

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 5 APRIL 2001**

#### **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME, 1997**

#### **OUTCOME OF FIRST PERIOD OF FORMAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE SECOND REVIEW OF THE SCHEME**

##### **Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise of the outcome of the first of three periods of formal public consultation on the review of the East Ayrshire Council Community Council Scheme 1997, and to present for consideration proposed amendments to the Scheme and issues for further consultation identified as a result of the consultation exercise and operational experience.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The East Ayrshire Council Community Council Scheme, 1997, was established on 27 March 1997 and subsequently revised by the Council, following consultation, on 24 September 1998.
- 2.2** In the period since the last review of the Scheme, the Council received a number of informal submissions in relation to proposed amendments. As a result, the Policy and Resources Committee on 30 November 2000 authorised a further review of the Scheme comprising three formal periods of public consultation.

### **3. FIRST PERIOD OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

- 3.1** The first consultation period commenced on 5 January 2001 and ended on 2 March 2001. In order to provide additional support to Community Councils in responding to the consultation exercise, an invitation was extended to all Community Councils to have Officers attend a meeting with a view to:-
- detailing the various stages of the review process and their purpose;
  - identifying the types of issues which could be raised as part of the review;
  - encouraging Community Councils to consider any relevant issues which they might wish to raise as part of the review process; and
  - confirming whether informal submissions already made by particular Community Councils were still relevant and/or required refinement.
- 3.2** The visits to Community Councils were very positively received and, in some cases, Officers were asked to attend a second meeting of the Community Council as a follow-up exercise.

#### **4. SUBMISSIONS**

- 4.1 Set out in summary form in Appendix I to this report are the submissions received in the course of the consultation exercise. Appendix II provides on a point by point basis Officer recommendation(s) which are emboldened and in italics and the relevant Community Council Scheme paragraph reference.

#### **5. OTHER SUPPORT MECHANISMS**

- 5.1 As part of the consultative process, comments were invited from Community Councils meetings on other support and mechanisms they would wish to see. Details of those relevant responses together with other comments received are contained in Appendix III. In respect of these comments, a number of initiatives are already in place to address these which may require further promotion and publicity. The remainder will be the subject of separate development work by Officers to address the issues.

#### **6. LEGAL AUTHORITY**

- 6.1 Section 53(3) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.
- 6.2 Part 1, Section 22 of the Local Government Etc (Scotland) Act 1994.

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The cost of undertaking the next period of public consultation will be met from within existing budgets.

#### **8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Regular review of the Scheme supports the Council's Decentralisation Scheme which recognises the important role of Community Councils in partnership with the Council.

#### **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The Committee is requested:-

- (i) to consider the recommendations contained within the Appendix II to the report for the purposes of the second period of public consultation;
- (ii) to remit to the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources to undertake the necessary statutory public notification of this decision in terms of Section 53(3) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973; and
- (iii) to note that, subject to budgetary provision, support to Community Councils will be developed to meet existing and future needs.

Fiona Lees  
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

20 March 2001  
AH/MM/SR

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. East Ayrshire Council Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils, 1997.
2. Submissions by Community Councils and Elected Members.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers relative to this report should contact Alex Hewetson or Melanie Macleod, Administrative Officers, on telephone numbers (01563) 576093 or 576094 respectively. Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on telephone number (01563) 576135.

**Implementation Officers: Melanie Macleod and Alex Hewetson, Administrative Officers.**

**APPENDIX I**

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME - REVIEW 2001**

**COMMUNITY COUNCILS'/OTHERS RESPONSES**

**SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS**

<b><u>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</u></b>	<b><u>DESCRIPTION OF AREA</u></b>	<b><u>BOUNDARIES</u></b>	<b><u>COMPOSITION</u></b>	<b><u>QUALIFICATIONS FOR NOMINATIONS, ELECTION AND HOLDING OFFICE</u></b>	<b><u>ORDINARY ELECTIONS</u></b>	<b><u>CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS</u></b>	<b><u>FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE</u></b>	<b><u>CODE OF PRACTICE</u></b>	<b><u>RULES FOR ELECTION</u></b>
Auchinleck						Quorum minimum each 4th meeting. Should be relaxed.			
Bellfield						Quorum minimum each 4th meeting. Should be reduced to 1/3rd.	Administrative allowance insufficient. If some Community Councils don't spend their funds, these should be capped after say, 3 years. Community Councils need to be able to plan ahead financially.		
Bonnyton and Woodstock	Should be 'Bonnyton'.								
Catrine		Should be amended to include Ballochmyle Estate and Daldorch.					Administrative allowance criteria should be relaxed to permit greater flexibility in Community Council spending. Provision should be made in the Scheme to cover payment of expenses for Community Councillors on Community Council business, specifically, viz:- travel/loss of earnings.		
Crosshouse		Concurs with submission by Gatehead Community Council that it gains the Cochrane Inn and properties at A759. Does not accept submission by Grange/Howard Community Council to extend its boundary to Dalespark roundabout to the West of Crosshouse.				Quorum minimum each 4th meeting. Should be discontinued - East Ayrshire Council Committee meetings are not subject to this practise.			

