



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jamie Hepburn MSP
Minister for Parliamentary
Business

Local Government,
Housing and Planning Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

By email only

Email: localgov.committee@parliament.scot

28 June 2024

Dear Jamie,

Under the Scottish Elections (Reform) Act 2020, the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee has responsibility for considering regulations giving effect to Boundaries Scotland recommendations for changes to local government areas or electoral arrangements.

The Committee considered proposals relating to the six local authority areas in Scotland containing inhabited islands in 2021. Boundaries Scotland then confirmed in August 2023 that it had “no current plans to conduct any reviews” in relation to local authority boundary areas and that its “principal work focus at the moment is the review of Scottish Parliament constituencies and regions which will report by May 2025.”

The previous Minister for Parliamentary Business wrote to the Committee in March¹ noting the intention expressed in the policy memorandum to the Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) (Scotland) Bill “to consider further how best to approach any future changes to the boundary approval process” and committing “to write back to the Committee in the near future with a substantive update on this matter.”

The Committee is mindful that with less than two years to go until the next Scottish Parliament elections and less than three years until the next set of local government elections there is a limited window in which changes to the boundary approval process could be made.

¹ [SG Gaelic Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery \(parliament.scot\)](https://www.parliament.scot/sg-gaelic-deputy-first-minister-and-cabinet-secretary-for-covid-recovery)

Given that three months have now passed since the Committee received your predecessor's letter, I would be grateful if you could confirm when we can expect to receive the substantive update.

Yours sincerely,

Ariane Burgess
Convener, Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee