

City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 28 September 2023

Review of Scheme for Community Councils and their Boundaries

Executive/routine Wards	ALL
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To note a preliminary consultation process has been undertaken as a model of good practice.
- 1.2 To agree the proposals for a statutory review of the Scheme for Community Councils and their Boundaries.
- 1.3 To agree the arrangements for public notice of the period of the statutory consultation.

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Review of Scheme for Community Councils and their Boundaries

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to undertake a statutory review of the Scheme for Community Councils and their Boundaries, together with the arrangements to give public notice of the period to begin the statutory consultation.

3. Background

- 3.1 Community Councils 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 City of Edinburgh Council in June 2019.
- 3.2 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 requires that a special convened meeting of the Council pass any further amended schemes with not less than a two-thirds majority of the members voting at the meeting.
- 3.3 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 allows a local authority to amend their Scheme provided that Community Councils are given the opportunity to make “representations as respects the proposals” in accordance with the statutory review process.
- 3.4 A series of consultations with Community Council Liaison Officers (CCLOs), Community Councils, COSLA, Scottish Community Development Centre produced a series of proposed amendments to the Scottish Governments Model Scheme for Community Councils in March 2023.
- 3.5 The intention of the amendments to the Model Scheme is a practical update to the 2009 Model Scheme.
- 3.6 The Scheme for Community Councils in Edinburgh is largely based on the Scottish Governments Model Scheme for Community Councils and was last reviewed and agreed in June 2019.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Following the Collaborative working with Community Councils report to Culture and Communities Committee on 1 February 2022 and the Update report regarding Community Council Scheme and Boundary Review 2023 on 31 August 2023, the Council noted that a preliminary consultation process had commenced.
- 4.2 The preliminary consultation concluded on 1 September 2023 and the feedback provided has been analysed by the Governance Team. This analysis has identified a number of scheme clarifications or proposed improvements,;
 - 4.2.1 Eligibility and diversity of membership of Community Councils
 - 4.2.2 Community Council boundaries
 - 4.2.3 Financial arrangements and resourcing for Community Councils
 - 4.2.4 Virtual meetings.
- 4.3 The preliminary consultation also identified areas where Community Councils sought further support to improve their ability to represent their communities:
 - 4.3.1 Training that would provide practical skills to allow for improved engagement with their communities.
 - 4.3.2 Support in engaging with Council services.
 - 4.3.3 Support in establishing positive relationships with external organisations.
- 4.4 The statutory consultation process will address the review of the Scheme for Community Councils and their Boundaries alongside collection of detailed feedback on the support being sought.
- 4.5 The review will be progressed according to the outline consultation plan and timeline at appendix 1.
- 4.6 An action plan to deliver the statutory consultation is being developed to promote wide public engagement through a variety of channels to maximise responses from all citizens and key stakeholders.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The issuing of a public notice of the period of the statutory of consultation process will begin the review of the Scheme for Community Councils and their Boundaries.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 All financial implications are expected to be contained within existing budgets.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process identified implications for groups including: older people and people in their middle years; young people and children.
- 7.2 Opportunities for intergenerational participation are being explored through specific questions within the consultation.
- 7.3 As agreed at Council within the guidance distributed to key stakeholders, the aspiration is to improve diversity, including gender balance, within Community Council membership.
- 7.4 Accessibility support and physical location was considered to enable participation in the consultation events.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 Community Council meetings and pre-statutory consultation events now have the option to be held virtually or hybrid. Previously attendance at meetings could incur travel emissions.
- 8.2 All correspondence inviting feedback has been electronic unless otherwise requested.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 A pre-statutory consultation period has concluded. This included three drop-in sessions, with one held virtually, an online questionnaire and invitations to provide written feedback. The feedback received was reviewed and is shaping the parameters of the statutory consultation.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Collaborative Working with Community Councils - Culture and Communities Committee 1 February 2022](#)
- 10.2 [Update Regarding Community Council Scheme and Boundary Review 2023 and Community Council Elections 2024](#)
- 10.3 [Scheme for Community Councils](#)
- 10.4 [Community Council Maps](#)
- 10.5 [Community Council Guidance Notes](#)
- 10.6 [Community Council scheme and boundary review \(pre-statutory consultation\) - City of Edinburgh Council - Citizen Space](#)

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 – Outline Consultation Plan and Timeline

Appendix 1 – Outline Consultation Plan and Timeline

June 2023 – September 2023	Preliminary consultation period
28 September 2023	Subject to Council approval, public notice of the Statutory Consultation Process will be issued. This consultation phase will be for eight weeks.
8 February 2024	Subject to Council approval, public notice of the draft Scheme and proposed boundary changes will be issued. This consultation phase will be for eight weeks.
26 April 2024	Report to Council to approve the finalised Scheme and boundary changes following the consultation.
9 May 2024	Subject to Council approval, a final 4 week consultation period before Council will determine approval of the new Scheme and boundaries.
May/June 2024	Final scheme to be implemented for CC elections and CC term.

This timetable is indicative and subject to change depending on a requirement for a second statutory period of consultation.