

## **Notice of Midlothian Council's Intent to Withdraw from the Minute of Agreement for the Pentland Hills Regional Park**

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### **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee**

13<sup>th</sup> March 2009

#### **Purpose of report**

- 1 To advise the Joint Committee of Midlothian Council's intent to withdraw from the Joint Minute of Agreement for the Pentland Hills Regional Park.

#### **Main report**

- 2 As part of a range of measures in response to current budget pressures, Midlothian Council has taken the decision to withdraw from the Minute of Agreement for the Pentland Hills Regional Park.
- 3 This decision was confirmed in a letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009, from Midlothian Council's Director of Commercial Services to the City of Edinburgh Council's Director of Services for Communities, giving notice that Midlothian Council will be withdrawing from the Agreement on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.
- 4 This notice is consistent with paragraph 19 in the Minute of Agreement which requires parties to provide 12 months notice of their intent to withdraw on the 31<sup>st</sup> March of any given year.

#### **Financial Implications**

- 5 The Minute of Agreement requires that any party withdrawing is required to continue making its agreed budget contributions for one further year. This means that the local authority contributions to the Regional Park budget will be unaffected for the coming financial year, 2009-10.
- 6 The decision to withdraw may have significant implications for the management, funding, and staffing of the Regional Park.
- 7 Midlothian Council's Director of Commercial Services has requested that Officers from Midlothian Council and City of Edinburgh Council work to provide a smooth transition during 2009-10. The outcome of these discussions will be reported to the Joint Committee at the earliest opportunity.

## Environmental Impact

- 8 The current integrated approach to providing a visitor and countryside management service within the Regional Park supports and enhances the high environmental quality and visitor experience. There is a risk that a less integrated approach may reduce service capacity and have a detrimental effect on environmental quality.

## Recommendations

- 9 It is recommended that the Joint Committee:
- a) notes that Midlothian Council has served notice of their intent to withdraw from the joint Minute of Agreement, as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010; and
  - b) notes that officers from Midlothian and City of Edinburgh Council will be discussing transitional arrangements and will report further on these at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.



**David Jamieson**  
Parks & Greenspace Manager

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Appendices	None
Contact/tel/Email	David Jamieson (Parks and Greenspace Manager, 0131 529 7055) Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager, 0131 529 7916) Alan McGregor (Acting Regional Park Manager, 0131 445 3383)
Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	Supports National Outcome 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.
Background Papers	N.A