

Renfrewshire Council

Scheme for Community Councils

1. General

In accordance with the provisions of Section 22 of the Local Government Etc (Scotland) Act, 1994, Renfrewshire Council, having considered suggestions and comments submitted by the public and interested parties arising from public advertisements, consultative meetings and written consultations on proposals for the review of the operation of community councils in Renfrewshire, hereby (a) revoke the scheme for community councils approved by Renfrew District Council on 28th April, 1977 and (b) make the following scheme for the establishment and operation of community councils in Renfrewshire.

Any existing community council shall continue in operation until the date that the members of the community council are declared elected by the returning officer under this Scheme, providing a petition has been lodged for the establishment of the community council in terms of the Scheme pursuant to any notice first given by the Council under the Scheme and sufficient members are nominated to form a community council.

2. Purpose of this document

This document provides a brief summary of the framework that will govern the operation of community councils within Renfrewshire.

It outlines a range of factors relating to community councils including their role, the geographic areas that they cover and their membership. More generally, the document sets out the basis of the relationship between the Local Authority and the community councils within Renfrewshire.

The document is intended to provide a guide to the role of community councils and acts as a summary. Further information and clarification may be obtained from Renfrewshire Council's Community Council Liaison Officer.

3. Preface - Leader of the Council

As part of its decentralisation strategy, Renfrewshire Council is committed to ensuring that its services are relevant to the needs of all sections of the community that it serves.

One important way of doing this is to listen and respond to the views of local representatives. In this respect, community councils can play an important role in representing the views and concerns of local people. They can also help more generally in encouraging a strong community interest in the operation of the Local Authority and in ensuring democratic accountability.

Accordingly, Renfrewshire Council is keen to assist local community councils in achieving their full potential and in playing a strong role within Renfrewshire.

4. Background

Community councils were first established in Scotland following the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973 which came into force in May, 1975. Thereafter, the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act, 1994 which produced the current system of unitary local authorities, also made provision for the continuation of community councils.

Given the number of significant changes that have taken place over the twenty year period since community councils were first set up, Renfrewshire Council agreed to carry out a review of arrangements in 1999.

The review included a process of consultation with the general public and existing community councils within the Renfrewshire area.

The key elements emerging from the review are embodied within this document and its appendices.

5. **The Role and Responsibilities of Community Councils**

Community councils while having a statutory role as consultees on some planning matters, are, essentially, voluntary bodies. The key purpose of community councils is to act as a voice for their local area. This will involve them articulating the views and concerns of local people within their area on a wide range of issues of public interest.

This will include making representations to Renfrewshire Council on matters for which the Local Authority is responsible.

It may also involve making representations to a range of other public bodies on matters which affect them.

It is important that these views are seen to be representative of the community and, accordingly, the community council should have in place recognised consultative mechanisms to validate their views and devise strategies to secure greater involvement by all sectors of the community.

Community councils may also, from time to time, act as a consultative forum for the Local Authority on planning and licensing matters and any other matters deemed appropriate to consult upon. This, for example, might include issues which are exclusively related to their local areas. It is impossible to provide a full list of all of the issues that the Local Authority might be likely to consult upon. However, consultation with community councils will tend to take place where the Council is considering policy matters that are likely to be of exclusive interest to a particular local area.

Community councils may also carry out other activities that are in the general interests of the community that they represent, provided they fall within the objects of their constitution.

Overall, community councils should establish a positive working relationship with the Local Authority and other public bodies.

In carrying out their activities, community councils must at all times adhere to the law.

Each community council requires to draw up and adopt a constitution and have this endorsed by the Local Authority. The purpose of the constitution is to specify the objectives of the community council and set out its agreed working practices. Notwithstanding, each constitution should expressly state that the community council shall be non-political and non-sectarian.

In order to encourage consistency between community councils within the Local Authority area, Renfrewshire Council shall provide a model constitution which sets out the key elements that should be included in a community council's constitution. **(Appendix I).**

Assistance with drawing up a constitution can be provided by Renfrewshire Council's Community Council Liaison Officer.

On a regular basis community councils should review their representative nature and how effective they are in establishing public opinion within their area. In their operation they should put in place procedures to ensure that their representative role is effectively carried out.

Community councils should adopt modified standing orders (**Appendix II**) to ensure that their proceedings are properly structured and regulated so that items of business are relevant to the community, discussed properly and decisions are reached in a democratic manner.

