



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

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

#### **Report for Decision**

#### **1 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Council approves an 8-week public consultation on the revised Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.

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

To approve a public consultation on a revision of the Midlothian Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils. This is required to reflect changes in policy since 2014 and to update the Scheme to reflect the amended Model Scheme for Community Councils.

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**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 the 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** Areas have been identified where clarity or guidance contained in the current Scheme can be improved. A formal review is required so these matters can be addressed.

Proposed revisions include:

- Review and modernisation of the existing scheme for Community Councils in line with the Good Practice Guidelines for Community Councils (2023).
  - Complaints Process – A review of the Midlothian Community Councils Complaints procedure.
  - Boundary changes – will be considered in the Penicuik, Roslin & Bilston and Damhead areas due to extensive housing development in these areas.
- 3.3** An initial draft of a revised scheme including the revisions from the new Model Scheme has been developed. This now needs to be circulated for consideration by the Community Councils, third sector groups, and stakeholder groups so that they can engage in the consultation process.

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

#### **4.1 Resource**

Staff time will be required to promote and support the consultation process. It is proposed that this is done jointly by the existing council and federation representatives within their current workloads.

#### **4.2 Digital**

There are no digital issues arising from this report.

#### **4.3 Risk**

Feedback may be received which is not in line with current guidance and therefore not able to be included within the final scheme.

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

An equality impact assessment will be required once the decision to proceed with the review has been agreed.

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

None

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Additional Report Implications

Appendix B: Review of Midlothian Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils - Draft Revision Proposal (changes highlighted in red)

Appendix C: Review of Midlothian Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils - Communications Plan

Appendix D: Review of Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils - Process

Appendix E: Review of Midlothian Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils - Draft timetable

## 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 will be co-produced by Midlothian Council, Midlothian Federation of Community Councils members, local Community Council members and local stakeholder groups

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

Community Councils will be supported to 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.