

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Executive Sub-Committee of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee -
30 July 2015Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils – Proposed Amendments in
respect of Community Council Elections

Report by Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks authority to amend the Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils in respect of the age limit on eligibility to stand for election to Community Councils and to vote in Community Council elections.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In February 2011 the Council agreed to adopt a Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils
<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=17949&p=0>
- 1.2 The Scheme as adopted reflected the findings of a series of consultative meetings in 2010 with Community Councils and elected members on proposals to amend the previous Scheme, resulting from the model documentation published by the Scottish Government in March 2009.
- 1.3 The model Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils published by Scottish Government <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/local-government/CommunityCouncils/CCModelScheme> provides that the minimum age to stand for election as a Community Councillor is 16 years; and that 16 and 17 year olds residing in the Community Council area and named on the electoral register for that area also entitled to both stand for the Community Council and vote in any election.
- 1.4 During the consultative meeting in 2010, the Community Councils expressed the view that the minimum age to stand and vote should remain at 18 until such time as legislation is changed. Consequently, the adopted Scheme requires those standing and voting at Community Council elections to be at least 18 years of age.
- 1.5 Members may wish to note that the minimum age to stand and vote at elections for Community Councils in Angus, Dundee City and Fife Councils is 16.
- 1.6 In June 2015, the Scottish Parliament approved the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting age) Bill which provides for the reduction of the voting age for Scottish Parliament elections on or after 5 April 2016 and for Scottish Local Government elections on or after 5 May 2016.

- 1.7 Under the new legislation, 16 and 17 year olds will be included in electoral registers used for elections to the Scottish Parliament and Scotland's Councils. The process to register those aged under 16 will be undertaken during the annual canvass commencing on or about 3 August 2015, with the first registers being published on 1 December 2015.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 As members will be aware, elections to Community Councils in the Perth & Kinross Council area will take place on 5 November 2015. The timetable has been made available to Community Councils and elected members and is available on the Council's website.

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=32418&p=0>

In accordance with the Scheme, only people aged 18 or over will be eligible to stand for and vote at these elections. If the Council does not amend the provisions in the Scheme for the 2015 elections, then the next opportunity will be in advance of the elections scheduled to take place in November 2019.

- 2.2 In line with the model Scheme published by Scottish Government; the views previously expressed by Community Councils in 2010; and with the recent change to legislation regarding voting age at future Scottish elections, it is proposed that the Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils be amended so that the age at which someone can stand for and vote at Community Council elections in the Perth & Kinross Council area be reduced to 16 with immediate effect.
- 2.3 The Electoral Registration Officer for Perth & Kinross, Alastair Kirkwood of Tayside Valuation Joint Board, has advised that the electoral register to be used for the Community Council elections on 5 November 2015 will be the register published on 1 August 2015, i.e. the last register before the commencement of the annual canvass. This will mean that 16 and 17 year olds on that register will be able to stand and vote at the Community Council elections.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils be amended to allow 16 and 17 year olds to stand and vote at Community Council elections in the Perth & Kinross area.
- 3.2
- i. To amend the Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils so that the age at which someone can stand for and vote at Community Council elections be reduced to 16 with immediate effect;
 - ii. To instruct the Head of Democratic Services to advise all Community Councils of this change as a matter of urgency;
 - iii. To note that the electoral register to be used for the Community Council elections on 5 November 2015 will be the register published on 1 August 2015.

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Gillian Taylor	Head of Democratic Services	gataylor@pkc.gov.uk 01738 475135

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
John Fyffe	Depute Chief Executive	16 July 2015

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / No
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	No
Workforce	No
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The proposals in this report support the delivery of the priorities in the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The proposals in this report support the achievement of the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan.

2. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 2.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties. The Equality Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to this report can be viewed clicking [here](#).

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and assessed as making a positive contribution towards encouraging vibrant and safe communities, where everyone has an opportunity to participate in community life and local decision-making, and also promoting equal access and inclusiveness for everyone.

Legal and Governance

- 2.2 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted and is in agreement with the proposals.

3. Consultation

Internal

- 3.1 As the Notice of Election for the forthcoming Community Council elections requires to be published on 17 August 2015, there has been insufficient time to undertake consultation on the proposals.

External

- 3.2 As the Notice of Election for the forthcoming Community Council elections requires to be published on 17 August 2015, there has been insufficient time to undertake consultation on the proposals.

4. Communication

- 4.1 There is a communications plan for the Community Council elections.

5. Background Papers

There are no background papers.

6. Appendices

There are no appendices.