Community councils have a duty under statute to represent the views of their community to Renfrewshire Council and other public bodies. It is important that they reflect the broad spectrum of opinion and interests of all sections of their community. In order to fulfil their potential as effective, representative local organisations, community councils are expected to:-

- inform the community of the work and decisions of the community council by issuing newsletters and posting agendas and minutes of meetings in public places and notice boards and provide contact names, addresses and telephone numbers;
- consider establishing sub-committees to deal with specific pieces of work e.g. producing a newsletter;
 - seek to broaden representation/expertise by co-opting individuals/local organisations onto the community council;
- adopt standing orders to ensure that their proceedings are properly structured and regulated so that items of business are relevant to the community, discussed properly and decisions are reached in a democratic manner;
- make particular efforts to encourage young people to attend/participate in meetings;
- send minutes of the meetings to local councillors and the Director of Corporate Services;
- maintain proper financial records and give regular financial reports at meetings;

- submit annual audited accounts at the annual general meeting and thereafter to the Director of Corporate Services; display these accounts locally to ensure public awareness of them;
- liaise with other community councils and local organisations to establish and share good practice and exchange information and, in particular, establish a Renfrewshire Community Council Forum comprised of and run by the community councils themselves to provide community councils in Renfrewshire with the opportunity to discuss collective issues, exchange experiences, ideas, information and good practice. Renfrewshire Councillors and departmental representatives may be invited to attend as necessary to discuss genuine local and authority wide matters of interest;
 - when corresponding with the Council ensure a reasonable response time is given to allow a proper reply from the Council or its departments;
- advise the Director of Corporate Services of the names and addresses and, where possible, the telephone numbers of the members and office bearers of the community council and any change when this occurs for administrative purposes and for publication in the Renfrewshire Council diary and such other documents, public or otherwise, as may be deemed appropriate;
 - when inviting officers or elected members to a meeting, give as much advance notice as possible.

6. **Community Council areas within Renfrewshire - Principles for establishment**

As the Local Authority, Renfrewshire Council is responsible for establishing a Scheme for enabling the operation of community councils where there is local demand for them. This is the key principle that will determine where community councils will be formed.

A list is attached to this document of the community council areas within Renfrewshire and map showing boundaries. (**Appendix III**).

The list outlines the names of the community council areas, provides an indication of their approximate populations and includes a note of the minimum and maximum number of community councillors permissible.

The quorum for meetings of community councils shall be one third of the total membership or a minimum of three, whichever is the greater. Maps detailing the boundaries of each community council area are also attached.

The community council areas have been drawn up following consultation on the basis of locally recognised areas of community interest and identity.

Renfrewshire Council may, from time to time, review the community council boundaries. Where this happens, proper consultation will be carried out with the community councils prior to any changes taking place.

7. Membership of Community Councils

Each community council requires to have a minimum and maximum number of members as shown in **Appendix III**.

The membership of community councils should seek to reflect all cross-sections of the community that they represent.

Community councils may also, from to time, co-opt additional members with voting rights to a permitted maximum of not more than one third of the total membership drawn from other community groups, voluntary organisations and senior pupils from local secondary schools. Individuals with specialised knowledge may also be co-opted for a specific purpose but without voting rights.

Community councils should be seen to be actively making an effort to ascertain local views. It should not automatically be assumed that the views of individual members of community councils represent the wider views of the community.

Persons entitled to stand for election as members of community councils and vote in such elections must be aged 16 years or over and resident within the community council area.

Each community council requires to appoint nominated Office Bearers. Full details of the required positions and length of office are contained within the model constitution. (**Appendix I**).

In terms of the Scheme, Elected Members of the Local Authority, and Scottish, UK and European Parliaments are entitled to attend meetings of the community council and receive agendas and minutes of its meetings. They are not, however, entitled to become members of community councils or to vote at meetings.

8. Elections to Community Councils

As a general principle, community councils should endeavour to be broadly representative of the communities they represent.

A high turnout from all sections of the local community is to be encouraged in contesting community council elections.

Where there are more than the maximum number of members permissible in terms of paragraph 7 above wishing to stand for election to a community council, or more people than places available arrangements will be made for an election to be conducted in the agreed format.

Elections to community councils will be held on a four yearly basis in September, commencing in September 2001 or as soon as practicable thereafter having regard to the election timetable.

