

REPORT

To: CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE	Subject: REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS IN SCOTLAND	
From: HEAD OF CENTRAL SERVICES		
Date: 04 December 2007	Ref: TG/EH	

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to bring to the attention of the Committee the deliberations of a Working Group established by the Scottish Government to progress a review of Community Councils in Scotland.

2. Background

- 2.1. The previous Scottish administration initiated a review of the operation of Community Councils in Scotland entitled "What can we do to help Community Councils fulfil their role?" and the Council previously prepared a submission as part of that consultation process.
- 2.2. Consequential upon the Scottish Parliamentary elections on 3 May 2007, the new Scottish Government established a Short Life Working Group to take forward this review with three specific remits, these being:-
 - to produce a model Community Council Scheme for local authorities;
 - to produce good practice guidance for both Community Councils and local authorities, and
 - to produce a Code of Conduct for Community Councillors.
- 2.3. The Working Group first met on 8 May and since that date a series of meetings have been held to progress its varied remit.
- 2.4. As part of this review the Working Group has also considered the eligibility arrangements for candidates wishing to stand for election; the potential for lowering the age for nomination, the dates for elections, including the identification of a fixed date for elections, the possibility of Community Council boundaries being adjusted so that they are coterminous with local authority ward boundaries, the appointment of a Returning Officer for elections, the nomination process, the introduction of postal ballots for all electors and the introduction of the single transferable vote system for elections.

3. **Considerations**

3.1. North Lanarkshire Council organises quadrennial elections every four years for all Community Councils and these require Community Council members to stand down, for a process of nomination to be initiated and if necessary for elections to be organised to new Community Councils. The next quadrennial elections for Community Councils in North Lanarkshire are due to be held in 2008 and it is possible that the findings of the Working Group, in so far as they relate to election arrangements, may impact upon this process.

4. **Corporate Consideration**

There are no corporate considerations for the Council.

5. **Recommendations**

That the Committee note the position.



Head of Central Services