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Cumnock							Administrative allowance criteria should be abolished to permit greater flexibility in Community Council spending. The Administrative allowance is too low to permit Community Councils to undertake large scale consultation exercises, for example.		
Cumnock Landward		The Community Council would be guided on the issue of Skares coming under Ochiltree Community Council by the inhabitants of Skares.					Generally content, however, some clearer definition/guidance required upon the criteria of administrative allowance.		
Dalmellington				Remove requirement for 8 members to be drawn from Dalmellington, Waterside and Dunaskin and 9 members from Bellsbank.			Should be fixed sum each year.		
Dalrymple			Lower minimum number required to establish a Community Council and abolish upper limit on membership.		Posters in Community Centres, local shops, notice-boards etc., should be sufficient to intimate an ordinary Community Council Election.		Administrative allowance should be a fixed sum. Top-up should be discontinued.		
Darvel and District							Should be an alternative to the current and inadequate top-up system. Free lets limit should be raised to 30 for 'active' Community Councils.		
Drongan	Should be 'Drongan, Rankinston and Stair'.						Can a more convenient method be suggested to reimburse Community Council's Office Bearers expenses such as phone calls, printing etc?		

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Dunlop and Lugton						Quorum - Favour status quo.	Administrative allowance should be a fixed sum. Top-up should be abolished. Spending criteria should be relaxed.		
Fenwick		Exclude the Southcraigs and its local environs from Fenwick boundary.					Inadequate funding. Criteria too rigid.		
Galston							Honoraria should be an eligible category. There should be an alternative to the current top-up system.		
Gatehead		Should include the Cochrane Inn and properties at A759. Crosshouse has agreed to the amendment.							
Grange/Howard		Should extend boundary to include Dalespark roundabout to the west of Crosshouse (see plan attached). Crosshouse does not concur.							
Hurlford				Formalise 5 reserved places for representatives from Crookedholm, in the Scheme.		Quorum minimum each 4th meeting. Should be relaxed.	Administrative allowance should be a fixed sum. Top-up should be discontinued.		
Kilmaurs			As the population figures are based upon the 1991 census, would it not be more relevant/accurate to base population figures on the more recent Electoral Register?			Can quorum be flexible, say + - 20% of minimum required?	Block grant preferable to top-up system. Is administrative allowance to be increased? Suggest £300. Criteria for administrative allowance should be relaxed.	Promote Councils/Community Councils Code of Practice.	

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Lugar and Logan							Administrative allowance should be fixed sum. Top-up system should be abolished.		
Mauchline			How do we attract younger members?						
Moscow and Waterside							Current allowance adequate. Provision should be made to cover payment of expenses for Community Councillors on Community Council business, specifically, viz:- travel/loss of earnings.		
Muirkirk						Quorum minimum each 4th meeting. Should be relaxed.	Administrative allowance criteria should be relaxed. Top-up ok. Should include travel expenses.		
New Cumnock			View that the 1991 census does not accurately reflect the current population for the New Cumnock Community Council area. Perception locally is population has declined.			Quorum minimum each 4th meeting. Should be relaxed.	Administrative allowance criteria should be relaxed.		
New Farm Loch		Boundary changes submitted. Minor boundary changes effecting Fenwick, Piersland and Bentinck and the Dean Community Councils.	Propose 10 members for first 5,000 of population than 1 per 250. Reduce membership from current 25 to 20 but to allow flexibility permit up to 30 voting members.				Larger administrative allowance required. Costs Community Councils incur for Council premises for events such as Easter parties, should be waived.		
Newmilns and Greenholm							Larger administrative allowance required.		