The initial elections will be conducted by Renfrewshire Council using a modified electoral process including:-

- public advertisement intimating the forthcoming election;
- invitation of nominations;
- public advertisement with statement of persons nominated and an indication of whether a poll has to be held and the method of poll, and

- public advertisement indicating those persons duly elected either by poll or uncontested.

Where no petition is received from electors within a community council area for the establishment of a community council there as a consequence of the initial invitation, it shall be open to the community to lodge such a petition at any time thereafter whereupon the Council shall make appropriate arrangements to establish a community council, such community council holding office in their first term for a lesser period than the 4 years provided in the Scheme coincident with the terms of other community councils.

Notwithstanding the above, extraordinary general meetings might be held by community councils throughout the year for the purpose of filling of vacancies on the basis that such vacancies would be publicised, nominations invited and an election held where the number of candidates exceeded the number of places available.

For future years, it will be for the community councils themselves to undertake elections with advice and assistance from the Community Council Liaison Officer of Renfrewshire Council as required.

For membership and voting purposes, membership of community councils and the franchise in community council elections shall be extended to persons aged 16 and over resident within the community council area.

Nominations must be proposed and seconded by persons on the Register of Electors for the community council area.

9. **Resources**

The financial year of each community council shall be provided for in the constitution of each community council and shall be from 1 September to 31 August in each succeeding year to allow for the proper submission of audited statement of accounts to the annual general meeting in October.

The Accounts of each community council shall be audited by at least two Auditors appointed by the community council and who are not members of the community council and a copy of the audited statement of accounts shall be forwarded as soon as the statement is prepared to the Director of Corporate Services of Renfrewshire Council who may in her discretion and in consultation with the Council's Director of Finance & I.T., request the community council to produce such records, vouchers and account books as he may require.

Renfrewshire Council will bear the reasonable cost of postages, photocopying and distribution of community council minutes and agendas as required, and of lets of halls for meetings of each community council to a maximum of 12 per annum.

Each community council shall have the power to raise its own financial resources for schemes, projects and all other purposes consistent with its functions.

Each community council shall be eligible to apply for grants for suitable projects from their Local Grant Committee.

Renfrewshire Council shall provide an administrative grant to community councils to assist with the operating costs of the community council. The grant shall be fixed at a flat rate of £400 per community council with an additional 3p per head of population.

Renfrewshire Council's Community Council Liaison Officer shall establish a training programme for community councils on Council activities.

10. **Community Council Meetings**

Community councils are required to meet at least four times per year. (Members may, of course, opt to meet more frequently than this).

The quorum for community council meetings shall be at least one third of the total membership of each community council or a minimum of three members whichever is the greater.

An Annual General Meeting of each community council must be held in October of each year. (The Annual General Meeting may be regarded as one of the 4 basic meetings).

An outline of the conduct of business that community councils should adhere to at meetings is contained within the model constitution attached to this document. **(See Appendix I).**

Community councils shall retain the right to seek amendments to their constitutions, including membership and quorums, as benefits local circumstances subject to the approval of the Council and subject also to the minimal criteria specified above.

This should be supported by modified standing orders which govern their proceedings. Model standing orders are attached at **Appendix II.**

11. **Liaison with Renfrewshire Council**

In order to help facilitate the effective functioning of community councils, Renfrewshire Council has appointed a Community Council Liaison Officer. Unless there is a specific agreement or an issue is a specific departmental issue, all correspondence between the Local Authority and the community councils should, in the first instance, be directed through this officer.

Renfrewshire Council has undertaken to consult with the relevant community councils on policy proposals that it is developing and other issues of major significance to local communities.

In addition, community councils may make representations to Renfrewshire Council on matters for which the Local Authority is responsible and which they consider to be of local interest. Representations should be made, in the case of statutory objections, such as planning or licensing matters, to the appropriate Departmental Officer. In issues where a department is consulting with community councils representations should be made to the appropriate departmental officer. If community councils feel it is of assistance they may copy correspondence to the Community Council Liaison Officer.

In order to facilitate an exchange of information, Renfrewshire Council will make copies of its agendas and minutes available to community councils. Community councils should also provide copies of their agendas and minutes to the Council via the Director of Corporate Services.

12. **Summary of Community Council responsibilities**

To assist community councils, the Council has set out in **Appendix IV** a summary of their responsibilities and what the Council expects from community councils to show that they are effective, representative organisations.

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

SCHEME OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS

MODEL CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The name of the community council shall be _____ (referred to as “the community council” in this document).

