

## **Review of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian**

### **Report by Fiona Robertson – Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships**

#### **Report for Decision**

#### **1 Recommendations**

After a third stage of consultation, it is recommended that Council approves the revised Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian (2025).

#### **2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary**

Three periods of public engagement and consultation have taken place as recommended in the Model Scheme for Community Councils and the Good Practice Guide. Following each period of consultation changes were made as appropriate.

As the consultation period is at an end and no further amendments are proposed by stakeholders, Council is asked to approve the new Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian (2025).

**Date** 1 April 2025

#### **Report Contact:**

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### **3 Background**

- 3.1** Community Councils (CCs) were first established in Scotland following the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. Under the Act, each Local Authority is required to produce a Scheme which provides a framework for their creation and operation.

The current Scheme was approved by Midlothian Council in 2014. In the period since the last review, there have been several changes in legislation, most significantly the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015.

Nationally, the Model Scheme for Community Councils has been reviewed. Revised Model Scheme documents, including a Good Practice Guide, have been published (2023).

- 3.2** Elected members approved 3 stages of public engagement and consultation of a draft revised scheme.

The initial draft document was circulated in April 2024.

A second draft revision was circulated in July and agreed at a meeting of Midlothian Federation of Community Councils in August 2024.

Details of the consultation are as follows:

- An online survey was available for local residents, community groups and Community Councils to review and contribute to the draft Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian document.
- During the process 'in person' and 'online' engagement events were held across the county.
- Comments and proposed amendments have been recorded and the document updated with the assistance of a sub-group of Midlothian Federation of Community Councils.
- The revised (2<sup>nd</sup>) draft has been recirculated for consultation and comment by Midlothian Community Councillors.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> draft document has been considered by Midlothian Council at a special meeting in November 2024.
- Amendments suggested at the meeting have been made.
- The Community Council Complaint procedure has been updated and amended and now includes a 3<sup>rd</sup> stage – External Review.
- A final period of engagement and consultation with Midlothian Federation of Community Councils members, and local Community Council members has been undertaken.

- 3.3** Having completed 3 stages of consultation and engagement, the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils (2025) in Midlothian requires the approval of Midlothian Council.

### **4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)**

#### **4.1 Resource**

A period of training for Community Councils will support the implementation of the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian (2025).

#### **4.2 Digital**

There are no digital issues arising from this report.

#### **4.3 Risk**

Feedback has been included in the final version submitted for approval.

#### **4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)**

Documents and information in a range of formats will be made available.

#### **4.5 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)**

None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Review of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Midlothian (2025)

Appendix 2: Midlothian Community Councils Complaint Procedure (3 Stages)

### **APPENDIX A – Report Implications**

#### **A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

The project objectives meet the objectives of the Single Midlothian Plan:

- Reduce the economic circumstances gap.
- Reduce the gap in learning outcomes.
- Reduce the gap in health outcomes.
- Reduce carbon emissions in Midlothian to net zero by 2030.

#### **A.2 Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

#### **A.3 Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you.
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

**A.4 Delivering Best Value**

No Implications for Midlothian Council

**A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

The revised scheme has been co-produced by Midlothian Council, Midlothian Federation of Community Councils members, and local Community Council members.

**A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The revised scheme will support Midlothian Community Councils to operate, work and engage more effectively with the communities they represent.

**A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Not Applicable

**A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

The revised scheme will support the engagement of community councils and the communities they represent within Midlothian.