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North West Kilmarnock		Would take in Longpark area. Agree that Southcraigs should have a Community Council set-up for that area. We would offer assistance to the new Community Council.					Abolish top-up system. Criteria should be relaxed.		
Ochiltree		Not appropriate to comment on possibility of Skares being included in our boundary.				Quorum requirements should be relaxed.	Larger administrative grant required. Criteria should be relaxed.		
Patna			Membership set too high.						
Piersland/Bentinck						Consider lowering quorum of each 4th meeting.			
Sorn		On issue of Catrine Community Council looking to include Daldorch House within its boundary. Community Council awaits the second stage of the review.							
Stewarton and District					No need for newspaper intimation.	Retain 4th meeting quorum requirement.	'Larger' expenses should be claimed direct to East Ayrshire Council, not the administrative allowance. Larger administrative allowance required.		

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Councillor George Smith						<p>The period of 6 months failure to attend Community Council meetings, resulting in expulsion, should be reduced.</p> <p>Guidance to be included on the structure/format of Minutes/Agendas/Sederunts. Should there be a common 8 week-cycle for Community Council meetings.</p>		A Code of Conduct should be established including roles and responsibilities.	
Public Submission	<p>Possible establishment of Community Council at Southcraigs. Alternatively the Southcraigs area be subsumed into Northwest Kilmarnock Community Council (see submissions (above) by Fenwick and Northwest Kilmarnock Community Councils).</p>								

6 March 2001

AH/SR

## APPENDIX II

### ANALYSIS OF SUBMISSIONS

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF AREA (PARAGRAPHS 5/6)

##### 1.1 Drongan Community Council

The Community Council submitted a request that the name of the Community Council should be changed to “Drongan, Rankinston and Stair” to more accurately reflect the local community.

***No difficulty is seen in recommending approval of the proposed name change for consideration during the second period of public consultation.***

##### 1.2 Bonnyton & Woodstock Community Council

The Community Council submitted an unanimous proposal that the name of the Community Council should be changed to “Bonnyton Community Council”. In support of this proposal, the Community Council stated that the Fullarton Street/North Hamilton Street area is not, and never has been, known as Woodstock; the local residents do not identify with the name Woodstock, and neither do the rest of the citizens of Kilmarnock; and it would seem that the previous name change to Bonnyton Woodstock Community Council did not achieve its stated aim of encouraging more interest in the Community Council from the inhabitants of the Fullarton Street/North Hamilton Street area.

***No difficulty is seen in recommending approval of the proposed name change for consideration during the second period of public consultation.***

#### 2. COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOUNDARIES/NEW COMMUNITY COUNCILS

**All maps referred to in this Paragraph will be displayed in the Main Meeting Room from Monday 2 April 2001.**

##### 2.1 Catrine/Sorn/Mauchline Community Councils

Catrine Community Council submitted a request that its boundary be amended to include Ballochmyle Estate and Daldorch (**Map A**), it being felt that these areas geographically and historically are more closely associated with Catrine. Sorn Community Council has agreed to await further specific consultation during the second stage of consultation. Mauchline Community Council is also affected by this proposal.

***It is recommended that this issue proceed to the second period of public consultation and allow all Community Councils affected to discuss the issue. The consultative meeting will be facilitated by Officers from Administration.***

## **2.2 Cumnock Landward/Ochiltree**

Prior to the formal review process, a survey was received from residents of Skares indicating support for the inclusion of that community in Ochiltree Community Council area. Cumnock Landward Community Council has indicated a willingness to be guided by the views of Skares residents. Ochiltree Community Council recognises that it is a matter for the Skares residents and it would not be appropriate for the Community Council to comment at this stage.

***It is recommended that the specific possibility of Skares being included within Ochiltree Community Council area proceed to the second stage of the consultation exercise. This would allow an opportunity for both Councils to determine the up-to-date view of the residents of Skares. Officer assistance will be provided to facilitate any public meetings and dissemination of information.***

## **2.3 Fenwick Community Council**

Fenwick Community Council has proposed that its boundary be re-aligned to exclude the Southcraigs area, together with the proposed area of industrial development, on the grounds that the area constitutes a new conurbation in North Kilmarnock which is not compatible with the rural area represented by Fenwick Community Council.