2. Area

The boundaries of the community council shall be as shown on the map attached to the Renfrewshire Council’s Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils (referred to as “the Scheme” in this document).

3. Objectives

The objectives of the community council shall be:

- (a) to ascertain, co-ordinate and reflect the views of the community which it represents, to liaise with other community groups within the area, and to fairly express the diversity of opinions and outlooks of the people;
- (b) to express the views of the community to the Local Authority for the area, to public authorities and other organisations;
- (c) to take such action in the interests of the community as appears to it to be desirable and practicable;
- (d) to promote the well-being of the community and to foster a community spirit;
- (e) to be a means whereby the people of the area shall be able to voice their opinions on any matter affecting their lives, their welfare, their environment, its development and amenity.

The Council shall be non-political and non-sectarian.

4. Role and Responsibilities

In the discharge of their functions and the conduct of their business, the community council shall have regard to their role and responsibilities as set out in Appendix IV to the Scheme for Community Councils approved by Renfrewshire Council and reproduced as an appendix hereto.

5. Membership

The community council shall consist of no more than elected or co-opted members as governed by paragraph 7 of the Scheme and as detailed in the Appendix III to the Scheme.

6. Elections

- (a) Method of Election - Elections shall be by the method of election laid down from time to time by Renfrewshire Council.
- (b) Qualifications of Candidates and Electors - Candidates and voters at elections to the community council must be persons aged 16 years or over resident within the area of the community council. (In the case of persons aged between 16 and 18 years of age, such nominations would require to be proposed and seconded by persons on the electoral register for the area of the community council).
- (c) Frequency of Elections - Elections shall be held every four years in September. All community councillors shall retire at each election. Retiring community councillors shall be eligible for re-election.

7. Casual Vacancies on the community council

Where, following any election, an individual, for whatever reason, ceases to be a member and a vacancy arises which does not result in the number of community councillors on the community council falling below the minimum number as specified in Renfrewshire Council's Scheme of Community Councils, the community council may, if it considers it to be desirable, agree to:-

- (a) an extraordinary general meeting be held in order that the vacancy (and any other outstanding vacancies) can be filled, on the basis that such vacancies would be publicised, nominations invited and an election held where the number of candidates exceeded the number of places available.
- (b) the filling of a vacancy by co-option with voting rights to a maximum of one third of the total membership of the community council as governed by paragraph 7 of Renfrewshire Council's Scheme for Community Councils.
- (c) the vacancy to be left unfilled until a further vacancy arises or until the next set of regular elections.

8. Voting Rights of Members of the Council

The right to vote at any meeting of the community council or any sub-committee thereof shall be held by all community councillors whether elected or co-opted, except those members co-opted for specific issues on a temporary basis, appointed to serve until the date of the next ordinary election.

9. Election of Office-Bearers

- (a) At the first meeting of the community council after elections in the year when elections are held and at the Annual General Meeting in October in the year when elections are not held, the community council shall appoint a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and such other office-bearers as it shall from time to time decide.
- (b) All office-bearers shall be elected for one year, but shall be eligible for re-election, without limitation of time.
- (c) One member shall not hold more than one of the following offices at any one time: Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer.

10. Sub-Committees

The community council may appoint such Sub-committees or representatives to other groups when invited to do so as it may from time to time decide and shall determine their composition, terms of reference, duration, duties and powers.

11. Meetings of the community council

- (a) The quorum for community council meetings shall be at least one third of the total membership or a minimum of three whichever is the greater.
- (b) Once in each year in the month of October the community council shall convene an Annual General Meeting which may be attended by residents of the area for the purpose of receiving and considering the annual report of the community council, the appointment of office bearers, and the submission of the annual audited statement of accounts.
- (c) The community council shall meet not less than four times throughout the year.
- (d) Dates of regular meetings of the community council shall be fixed at the first meeting of the community council following ordinary elections.
- (e) Copies of all Minutes of Meetings of the community council and of sub-committees thereof shall be approved at the next following meeting of the community council and shall be sent to local councillors MP's, MSP's, MEP's, and the Director of Corporate Services, Renfrewshire Council.
- (e) The community council shall have power to draw up standing orders for the proper conduct of its meetings.

12. Public Participation in the Work of the Council

- (a) All meetings of the community council and its Sub-committees shall be open to members of the public. Proper provision is to be made for the accommodation of members of the public and the opportunity should be afforded at each meeting to permit members of the public to address the community council under the guidance of the Chairman.
- (b) Notices calling meetings of the community councils and its Sub-committees shall be posted prominently within the community council area for a minimum period of seven days before the date of any such meeting, and by other suitable means.

