time is to be set then it is not necessary for it to be the same for all hearings – in particular the Commission may want to consider a later start in Inverness.

Commission statements

11. A statement for the hearing in Edinburgh is attached at Appendix C. Summaries of the proposals for the areas that form the geographical focus of hearings are attached at Appendix D.

Verbatim Reporters

12. Larking Hodge Pollock will provide a transcription service at each Public Hearing.

Display materials

13. Copies of the policies and procedures booklet and summary of initial proposals booklet will be available at the hearings and constituency posters will be on display.

Recommendation

14. The Secretariat invites the Commission to:
 - suggest any amendments to the draft news release at Appendix B;
 - agree its approach to start and finish times for hearings;
 - suggest any amendments to the Commission statement and area summaries at Appendices C and D respectively.

Secretariat
October 2016

Public Hearing Schedule

Public Hearings

Location	Venue	Chair	Date	Geographic focus
Ayr	Ayr Town Hall New Bridge Street Ayr KA7 1JX	Sheriff Principal Abercrombie	Thursday 1 Dec 2016	East Ayrshire East Renfrewshire Inverclyde North Ayrshire Renfrewshire South Ayrshire
Dundee	The City Chambers 14 City Square Dundee DD1 3BY	Sheriff Principal Lewis	Tuesday 29 Nov 2016	Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire Angus Dundee City Fife Perth and Kinross
Edinburgh	Apex Waterloo Place Hotel 23-27 Waterloo Place Edinburgh EH1 3BH	Sheriff Principal Stephen	Wednesday 7 Dec 2016	Clackmannanshire City of Edinburgh East Lothian Falkirk Midlothian Scottish Borders Stirling West Lothian
Glasgow	Royal Concert Hall 2 Sauchiehall Street Glasgow G2 3NY	Sheriff Principal Turnbull	Thursday 24 Nov 2016	Dumfries and Galloway Glasgow City East Dunbartonshire North Lanarkshire South Lanarkshire West Dunbartonshire
Inverness	The Town House High Street Inverness IV1 1JJ	Sheriff Principal Pyle	Monday 5 Dec 2016	Argyll and Bute Highland Moray