***The removal of Southcraigs from the boundary of Fenwick Community Council (Map B) would appear to have some justification and it is, therefore, proposed that this issue be taken forward into the second period of public consultation for further consideration. The issue of a proposed Southcraigs Community Council is referred to later in the report.***

## **2.4 Gatehead/Crosshouse Community Councils**

Gatehead Community Council has submitted a request that its boundary be amended to include the Cochrane Inn and the properties adjacent to it on the same side of the A759, the new boundary to run round the line of the gardens to the rear of these properties on **(Map C)**. Gatehead Community Council confirms that it has consulted with the neighbouring Community Council of Crosshouse and obtained its agreement in respect of the proposed amendment to the boundary. In its submission, Crosshouse Community Council has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposed boundary change.

***This is a mutually agreed submission and, therefore, recommended for approval for consideration during the second period of public consultation.***

## **2.5 Grange-Howard/Crosshouse Community Councils**

Grange-Howard Community Council has submitted a request that its boundary be extended to include Dalespark Roundabout to the west of Crosshouse (**Map D**) on the grounds that the area is considered a natural part of the Grange-Howard community and the relief road would form a more identifiable boundary between the two communities. Crosshouse Community Council does not concur with this proposal.

***It is recommended that the issue proceed to the second period of public consultation and to allow both Community Councils to discuss this issue. The consultative meeting will be facilitated by Officers from Administration.***

## **2.6 New Farm Loch/Fenwick/The Dean/Piersland Bentinck Community Council**

New Farm Loch Community Council has submitted a request that minor changes be made to its boundary with Fenwick, The Dean and Piersland Bentinck Community Councils (**Map E**).

***Officers consider that the proposals appear reasonable and more accurately reflect the local community of New Farm Loch. It is, therefore, recommended that the issue proceed to the second period of public consultation which will also allow the relevant Community Councils to discuss the issue. The consultative meeting will be facilitated by Officers from Administration.***

## **2.7 Northwest Community Council**

Northwest Community Council has intimated its willingness to amend its boundary to incorporate the Longpark area of Kilmarnock which, at present, lies within the boundary of the currently dissolved Dean Community Council. (**Map F**).

***Given that the Dean Community Council experienced long-term difficulties in encouraging membership and, ultimately, required to be dissolved due to failure to achieve minimum membership required, the proposal put forward by Northwest Kilmarnock Community Council would appear to have some merit. Moreover, Longpark would be geographically complementary to the Northwest Kilmarnock area. Consideration would, however, require to be given to the remaining area of the former Dean Community Council. It is, therefore, proposed that the matter is subject to further consideration and consultation during the second period of public consultation.***

## 2.8 Southcraigs Area

Members will note that both Fenwick and Northwest Community Councils recognise that Southcraigs is an evolving independent geographical area of Kilmarnock (**Map G**). A letter from local residents intimating interest in establishing a Community Council for the area or examining other options, has been received.

***It is recommended that this issue be taken forward to the second period of public consultation to allow an opportunity to demonstrate the extent of local interest in establishing a Community Council for Southcraigs and environs.***

## 3. COMPOSITION OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS (PARAGRAPH 7(b)(i))

- 3.1 Several submissions have been received in relation to the composition of Community Councils (refer to relevant column of Appendix I).

***The size of Community Councils is based on the most recent population information and it is recommended that the status quo be maintained in the interests of consistency across Community Councils. With regard to encouraging younger members, proposals are referred to later in this report under Paragraph 6.1.***

## 4. QUALIFICATIONS FOR NOMINATION, ELECTION AND HOLDING OFFICE OF A MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY COUNCIL (PARAGRAPH 8(a)(ii) AND PARAGRAPH 8(b))

- 4.1 Operational experience indicates that some delay may be experienced by potential Community Councillors in having their names recorded within the Register of Electors once they have moved to a new Community Council area and such persons are, through no fault of their own, unable to meet the requirement of the Scheme that they be registered as electors for that particular Community Council area.

***It is recommended that Paragraphs 8(a)(ii) and 8(b) be amended to reflect that candidates, proposers and seconders should either have the name recorded within the Register of Electors for the area of the Community Council or otherwise prove to the satisfaction of the Council that they are resident within the Community Council area in question.***

- 4.2 In recognition of Crookedholm, Hurlford and Crookedholm Community Council has requested that five places be reserved for that area. It is suggested that this arrangement would ensure fair representation from both villages.