13. Information to Renfrewshire Council

Renfrewshire Council shall be sent a copy of the notice of all meetings. Minutes of all meetings, the annual report, the annual financial statement and such other suitable information, as the community council may decide.

14. Control of Finance

- (a) All monies raised by or on behalf of the community council or provided by Renfrewshire Council and other sources shall be applied to further the objectives of the community council and for no other purpose. The monies provided by Renfrewshire Council in the Administrative Grant shall be used for administrative and other approved purposes only. Monies raised from other sources may be used in accordance with the terms of the provision, or, in the absence of such terms, for the furtherance of the objectives of the community council.
- (b) The treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the community council.
- (c) The financial year of the community council shall be from 1 September until 31 August the succeeding year. Audited accounts as received and approved by the community council at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted to Renfrewshire Council at the end of each financial year.
- (d) An audited statement of accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted to an Annual General Meeting of the community council and shall be available for inspection at a convenient location.

15. Title to Property

Property and other assets belonging to the community council shall be vested in the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the community council and their successors in these respective offices.

16. Alterations to the Constitution

Any proposal to alter this Constitution must be delivered in writing to the Secretary of the community council not less than 28 days prior to the date of the meeting at which it is first to be considered and the terms of the proposed resolution to alter the Constitution shall be stated on the notice calling the meeting which shall be issued not less than fourteen days prior to the meeting. If the resolution is supported by two-thirds of the total voting membership of the community council and is approved, in writing by Renfrewshire Council or its appointed officer, the alteration shall be deemed to have been duly authorised.

17. Dissolution

If the community council by a two-thirds majority of the total voting membership decides at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve, it shall agree a date for a public meeting to be held to discuss the proposed resolution to dissolve. It is a requirement that not less than fourteen days prior to the date of such meeting a public notice be given by means of notification in the local newspaper. If the resolution is supported by a majority of those persons present and qualified to vote and is approved by Renfrewshire Council, the community council shall be deemed to be dissolved and all assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts or liabilities shall transfer to Renfrewshire Council who shall hold same in Trust for a future community council for the area or for such other local organisation, having objects similar to those of the community council, which Renfrewshire Council may recognise as an appropriate replacement for the community council for the area.

In the event that the community council is dissolved under the above procedure, and twenty or more electors subsequently wish the re-establishment of a community council for the area, these electors shall submit a requisition to Renfrewshire Council in accordance with Section 52(7) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 on receipt of which the Returning Officer shall arrange for Elections to be held in accordance with the Scheme.

Where for any reason the number of community councillors on the community council falls below the minimum specified in the Scheme, Renfrewshire Council may, by suspending the Constitution of the community council, cause the community council to be dissolved and in this event, the procedures for the establishment of a new community council, being those identified in the immediately preceding paragraph hereof, shall be initiated.

17. Adoption and approval of the Constitution

This Constitution was adopted by on

.....

Signed: Chairman

.....

Member

.....

Member

.....

Date

.....

and was approved on behalf of Renfrewshire Council on

.....

Signed

.....

Date

.....

Role and Responsibilities of Community Councils

Community councils have a duty under statute to represent the views of their community to Renfrewshire Council and other public bodies. It is important that they reflect the broad spectrum of opinion and interests of all sections of their community. In order to fulfil their potential as effective, representative local organisations, community councils are expected to:-

- be representative of the community, rather than individual interests;
- encourage local interest and participation in community council elections through the effective use of publicity, and local community networks etc.;
- recognise that the community itself cannot always reflect the views of all sections of the community, and therefore should form links with other local organisations to inform them of the work of the community council and to gather their views and opinions;
- look at ways of finding out what the community thinks by carrying out questionnaires, holding public meetings, exhibitions etc.;
- inform the community of the work and decisions of the community council by issuing newsletters and posting agendas and minutes of meetings in public places and notice boards;
- consider establishing sub-committees to deal with specific pieces of work e.g. producing a newsletter;
- seek to broaden representation/expertise by co-opting individuals/local organisations onto the community council;
- hold more than the minimum of four meetings a year and publicise these meetings well in advance to promote local awareness and encourage attendance at the meetings;
- ensure meetings are open to the public and encourage open debate and discussion;
- ensure meetings are held in premises that are accessible to all members of the community;
- adopt standing orders to ensure that their proceedings are properly structured and regulated so that items of business are relevant to the community, discussed properly and decisions are reached in a democratic manner;
- make particular efforts to encourage young people to attend/participate in meetings;

