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**To: Johnstone & The Villages Local Area Committee**

**On: 27 August 2015**

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**Report by: Director of Finance & Resources**

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**Heading: Community Council Elections 2015**

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report advises that the process of electing members to community councils in Renfrewshire will commence on 1 September 2015.
  - 1.2 A Public Notice in local newspapers week commencing 31 August will announce that community council elections to fill membership places are under way. Information about these elections will also be available on the Council's website and advertised on Facebook and Twitter. Existing community councils will receive publicity material to promote the election and raise awareness in their local area.
  - 1.3 Candidates for membership of community councils must complete and return a nomination form to the Council by 30 September 2015.
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**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note that the 4-yearly, Council-wide elections to community councils will commence on 1 September 2015.
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### 3. **Background**

- 3.1 In terms of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils 2015 (the Scheme) setting out the provisions to be made for community councils in Renfrewshire, elections to fill membership places on community councils must be held every four years. The last elections were held in April 2011 and the election of members to community councils for the next four year term (2015 – 2019) is scheduled to commence on 1 September 2015.
- 3.2 Foxbar & Brediland Community Council is exempt from this election on the grounds that it was newly-established on 29 June 2015 following a local election in that area. Its members will serve until the next election in 2019 and can seek re-election at that time.
- 3.3 All current community council members (except Foxbar & Brediland) stand down following the ordinary community council meeting in September and are eligible for re-election. All candidates for membership must submit a nomination form to the Council by 30 September 2015.
- 3.4 The maximum and minimum number of membership places on each community council is as set out in the Scheme and ranges from a minimum of 7 to a maximum of 21 for small community council areas (representing less than 5,000 residents), and 10 -30 members in larger community council areas.
- 3.5 As soon as possible after the 30 September 2015, all candidates who have submitted a valid nomination form will be advised the outcome, viz:
- Where the number of candidates is more than the minimum membership places available, but less than the maximum, candidates will be deemed to have been elected unopposed;
  - Where the number of candidates is less than the minimum number of membership places, no community council will be established; or
  - Where the number of candidates exceeds the maximum number of membership places, a Ballot, on a date to be determined by the Head of Corporate Governance, will be arranged as soon as possible to allow residents to select their representatives. Candidates will be advised of these arrangements in due course.
- 3.6 There are currently 283 community council members in Renfrewshire.
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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The costs involved will be met from existing resources. However, should a Ballot be required to determine the outcome of any individual community council election, additional costs, depending on the method of Ballot to be adopted, could accrue.
  2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
  3. **Community Planning –**  
**Empowering our Communities** – Community councils can act as a voice for their local area by articulating the views and concerns of local people on a wide range of issues and by make representations to the Council and its community partners on matters within those agencies sphere of interest. In this way, community councils strengthen democratic representation at a local level, encourage community spirit and resilience, and engender civic pride.
  4. **Legal** – The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 requires that the Council adopt a Scheme setting out the boundaries, arrangements for qualification of electors, elections, composition, meetings, finance and accounts of community councils.
  5. **Property/Assets** - None
  6. **Information Technology** - None
  7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendation contained in this report has been assessed in relation to its impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
  8. **Health & Safety** - None
  9. **Procurement** - None
  10. **Risk** - None
  11. **Privacy Impact** - None
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## List of Background Papers

- (a) The Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils 2015.

The foregoing background paper will be retained within Finance & Resources for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Anne McNaughton, Senior Committee Services Officer (Community Councils), Finance & Resources – 0141 618 7104 or email [anne.mcnaughton@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:anne.mcnaughton@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

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