



### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 At the meeting of 7 December 2023, the Council appointed the Chief Executive as Returning Officer and approved a provisional timetable for the 2024 Inverclyde Community Council Elections. Formal Notice of Election for all community council areas was published on 17 January 2024, and the period for submission of nominations closed on 7 February 2024.

3.2 Following the close of nominations, the following community councils were re-established:

- Gourock Community Council;
- Greenock West and Cardwell Bay Community Council;
- Greenock South West Community Council;
- Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Community Council;
- Kilmacolm and Quarrier's Village Community Council;
- Larkfield, Braeside and Branchton Community Council; and
- Port Glasgow West Community Council.

3.3 Additionally, the following community councils were established as of new in areas that, prior to the elections, had no community council:

- Greenock East Community Council; and
- Port Glasgow East Community Council.

3.4 Insufficient numbers of nominations were received to establish community councils for the following areas:

- Greenock Central Community Council; and
- Holefarm and Cowdenknowes Community Council.

In terms of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Inverclyde (the Scheme), it is open to the Council to seek a second call for nominations within a 6 month period of the close of the first call, for one or more of these areas.

3.5 Officers in Community Learning and Development (CLD) continue to engage with established TARAs, action groups and other community bodies in the areas of the community councils that have not been established. The feedback to date is that there is limited appetite for the established of community councils at this time, and the officer view is that:

- continued engagement with these groups to with a view to encouraging greater interest in a community council is a more effective use of resources than a second call for nominations; and
- were such a second call issued, it is unlikely that community councils in these areas would be effectively established.

Officers would therefore not recommend a second call for nominations at this time.

3.6 In summary, of the 11 community council areas:

- 9 have been established or re-established in this process; and
- 2 remain without an established community council.

Declarations of Results were published for all community council areas on 12 February 2024 and can be downloaded from the Council website at:

[www.inverclyde.gov.uk/ccelection](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/ccelection)

3.7 If a minimum of 20 electors in an area without a community council provide the Council with a written request that a community council be established in that area, then under Section 52 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the Council is required to arrange elections or other voting arrangements for that purpose. This provides a mechanism for interim elections for such an area will be held if a community desire that a community council be formed prior to the next regular Inverclyde wide elections in the 4 yearly cycle.

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Initial meetings have been organised by officers for each of the established community councils, and CLD officers continue to attend these first meetings to provide support and to deal with initial administrative matters, such as appointment of officer bearers and agreement of a meeting cycle.
- 4.2 CLD officers will continue to support the development of each of the established community councils. An induction event has been arranged for the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 in which the good practice resources that have been developed will be launched. The resources will be available online via the dedicated community council section on the Moodle platform and paper format upon request. This event will create a platform to discuss training needs with the aim of creating a training calendar and further digital and paper based resources.
- 4.3 CLD Officers have an established relationship with existing community bodies in areas in which no community council has been established. CLD Officers will continue to provide development support to ensure that communities have a platform to have their say and for their views to be represented.
- 4.4 At the Special Meeting of Inverclyde Council of 28 September 2023, one of the meetings called in the recent review of the Scheme, officers undertook that if following these elections there remained community council areas without an established community council, then officers would bring a report to a future meeting of the Inverclyde Council within a year of the elections on developments of community council activity. Such a report will include set out the outcomes from the officer activity detailed in the paragraph above and the feedback from the community.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

### 5.2 Finance

Any one off or recurring costs arising from the recommendations in this report will be contained within existing budgets.

### 5.3 Legal/Risk

The Legal and Risk implications are dealt with in the body of this report.

### 5.4 Human Resources

None.

### 5.5 Strategic

The Inverclyde Partnership Plan encompasses the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Inverclyde Community Learning and Development 3 year plan has Community Empowerment as a key strategic priority. Supporting and engaging community councils is key to achieving this priority. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 gave rights to community bodies and duties to public sector authorities, and as the most local tier of statutory representation in Scotland, Community Councils bridge the gap between local authorities and communities and help to make those authorities aware of the opinions and needs of the communities they represent.

### 5.6 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Community Council Champion has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.