- develop protocols governing their links with the Council and community interest to regular their dealings with these bodies;
- send minutes of the meetings to local councillors and the Director of Corporate Services;
- maintain proper financial records and give regular financial reports at meetings;
- submit annual audited accounts at the annual general meeting and thereafter to the Director of Corporate Services; display these accounts locally to ensure public awareness of them;
- liaise with other community councils and local organisations to establish and share good practice and exchange information and, in particular, shall establish a Renfrewshire Community Council Forum comprised of and run by the community councils themselves to provide community councils in Renfrewshire with the opportunity to discuss collective issues, exchange experiences, ideas, information and good practice. Renfrewshire Councillors and departmental representatives may be invited to attend as necessary to discuss genuine local and authority wide matters of interest;
- appoint a community council contact person to deal with the Council and confirm his/her name, address and, where possible, a daytime telephone number to the Council;
- when corresponding with the Council ensure a reasonable response time is given to allow a proper reply from the Council or its departments;
- advise the Director of Corporate Services of the names and addresses and, where possible, the telephone numbers of the members and office bearers of the community council and any change when this occurs for administrative purposes and for publication in the Renfrewshire Council diary and such other documents, public or otherwise, as may be deemed appropriate;
- when inviting officers or elected members to a meeting, give as much advance notice as possible.

In addition to the statutory consultative role of community councils on planning matters, Renfrewshire Council, through its Community Council Liaison Officer will extend the consultative process to additional areas of activity from among its responsibilities including liquor licensing and civic government licensing in consultation with community councils and the departments of the Council.

MODEL STANDING ORDERS

1. Meetings

- (a) Ordinary Meetings of the community council shall be held in the months of [to be entered]. Special Meetings may be called at any time on the instructions of the Chair of the community council or on the request of not less than one-half of the total number of community councillors, which Special Meeting shall be held within fourteen days of the receipt of the request made to the Secretary of the community council.
- (b) The Notice of Ordinary and Special Meetings of the community council shall be given to each community councillor by the Secretary at least seven days before the date fixed for the meeting.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the community council shall be drawn up within fourteen days, distributed to community councillors, local Renfrewshire councillor(s), Renfrewshire Council's Community Council Liaison Officer and other relevant bodies, shall be signed at the next Meeting of the community council by the person presiding thereat and retained for future reference.

3. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of one-third of the total membership of the community council or a minimum of three, whichever is the greater.

4. Order of Business

The order of Business at every meeting of the community council shall be as follows:

- (a) Recording of membership present and apologies received.
- (b) The Minutes of the last meeting of the community council shall be submitted for adoption.
- (c) Any other business which the Chair has directed should be considered.
- (d) Any other competent business.
- (e) Questions from the floor.

5. Order of Debate

- (a) The Chair shall decide all questions of order, relevancy and competency arising at meetings of the community council and his/her ruling shall be final and shall not be open to discussion. In particular, the Chair shall determine the order, relevancy and competency of all questions from the public in attendance at meetings of the community council raised at (e) above. The Chair in determining the order, relevance and competency of business and questions shall have particular regard to the relevance of the issue to the community and ensure that the discussion and proceedings are conducted in such a manner that decisions are reached in a democratic manner. The Chair shall have the power, in the event of disorder arising at any meeting, to adjourn the meeting to a time he/she may then or afterwards fix.
- (b) Every motion or amendment shall be moved and seconded.
- (c) After a mover of a motion has been called on by the Chair to reply no other members shall speak to the question.
- (d) A motion or amendment once made and seconded shall not be withdrawn without the consent of the mover and seconder thereof.
- (e) A motion or amendment which is contrary to a previous decision of the community council shall not be competent within six months of that decision.

6. Voting

- (a) Voting shall be taken by a show of hands of those present and eligible to vote.
- (b) The Chair of a meeting of the community council shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.

7. Application of Standing Orders

These Standing Orders may be altered or added to at any time by the community council provided that notice of motion to that effect is given at the meeting of the community council previous to that at which the motion is discussed.

8. Sub-Committees

The community council may appoint such Sub-committees at it may from time to time decide and shall determine their composition, terms of reference, duration, duties and powers.

