

## ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

### SPECIAL MEETING

#### SKYPE MEETING, 23 SEPTEMBER, 2021

**Present:** Councillors W Agnew, D Aitchison, A Allan, P Argyle, N Baillie, D Beagrie, L Berry, A Bews, R Bruce, C Buchan, M Buchan, S Calder, R Cassie, J Cox, I Davidson, S Dickinson, E Durno, A Evison, A Fakley, M Findlater, M Ford, A Forsyth, P Gibb, J Gifford, V Harper, A Hassan, W Howatson, J Hutchison, P Johnston, A Kille, D Keating, A Kloppert, J Latham, D Lonchay, R McKail, D Mair, I Mollison, G Owen, G Petrie, C Pike, S Powell, G Reid, G Reynolds, D Robertson, A Ross, M Roy, A Simpson, H Smith, N Smith, A Stirling, I Sutherland, I Taylor, B Topping, I Walker, R Withey and J Whyte.

**Apologies:** Councillors G Blackett, A Buchan, G Carr, A Duncan, M Ewenson, M Ingleby, J Ingram, S Leslie, L McAllister, A McKelvie, H Partridge, S Smith, A Wallace and L Wilson.

**Officers:** Chief Executive, Director of Education and Children's Services, Director of Infrastructure Services, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership, Head of Service, Legal and People, Head of Service, Customer & Digital Services, Head of Service, Finance, Area Manager (Garioch) and Principal Committee Services Officer.

#### CHAIR

Councillor W Howatson, Provost of the Council, presided.

#### 1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Provost asked Members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. The following declarations were intimated in respect of Item 3 –

- (1) Councillor Ford on the basis that his wife is a member of a Community Council and left the meeting; and
- (2) Councillor Sutherland on the basis that a relative had recently been appointed as a member of a Community Council and having applied the objective test concluded that the interest was remote and insignificant and would remain and participate in the meeting.

#### 2. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Council **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
  - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

### **3. REVIEW OF THE SCHEME FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

With reference to the Minute of Special Meeting of the Council of 29 April, 2021 (Item 3) there had been circulated a report dated 25 August, 2021 by the Director of Education and Children's Services (1) advising that the third period of consultation of the review of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Council's had concluded, (2) seeking approval to adopt the revised Scheme, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, and the publication of the Legal Notice required to confirm the adoption of the new Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils with effect from 1 January, 2022.

The Council heard from the Area Manager (Garioch) on the robust procedure and engagement process undertaken as part of the review and expressed her gratitude to all Community Councils and Officers involved. Reference was also made to further work to be undertaken to complete a review of the Community Council handbook, delivery of training to Community Councils on the new Scheme provisions and the delivery of training, post May 2022 elections, to Elected Members.

Discussion took place on whether an approved Community Council constitution would take precedence over the Scheme, room for different interpretation of the Scheme and any Appeal process included, incorporation of equalities throughout the Scheme, incorporation of a maximum period of office for Office Bearers and development of a Code of Conduct for Community Councillors.

Thereafter, the Council **agreed**:

- (1) to acknowledge the results of the third period of consultation as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) to approve the revised Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (3) that the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils come into effect on 1 January 2022;
- (4) to approve the publication of the Legal Notice required to confirm the adoption of the new Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils; and
- (5) that Officers consider opportunities to incorporate a maximum period of office for Office Bearers and the development of a Code of Conduct for Community Councillors.