***It is considered appropriate to support Community Councils' wishes to recognise individual communities within their area.***

***For electoral purposes, it is recommended that Hurlford have 11 members and Crookedholm 5 members. Where nominations from one community are under-subscribed, it is suggested that the vacancies attributed to that community may be filled by any excess nominations from the other community up to the total available.***

- 4.3 Dalmellington Community Council has requested the removal of the current requirement for 8 members to be drawn from residents of Dalmellington, Waterside and Dunaskin and 9 members from Bellsbank.

***It is recommended that the views of the Community Council be accepted.***

## **5 METHOD OF ELECTION (PARAGRAPH 9)**

- 5.1 Anecdotal information obtained by Officers suggests that Community Councils would benefit from support from the Council in arranging their ordinary Elections under Paragraph 9(c).

***It is recommended that Paragraph 9(c) be amended to include reference to Community Councils organising ordinary Elections “in association with the Council”. It is further recommended that Paragraph 10(2) be amended to include reference to the Council providing “appropriate support and guidance in relation to the running of ordinary Elections”. As a support mechanism to this provision, it is further recommended that Paragraph 10(2)(a) be amended to include a requirement for Community Councils to intimate to the Council the date of their proposed ordinary Election.***

## **6. CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS (PARAGRAPH 11)**

- 6.1 Operational experience indicates that some confusion exists between the notion of those Community Councillors co-opted with voting rights and forming part of the membership of a Community Council and other individuals who are co-opted without voting rights, outwith the membership of a Community Council, usually for a particular project or because of their specialist knowledge of a particular area.

***For the avoidance of confusion, it is recommended that those co-opted with voting rights to form part of the membership of the Community Council be referred to as “co-opted members” and those co-opted without voting rights be referred to “appointed persons”. It is further recommended that clarification be provided within the Scheme of appointed persons, defining them as “people with particular knowledge in respect of possible Community Council projects or initiatives; younger people residing within a Community Council area not eligible to become full members of the Community Council by reason of age; and groups or other organisations active within the Community Council area”.***

***It is considered that the inclusion of younger people as possible “appointed persons” would fulfil the principle contained within Paragraph 11(8) in terms of the establishment of a junior Community Council. It is considered that the needs of younger people might appropriately be met by their inclusion in a Community Council as “appointed persons”.***

- 6.2 A number of Community Councils (refer to Appendix I “Constitutional Requirements” Column) have observed that the current requirement under Paragraph 11(i) for ½ the maximum membership of a Community Council to be in attendance at one meeting in every four, can be problematic and have requested that the requirement be relaxed or discontinued.

***Given that the Council’s own quorum for meetings is ¼, it is recommended that the request for a quorum of ¼ for all Community Council meetings is accepted for consultation during the next period of public consultation and Paragraphs 11(i) and (k) amended accordingly. It is further recognised that under some circumstances, Community Councils may experience difficulty in maintaining a minimum of 50% membership. It is clearly in the interest of both the Community Council and the Council to avoid, as far as possible, the dissolution of Community Councils and, to that end, it is proposed that Community Councils be given a period of 4 months where membership difficulties have been identified, to address this issue without being required to dissolve.***

- 6.3 Comments have been made with regard to the period of six months specified in the Scheme relating to the failure of a Community Council member to attend meetings. It has been proposed that this time period be reduced.

***It is considered that the Scheme is in line with current arrangements for Elected Members and it is recommended that no change be made.***

## **7. FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE (PARAGRAPH 12)**

- 7.1 Of the Community Councils who responded to this issue (22), all but one have expressed dissatisfaction with the current “top-up allowance for administrative expenses alone, on the grounds that the system is overly restrictive. **(Refer to Appendix I)**. In the first instance, it is suggested that the “top-up” mechanism be abolished and the definition of allowable expenditure relaxed to permit Community Councils more freedom in carrying out their function.

***It is recognised that the current system has had the effect of restricting Community Councils and, in recognition of this, it is proposed that the following amendments be made:-***

- (i) ***Title of allowance (Paragraph 12(c)) to be amended from “Administrative and Accommodation Allowance” to “Funding and Accommodation Allowance”;***

- (ii) **Paragraph 12(b) to be amended to refer to funding to “promote and assist Community Councils to pursue their objectives” as opposed to a purely administrative allowance;**
- (iii) **Paragraph 12(c)(i) to be amended to refer to an annual grant towards the administrative and general running costs of Community Councils to allow them to promote their activities to be paid following satisfactory audit and assessment of Community Council’s accounts/funds by the Council. It is recommended that a stipulation be contained within the Scheme that such funding must not be used for any political purposes or for supporting any political activities. Guidance notes on expenditure of the annual grant will be provided by the Council, subject to review from time to time.**