9. Suspension of Standing Orders

These Standing Orders shall not be suspended except at a meeting at which three-quarters of the total number of community councillors are present and then only if the mover states the object of his motion and if two-thirds of the community councillors present consent to such suspension.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL AREAS WITHIN RENFREWSHIRE

Community Council	Population	Minimum Membership	Maximum Membership
Bishopton	5,400	10	30
Brediland	7,050	10	30
Bridge of Weir	5,100	10	30
Brookfield	600	7	21
Charleston & Castlehead	8,700	10	30
Craigielea	5,600	10	30
Elderslie	5,750	10	30
Erskine	15,000	10	30
Foxbar	7,000	10	30
Gallowhill	5,600	10	30
Glenburn	9,800	10	30
Hawkhead & Lochfield	6,050	10	30
Houston	6,650	10	30
Howwood	1,350	7	21
Hunterhill	3,450	7	21
Inchinnan	2,250	7	21
Johnstone	18,200	10	30
* Kilbarchan	4,000	7	30
Langbank	1,050	7	21
Linwood	9,650	10	30
Lochwinnoch	3,150	7	21
Paisley West & Central	7,000	10	30
Paisley North	4,500	7	21
Paisley East End	4,850	7	21
Ralston	5,000	10	30
Renfrew	20,450	10	30
Whitehaugh	3,350	7	21

***(Maximum membership increased at the request of the community council)**

Role and Responsibilities of Community Councils

Community councils have a duty under statute to represent the views of their community to Renfrewshire Council and other public bodies. It is important that they reflect the broad spectrum of opinion and interests of all sections of their community. In order to fulfil their potential as effective, representative local organisations, community councils are expected to:-

- be representative of the community, rather than individual interests;
- encourage local interest and participation in community council elections through the effective use of publicity, and local community networks etc.;
- recognise that the community itself cannot always reflect the views of all sections of the community, and therefore should form links with other local organisations to inform them of the work of the community council and to gather their views and opinions;
- look at ways of finding out what the community thinks by carrying out questionnaires, holding public meetings, exhibitions etc.;
- inform the community of the work and decisions of the community council by issuing newsletters and posting agendas and minutes of meetings in public places and notice boards;
- consider establishing sub-committees to deal with specific pieces of work e.g. producing a newsletter;
- seek to broaden representation/expertise by co-opting individuals/local organisations onto the community council;
- hold more than the minimum of four meetings a year and publicise these meetings well in advance to promote local awareness and encourage attendance at the meetings;
- ensure meetings are open to the public and encourage open debate and discussion;
- ensure meetings are held in premises that are accessible to all members of the community;
- adopt standing orders to ensure that their proceedings are properly structured and regulated so that items of business are relevant to the community, discussed properly and decisions are reached in a democratic manner;
- make particular efforts to encourage young people to attend/participate in meetings;
- develop protocols governing their links with the Council and community interest to regular their dealings with these bodies;
- send minutes of the meetings to local councillors and the Director of Corporate Services;

Appendix IV

- maintain proper financial records and give regular financial reports at meetings;
- submit annual audited accounts at the annual general meeting and thereafter to the Director of Corporate Services; display these accounts locally to ensure public awareness of them;
- liaise with other community councils and local organisations to establish and share good practice and exchange information and, in particular, shall establish a Renfrewshire Community Council Forum comprised of and run by the community councils themselves to provide community councils in Renfrewshire with the opportunity to discuss collective issues, exchange experiences, ideas, information and good practice. Renfrewshire Councillors and departmental representatives may be invited to attend as necessary to discuss genuine local and authority wide matters of interest;
- appoint a community council contact person to deal with the Council and confirm his/her name, address and, where possible, a daytime telephone number to the Council;
- when corresponding with the Council ensure a reasonable response time is given to allow a proper reply from the Council or its departments;
- advise the Director of Corporate Services of the names and addresses and, where possible, the telephone numbers of the members and office bearers of the community council and any change when this occurs for administrative purposes and for publication in the Renfrewshire Council diary and such other documents, public or otherwise, as may be deemed appropriate;
- when inviting officers or elected members to a meeting, give as much advance notice as possible.

In addition to the statutory consultative role of community councils on planning matters, Renfrewshire Council, through its Community Council Liaison Officer will extend the consultative process to additional areas of activity from among its responsibilities including liquor licensing and civic government licensing in consultation with community councils and the departments of the Council.