Statement of Reasons by David Davidson MSP

In relation to my draft proposal for a Member’s Bill, the proposed Local Government Elections (Scotland) Bill, I do not consider that consultation on the draft proposal is required for the following reasons:

A consultation on Local Government Elections (Scotland) Bill was carried out by David Mundell, when he was MSP for South Scotland, which was open to responses between 18 February 2005 and 15 June 2005. My draft proposal is in the same terms as David Mundell’s draft proposal. Therefore the consultation paper is still relevant to my proposal.

The main questions to which opinions were invited were:

• the problems that are currently generated by holding elections on the same day;
• the new problems that will be created as a result of the introduction of the single transferable vote for local government elections;
• the date to which local government elections should be moved, if at all;
• what benefits, if any, separate local government elections will create; and
• what the financial consequences of holding local government elections separately would be.

Nearly 200 copies of the consultation document were sent to every local authority in Scotland, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), electoral organisations, the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), the Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland (SOLAR), a number of academics, equal opportunity organisations and other interested parties. The consultation was also available on the Scottish Parliament website and was trailed in the Scottish press.

In light of this recent and thorough consultation I do not believe that it is necessary to carry out any further consultation, as all those who wished to respond to the proposal have had the opportunity to do so. On that note, I thank the respondents whose submissions have provided me with a comprehensive base to take my proposal forward to the next stage.

I therefore request the Committee to consider the above statement and confirm that it is satisfied with the reasons for not consulting on the draft proposal.

[Local Government Elections (Scotland) Bill Consultation Document - David Mundell MSP February 2005]