**It is further recognised that the current “top-up” system of funding Community Councils (Paragraph 12(c)(iii)) is somewhat restrictive and that consideration should be given to the award of an annual grant based on population and which will be the subject of review from time to time.**

**The current funding arrangements are based upon the population of Community Council areas which is converted to membership numbers. This in turn determines a Community Councils placing within the banding system and the amount of administrative allowance it may claim. However, it is considered, that given a difference of one member between Community Councils can place an almost identical Community Council at a financial disadvantage that the banding system is inherently unfair and an allowance based primarily on population would be more equitable.**

- 7.2** A further suggestion has been received that the number of free lets be increased and other Community Council activities be eligible for such free lets.

**It is considered that the existing provision of 15 free lets is adequate for a Community Council to carry out its normal business activities. It is also noted that the Council’s letting policy already provides concessionary rates to Community Councils for any additional meetings/events. Moreover, such a proposal would put other local voluntary organisations at a disadvantage.**

## **8. MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS**

### **8.1 Rules for Election of Elected Community Councillors (Annexation III)**

Operational experience has demonstrated that the cost of Community Councils meeting the requirement for a notice to be inserted in the local press to publicise ordinary Elections, can be prohibitive.

*It is considered that the requirement for Community Councils to advertise ordinary Elections in the local press could be discontinued without impairing public awareness raising, given that notices would still require to be exhibited on public notice boards within the area.*

## **8.2 Dissolved Community Councils**

*Provision will still be maintained within the Scheme for Community Councils to be created within Auchinleck, the Dean (as amended, subject to the second consultation process), Riccarton and Shortlees.*

## **8.3 Code of Practice**

*Reference to developing a Code of Practice should be removed from the Scheme as this document has now been established and is subject to separate review from time to time.*

## **8.4 Minor Boundary Changes**

*During this stage of the review, minor boundary anomalies have been identified, together with the need to take cognisance of future housing development proposals, which will be consulted upon with the specific Community Councils affected.*

## **8.5 Presentation of Scheme**

*It is considered appropriate to suggest as a general recommendation, that the Scheme document be subject to a presentational review, including a plain English review for consultation in the final period.*

21 March 2001

AH/MM/SR

**APPENDIX III**

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME - REVIEW 2001**

**COMMUNITY COUNCILS'/OTHERS RESPONSES**

**SUMMARY OF `ADDITIONAL' COMMENTS**

<b><u>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</u></b>	<b><u>COMMENTS</u></b>
Bellfield	<p>There can be a mutual benefit from a better working relationship with East Ayrshire Council. Training facilities within East Ayrshire Council should be available for Community Councillors too.</p> <p>Support in developing the Community Council's potential would be appreciated. In addition, the Community Council's role and remit should be better communicated to the general public.</p>
Catrine	<p>When East Ayrshire Council arranges meetings to which Community Councillors are invited, these should be outwith normal working hours.</p> <p>The Community Council supports an improvement to support/liaison from East Ayrshire Council.</p>
Crosshouse	<p>Additional support would be welcomed as undernoted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• lockable storage facility for Community Council documentation possibly within Crosshouse Community Centre;</li><li>• internet computer network to communicate with East Ayrshire Council and other Community Councils;</li><li>• more information requires to be provided on the Council Website in respect of Council Departments and their functions; and</li><li>• Officer support and attendance at Community Council meetings.</li></ul>

<u>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Cumnock	<p>Concern expressed that sensory impaired persons are not assisted at Community Council meetings. For example, not all premises have a loop system and it is difficult for Community Councils to produce large print formats for papers/documentation.</p> <p>Provision should be made within the Scheme that Elected Members would be required to attend Community Council meetings regularly.</p> <p>The Community Council welcomed the potential for support from East Ayrshire Council such as:- availability of PC's, training for Office Bearers and improved information flow/communication. The Community Council did not consider it necessary that Council officials attend every meeting however.</p>
Dalrymple	<p>Would East Ayrshire Council provide public liability insurance for <u>all</u> Community Council activities?</p>
Darvel and District	<p>East Ayrshire Council, Corporate Resources, Administration, should have a co-ordinating role in bringing Community Councils and Departments of the Council together for the benefit of Community Councils.</p> <p>Consultation timetables can be too short.</p>
Dunlop and Lugton	<p>East Ayrshire Council should monitor the Minutes of Community Councils for early warning signs of potential quorum/membership difficulties and assist accordingly.</p> <p>The Community Council would welcome all training opportunities preferably delivered in the local area. An annual assessment of Community Council's training needs should be introduced.</p> <p>The Community Council needs a focal point for community activities under <u>its</u> control (Dunlop Public Hall).</p>
Fenwick	<p>Develop Planning Authority communications.</p> <p>Perceived loss of autonomy of Community Councils - being marginalised by East Ayrshire Council. Decentralisation pays lip service to Community Representatives.</p>

