

# Inaugural Meeting – Briefing Note For Inaugural Community Council meeting

1. Meeting to be convened by Highland Council rep usually Local Member
2. Meeting format outlined at start by Highland Council rep usually Local Member
3. Scheme of Establishment link for all CC Members below:  
[Community Councils Scheme review 2018/2019 | Scheme of Establishment FINAL Sept 2019 \(highland.gov.uk\)](#)
4. For full training video and further information click:  
[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians\\_elections\\_and\\_democracy/364/community\\_councils/4](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians_elections_and_democracy/364/community_councils/4)

For Training Segments click

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=60s> Background to Community Councils

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=146s> Membership

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=602s> Elections and Interim Elections

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=892s> Financial Matters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=1091s> Assets

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=1236s> Responsibilities of Community Councils/Councillors

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPt26-zSfr8&t=1723s> Community Councils and Highland Council

For any further questions, contact your Ward Manager [Ward managers | Ward Managers | The Highland Council](#)

5. Overview of Scheme of Establishment to be given by the Highland Council representative.
6. The Highland Council representative will Chair the meeting until completion of Appointment of Office Bearers, including noting of appointments made for the minute of the meeting. Following this the newly appointed Chair will take over responsibility for the remainder of the agenda and the secretary or appointed person will note the remainder of the minute.
7. It is recommended that the Community Council should have a generic email address for all correspondence, and this should be shared with the named Council Officer.

Many CCs use hotmail or gmail or similar accounts as they can be easily passed on to subsequent office bearers.

## **Overview of Scheme of Establishment**

This current version of the Scheme was reviewed in 2018/19 under the terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. It was agreed by a Special Meeting of the Council on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and came into effect on 16 September 2019.

## **Summary of key points of the Scheme**

### ***Role of Community Councils***

- Community Councils have a duty to act as a voice for their Community Council area and to represent the views and concerns of local people to the Council and other public agencies
- Key roles in planning and liquor licence applications as statutory consultees
- Undertake other activities that are in the general interests of the communities they represent

### ***Membership***

- The membership of each Community Council is set out at **Appendix 2 (start on p.22)** of the Scheme documentation. No Community Council shall exceed this membership level.
- Should a vacancy or vacancies arise on a Community Council between elections the Community Council must inform the named Highland Council Officer (Ward Manager named at item 4 above) **Page 10 6.2.6 para 2.**

### ***Qualification for Membership or Voting***

- Must be named on the electoral register in that Community Council area
- Must reside in the Community Council area
- Must be 16 years or over

### ***Associate Members***

- **Page 7 para 5.5** Associate members, who need not be resident within the Community Council area, may be appointed by a majority vote of a Community Council where there is considered to be a need for individuals with particular skills or knowledge.
- They will have no voting rights

### ***Ex-Officio Members***

- **Page 7 para 5.6** Ex-officio Members will be any Highland Councillor, MP, MSP, whose Ward OR Constituency falls within the Community Council area.
- They will have no voting rights and cannot stand for the Community Council.

### ***Youth Members***

- **Page 8 para 5.7** *Each Community Council is able to appoint two youth members between the ages of 16-18. Youth members must live within the Community Council area. The appointment shall be made in liaison with the local High School and Youth Work Service. These members shall be in addition to the total membership of each Community Council but will be considered as full members of the Community Council. They will have full voting rights, with the exception of the appointment of co-opted members and will be appointed for a two-year term.*

## Co-opted Members

- [Page 11 para 6.3](#). CCs may co-opt up to their maximum permitted membership, as long as the number of co-opted members does not exceed 4 and half of all Community Councillors are elected. They cannot co-opt at the first meeting as they must make sure it is on an agenda prior to discussion [\(para 6.3 – first bullet\)](#).
- Shall have full voting rights, bar the appointment of co-opted members

## Meetings

- Frequency of meetings shall be determined by each Community Council but there shall be a minimum of 6 ordinary and 1 annual general meeting each year
- The annual general meeting shall be held between the 1<sup>st</sup> April and the 30<sup>th</sup> of June
- Quorum for all meetings shall be 4 voting members
- Draft minutes of Community Council meetings will be sent to CC members and the named Highland Council officer - *normally* within 14 days of the meeting
- Agendas will be distributed 7 days before a meeting

## Finance

HC provides an annual grant to cover the CCs administrative expenses. The grant is made on submission of the previous year's annual accounts, agreed at the CC AGM, to be held by end June each year. A standard format is used and is available from the Ward Manager. The CC Account balance should be reported to each CC meeting by the Treasurer.

## Insurance and Liability

- It is important for all Members to be aware of the Liability of Community Councils. [Related section is Page 15 Para 10.1 to 10.3](#)

## Constitution and Standing Orders

The Scheme includes the CC constitution (which applies to all CCs in Highland) [Related section is Appendix 3 Page 27 to 35](#) and the Standing Orders (which sets out how the CC meetings are conducted) [Related section is Appendix 4 Page 36 to 41](#)

## Code of conduct for Community Councillors

Community Councils are expected to abide by the terms of the Code of Conduct introduced as part of the Scheme. The Code sets out how Community Councillors are expected to conduct themselves as representatives of the Community Council but is also designed to assist in identifying their responsibilities in terms of declarations of interests. [Related section is Appendix 5 Page 42 to 48](#)

## Community Council Complaints Procedure

As part of the Council's review of the scheme establishment in 2019 the Highland Council developed a complaints process for Community Councils which can be found on the following link:

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians\\_elections\\_and\\_democracy/364/community\\_councils/5](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/772/politicians_elections_and_democracy/364/community_councils/5)

It is important to realise that Community Councils are separate, independent organisations and are not part of the Local Authority. As such, not all Council policies or procedures will apply to them. This is particularly relevant when making a complaint, either to a Community Council or about a Community Council or Councillor.

### Appointment of Office Bearers

- Appointment of
- a) Chair
  - b) Secretary
  - c) Treasurer

A vice-chair is optional and recommended if not all of the appointments can be filled as there is normally a requirement for the signatories to be any 2 of 3 office bearers.

..... Community Council		
<b>Chair</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>