

REPORT

To: CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE	Subject: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND IMPACT UPON NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL'S QUADRENNIAL ELECTIONS	
From: HEAD OF CENTRAL SERVICES		
Date: 7 May 2008	Ref: TG/MT	

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of (1) the receipt of a Scottish Government Consultation on aspects of Community Councils' operation and of their potential impact upon the proposed arrangements for the Community Council Quadrennial Elections which are due to be held later this year and to seek authority to respond to the consultation paper, and (2) to seek authority to respond to the consultation paper.

2. Background

2.1. At a meeting of the Council on 26 January 2000 the North Lanarkshire Scheme for Community Councils was adopted.

2.2. The Scheme outlines the general role of Community Councils and Community Councillors, specifies areas where Community Councils are to be established, provides details as to a composition of membership, outlines arrangements for the ordinary election of Community Council Members, specifies arrangements for AGMs and EGMs and makes a number of other general provisions as to their establishment, finance and dissolution, amongst other things.

2.3. In terms of the Scheme, Community Council Members are required to stand down every four years and can be nominated for a further four year term of office.

3. Proposals

3.1. The Council have recently received a Consultation Paper from the Scottish Government on certain operational matters pertaining to Community Councils and, in particular, to a draft Code of Conduct for Community Councillors and a Model Draft Scheme for Establishment.

3.2. This Consultation Paper is consequential upon a Scottish Executive Discussion Paper and information gathering exercise which aimed to establish examples of good practice, which was undertaken in 2005.

3.3. Two of the reasons behind the Scottish Government Review were to assess what steps could be taken to support Community Councils in their role as representative bodies for their area and to establish what could be done to improve their operational effectiveness.

3.4. The current consultation seeks comments on both areas and full details can be found on the

www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/government/local/government/communitycouncils/currentreview, website and responses are sought on the foregoing by August 1 2008.

- 3.5. In the light of the foregoing, and the fact that the new model scheme for establishment of Community Councils proposes as an option the establishment of a common date for all Community Council elections throughout Scotland, possibly in 2009, it is recommended that in these circumstances the North Lanarkshire Quadrennial Community Council elections, which are scheduled for later this year, be deferred until the conclusion of the Scottish Government consultation and its recommendations made clear.
- 3.6. As indicated above the deadline for responses to the consultation paper is 1 August 2008 and, given that the next meeting of the committee is after this date, it is recommended that authority be delegated to the Head of Central services, following consultation with the Convener, to respond on the Council's behalf.

4. **Corporate Considerations**

There are no adverse financial, legal or property corporate implications arising from this report.

5. **Recommendations**

- 5.1. That the Committee note the receipt of a Scottish Government consultation on a Draft Model Scheme for Establishment and on a Code of Conduct for Community Councillors.
- 5.2. That given that the date of the next meeting of the Committee is after the deadline for submission of comments on the consultation paper that authority be delegated to the Head of Central Services, following consultation with the Convener, to submit a response to the consultation paper.
- 5.3. That due to the possible establishment of a common date throughout Scotland for Community Council elections, that the Council's proposals to hold quadrennial elections for Community Councils later this year be deferred meantime.


Head of Central Services

Should any Member require further information please contact Tom Gaffney on extension 2342.