

Midlothian Council



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

Communications Plan

BACKGROUND

The scheme for establishment of Community Councils was last reviewed in 2014.

Revised guidance for Community Councils has been issued by the Scottish Government.

There has been substantial housing development in 3 of the Midlothian Community Council areas and boundaries need to be reviewed

Operating and governance procedures for Community Councils are required to be reviewed.

PURPOSE

This communication plan sets out how Midlothian Council, in partnership with Community Councils and community-based stakeholder groups, will engage in a review of the current scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.

COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

- Increase engagement in the process by promoting the revision process to as wide a range of Midlothian community and stakeholder groups, as possible.
- Raise general awareness of the scheme revision process and demonstrate the potential value in engaging in the process and thereafter the value of engaging with and being part of, Midlothian Community Councils.
- Encourage and support engagement by groups that may experience high levels of disadvantage and have been underrepresented in Community Council activities.

KEY MESSAGES

- The aim of the revision of the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils is to bring the scheme up to date and ensure it is fit for purpose.
- In consultation with local residents, Community Council boundaries will be adjusted to reflect housing developments completed since 2014.
- The process will be completed in 4 stages.
- Local residents and stakeholder groups will be consulted on the draft scheme and their input will be reflected in the final scheme.

TARGET AUDIENCES

- Community Councils
- Stakeholder groups
- Community groups
- Local residents
- MVA - Third Sector groups

COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH

- Use a mix of media channels including local press and community radio.
- Place an emphasis on use of social media with regular posts during consultation period.
- Ensure publicity emphasises the support available to local groups in the form of further information and assistance in generating discussion and engaging with the process.
- Disseminate information as widely as possible through existing networks, council contacts, Midlothian Federation of Community Councils, and stakeholder groups.
- Use a range of formats to reduce barriers to participation in the process.

EVALUATION

The success of this communications plan will be evaluated after the closing date, based on the number of responses received and on feedback from local groups and individuals on publicity and the application process. We will continue to collate recipients feedback to ensure lessons are learnt and processes can be improved.

What	How	Who	Why	When
Launch review of scheme for Establishment of Community Councils	Launch press release Council website MVA Midlothian Federation of Community Councils Local press & Local radio Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups Posters distributed	Communications and Marketing CLLE Team	Promote participation of local stakeholder groups in process	April 2024
Public Notice published in the local Press to notify that the Council <i>intends to review and amend the current scheme, with an at least, eight-week consultation period for any representations to be made on the: 'boundary changes areas, composition of the Community Councils and draft amended scheme'.</i>	Council website MVA Local press & Local radio Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups	Communications and Marketing CLLE	Promote and encourage engagement with the process	April 2024
Engage with Midlothian Federation of Community Councils Local Community Councils Stakeholder groups Inc. equalities groups	Workshop sessions & Focus groups Citizen Space Online Consultation	CLLE Local Community Councillors	Promote and encourage engagement with the process Provide support	April – June 2024
Second Public Notice published in the local Press to the effect <i>the council has considered the representations on the first stage & that there will be an eight-week consultation period for any representations to be made on the 'draft amended Scheme'.</i>	Council website MVA Local press & Local radio Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups	Communications and Marketing CLLE	Promote and encourage engagement with the process Seek representation and	June 2024

What	How	Who	Why	When
Engage with Midlothian Federation of Community Councils (MFCC) Local Community Councils Stakeholder groups Inc. equalities groups	Workshop sessions & Focus groups Citizen Space Online Consultation	CLLE MFCC	input into the draft revised scheme Promote and encourage engagement with the process Seek representation and input into the draft revised scheme	June – Sept 2024
Issue reminder that consultation period is closing	Council website Local press & Local radio MVA Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups	Communications and Marketing CLLE		Sept 2024
Third Public Notice is published in the local press to the effect that, <i>a commonly four-week consultation period for any final representations to be made on the draft amended Scheme, together with associated documents, including Community Council boundaries.</i>	Council website Local press & Local radio MVA Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups	Communications and Marketing CLLE		Oct 2024

Engage with Midlothian Federation of Community Councils Local Community Councils Stakeholder groups Inc. equalities groups	Workshop sessions & Focus groups Citizen Space Online Consultation	CLLE MFCC	Promote & encourage engagement with the process Seek representation and input into the draft revised scheme	Oct 2025 - Jan 2025
What	How	Who	Why	When
Issue reminder that consultation period is closing	Council website Local press MVA Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups	Communications and Marketing CLLE		
Fourth Public Notice is published 'of the Scheme in its amended form together with Public Notice <i>of such a Scheme as it applies to each proposed area, by exhibition in that area, and any such notice shall contain an invitation to electors in the area concerned (where there is currently no Community Council established) to apply in writing to the local authority for the establishment of a Community Council in accordance with the amended Scheme</i> '.	Council website MVA Local press & Local radio Community websites & social media Direct mailings to local groups	Communications and Marketing CLLE		Jan 2025
Revised Scheme published and available for access by Community Councils and Stakeholder groups	Council website MVA Local press & Local radio Community websites & social media	Communications and Marketing CLLE		Feb 2025

	Direct mailings to local groups			
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