<u>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Galston	<p>Absence of Community Education workers who used to attend Community Council meetings. Need to have definitive communication links with East Ayrshire Council for support/information.</p> <p>Community Council has new computer, is technical support available from East Ayrshire Council.</p>
Hurlford	<p>Current financial system too bureaucratic and the Community Council need assistance/training. East Ayrshire Council should publicise Community Councils more to the general public to challenge local apathy.</p> <p>Need clarification on communication links to East Ayrshire Council officials.</p>
Kilmaurs	<p>There is no clarification of an Elected Member's link/responsibilities to the Community Council in the Scheme other than that they are ex officio members.</p> <p>Encourage new technology in Community Councils - Computers, Internet.</p> <p>Do co-optees come under the same eligibility criteria as elected Community Councillors.</p> <p>Need improved communication links.</p> <p>Perceived marginalisation of Community Councils.</p> <p>There should be a complaints mechanism to air grievances against East Ayrshire Council.</p> <p>Council Local Area Committee meetings (1 in 3) be held in the evening?</p>
Lugar and Logan	<p>Should have training for Office Bearers.</p> <p>Community Council needs a computer and office equipment.</p> <p>The `Scheme' should be circulated in layperson's format.</p>
Mauchline	<p>Public awareness of Community Councils should be raised, possibly through such mediums as the Council's publication - Headlines.</p>

<b><u>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</u></b>	<b><u>COMMENTS</u></b>
Moscow and Waterside	<p>Not enough time given over `consultative documents`.</p> <p>Notion of Community Councils as Council Committees.</p> <p>Some documents issued to Community Councils need a Council official in attendance to `translate`. In particular we would have welcomed an official to present/explain the consultation document: Decision Making within the Council.</p> <p>Better communication links/liaison required. Minute taking service recommended.</p> <p>Link Community Councils to Internet/e-mail.</p> <p>Training required (including Community Representatives).</p> <p>Raise profile of Community Councils and their Elections and encourage community participation.</p> <p>Should be designated Officer link between East Ayrshire Council and the Community Council.</p> <p>Community Forums should be less formal. (`Boardroom` layout rather than `classroom`).</p> <p>Advocate more structure/discipline during meetings dealing with community grants.</p> <p>Copy of terms of reference of Local Committees requested.</p>
New Cumnock	<p>Block membership of ASCC recommended.</p> <p>Consultative exercise timescales too short.</p>
New Farm Loch	<p>Community Council Secretaries should get a retainer of approximately £40.00 per week.</p>

<u>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Newmilns and Greenholm	<p>Lack of accommodation/storage. Need base for computer.</p> <p>Perceived general lack of consultation.</p> <p>Raise profile/awareness of Community Councils.</p> <p>Need specific Council contact person.</p> <p>Wider use of joint Community Councils on such matters as policing.</p> <p>Cash to Community Councils for local maintenance projects such as painting of railings/grass cutting. More say in how East Ayrshire Council budgets are spent.</p>
Ochiltree	Responses to Community Council written issues/questions is good in the first instance (acknowledgement) but the follow-up could be improved.
Piersland/Bentinck	Raise awareness/profile of Community Councils through such mediums as Headlines.
Sorn	<p>Would welcome support such as PC's, training/guidance, regular East Ayrshire Council Officer attendance at meetings.</p> <p>Need information on project funding sources.</p>
Stewarton and District	<p>Establish dedicated East Ayrshire Council Liaison Officer(s) for Community Council business.</p> <p>Improve speed of reply to Community Council correspondence and its quality which should be in plain English.</p> <p>Speed up the turnaround when auditing Community Council accounts.</p>

6 March 2001

AH/SR

<b>AGENDA</b>
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