



PARTNERSHIP & RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

**REVIEW OF SCHEME FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS IN WEST
LOTHIAN**

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the panel that a review of the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils in West Lothian is being carried out in advance of the 2021 4-yearly Community Council Elections.

B. RECOMMENDATION

1. To note that a review of the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils in West Lothian is being conducted.
2. To note that a working group comprising 3 council officers and 3 representatives of the Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils will be established to progress the Scheme review.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; Providing equality of opportunities; Making best use of our resources and Working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Section 22, Part 1 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The costs of statutory notices will be met from the community council budget.

VII	Consideration at PDSP	Previous Scheme Reviews have been considered at meetings of the Partnership & Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.
VIII	Other consultations	All community councillors and elected members will be fully consulted on the existing and future draft Schemes. Comments from members of the public will be invited through the council's website, social media and press notices.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

In the year preceding the four-yearly Community Council Elections, the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils has traditionally been reviewed. The current Scheme was adopted at a special meeting of West Lothian Council on 24th February 2015 following extensive consultation from March 2014 to January 2015. Given that the next community council elections are due to take place in September/October 2021, arrangements are now underway to review the 2015 Community Council Scheme.

In line with previous Scheme reviews, a working group involving council officers and up to 3 representatives of the Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils will be established. The purpose of the working group is to produce a draft scheme that reflects not only changes deemed appropriate by council officers but also those considered necessary by operational community councillors. Notification of the consultation will be issued to all community council secretaries, community councillors for whom we hold contact details and all elected members, inviting comments on the current scheme. An advert will also be placed in the local press advising of the intention to revoke the existing scheme and inviting comments to inform the terms of the new scheme. A period of at least 8 weeks must and will be allowed for public consultation.

It is anticipated that 3-4 meetings of the working group will be necessary to develop an initial draft of the Scheme for consideration. Early meetings of the working group will be arranged and it is hoped that the initial draft Scheme can be presented to the panel in June 2020, before it is issued for public consultation. A further period of at least 8 weeks must be allowed for comments, following which a final draft proposed Scheme will be produced and advertised again for a period of at least 8 weeks.

The final Scheme will be adopted after all 3 stages of the statutory public consultation have been concluded. It is hoped that the finalised Scheme will be adopted at a meeting of West Lothian Council in February/March 2021. A timetable of key dates is set out in the appendix to the report.

E. CONCLUSION

Once a new Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils has been adopted, it will be published on the internet and issued to every community councillor in West Lothian. Training and support on the new Scheme will be offered following the community council elections in 2021.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils in West Lothian February 2015.

Appendices/Attachments: Community Council Scheme Review 2020-21 Draft Timetable

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