
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	12 August 2025
Report By:	Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services	Report No:	LS/102/25
Contact Officer:	Peter MacDonald	Contact No:	01475 712618
Subject:	2025 Greenock East Community Council Interim Election		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval of a timetable for an interim election for Greenock East Community Council and to appoint the Chief Executive as Returning Officer for those elections.
- 1.3 Greenock East Community Council (GECC) was established in the 2024 Community Council Elections with a membership of 8, leaving 3 vacancies. They have asked that an interim election be carried out for their area to bring on additional members.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee decides to hold an interim election for the Greenock East Community Council (GECC).
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee appoints the Chief Executive to act as Returning Officer for the interim election and delegates authority to the Chief Executive to administer it on the Council's behalf.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Committee approves the provisional election timetable at Appendix 1 and grants the Chief Executive (as Returning Officer) delegated authority to make such changes to this timetable as are considered appropriate for the effective administration of the election and to take account of the views of GECC.

Lynsey Brown
Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Prior to the Community Council Elections in 2024, there was no existing community council for the area of Greenock East. At said elections GECC was established with a membership of 8. The minimum membership is 5 for all community councils, and the maximum for this community council is 11.
- 3.2 Officers have worked closely with all the community councils since the 2024 elections and have provided additional support to GECC given that it is newly formed. The group has met regularly since establishment. The group is keen to recruit additional members to fill vacancies to take membership as close to the maximum as possible to promote representative decision-making and officers are supportive of this.
- 3.3 Following the report to Inverclyde Council on 10 April 2025, officers will be progressing the interim elections in September this year for the neighbouring community council areas of:
- Greenock Central; and
 - Holefarm and Cowdenknowes,
- seeking to also establish community councils in these areas.
- 3.4 GECC have asked if interim elections could be held for their area at this time also. Officers are supportive of this as a proposal as it maximises the benefit and efficiency of promotion that was being undertaken in any event. A further community council can be added to the interim election process without a material increase in demand on Council resources.
- 3.5 This group currently has a membership of 8 elected members which would leave 3 vacancies to be filled. Officers are aware however that some members of the community council are uncertain about whether they wish to continue to participate. Officers and the community council are discussing with the members in question, but it is thought likely that the number of vacancies to be filled will be greater than 3 by the time any formal interim election process commences.
- 3.6 It should also be noted that the community council has appointed a co-opted member. That membership will be brought to an end by an interim election process, but the member in question will then have the opportunity to seek nomination and election as an elected community councillor. This will give the community council more flexibility should future vacancies arise as there are limits on the number of co-opted members they can have.
- 3.7 A Provisional Election Timetable has been prepared and is included in this report at Appendix 1 for the Committee's approval. As arrangements proceed it may be necessary for the Returning Officer to vary the terms of this timetable and authority to do so is therefore sought in this report. In particular, there will be further engagement with GECC to seek its views on the timing of the process.
- 3.8 Nomination forms will be made available on the Council's website, from relevant Council libraries, from the Customer Service Centre and directly to the community council. Completed nomination forms (signed by a qualifying nominee and qualifying proposers and seconders) will require to be submitted to the Returning Officer by the Close of Nominations, as per the Election Timetable.
- 3.9 In terms of current Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Inverclyde (the Scheme), to be nominated as a member of a community council, or to act as a proposer or seconder on a Nomination Form, an individual must:
- be resident in the community council area;
 - be named on the Electoral Register for the community council area;
 - be aged 16 or over; and
 - not currently be elected as a Member of Inverclyde Council, or of the Scottish or UK parliaments.
- 3.10 Following the Close of Nominations:

- if there are more validly nominated candidates than there are vacancies, then a poll will be held to determine which of them are elected; and
- if there are not more validly nominated candidates than there are vacancies then there will not be a poll and all such candidates will be duly elected.

3.11 In terms of the Scheme, to vote in a community council election, an individual must:

- be resident in the community council area;
- be named on the Electoral Register for the community council area; and
- be aged 16 or over.

3.12 Any poll will proceed by way of secret ballot and voting in person. The election will proceed on a modified first past the post system, in that:

- voters will be allowed to make a number of votes (up to the maximum number of vacancies for members for that community council) on one ballot paper; and
- each vote will be of equal ranking.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 Should the recommendations in this report be approved, officers will proceed to include the GECC in the interim elections already being planned.

4.2 Greenock East Community Council is keen to move forward with an interim election. The aim is to bring in new members, build on the existing range of skills and experience, and help ensure the Community Council remains active and sustainable in the long term.

4.3 A request has been made to Corporate Communications for marketing support, and early conversations have taken place around the design of graphics and materials to help promote the election.

4.4 In the meantime, Council officers from Inclusive Communities have started engaging with residents at a grassroots level to raise awareness and encourage involvement. The Community Council will also play an active role in supporting this engagement, particularly through their upcoming public meetings.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
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

Advertising costs may be incurred as part of the election process, but will be contained within existing budgets for community council funding. Similarly, any staffing requirements for a ballot will be met from existing Council resources.

5.3 Legal/Risk

The Council is required to administer community council elections in terms of the Scheme. The Council may in terms of the Scheme make arrangements for an interim election for a community council where the Community Council has requested one to fill vacancies.

5.4 Human Resources

None

5.5 Strategic

None

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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 Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources, the Community Council Champion and GECC have been consulted on the proposals set out in this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

Appendix 1

Provisional Election Timetable – 2025 Greenock East Community Council Interim Election.

No	Task	Comment	Date
1	Appoint a Returning Officer and start the formal election process.		12/8/25
2	Make nomination forms available at libraries, online and directly to community council.		not later than 15/9/25
3	Notice of Election.	<p>Public notice online, in libraries and in the Customer Contact Centre and inviting nominations.</p> <p>This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details on how to obtain nomination forms; • the date and time of close of nominations; and • the dates of any polls that may be held. 	per 2
4	CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS	Nominations received later than the date and time of close will not be accepted.	4.00pm on 8/10/25
5	Notice of Validly Nominated Candidates.	Public notice online, in libraries and in the Customer Contact Centre.	As soon as practicable following 4.
6	Declaration of Result for if uncontested.	Where the number of validly nominated candidates is between the maximum number and half the maximum number of members (inclusive), public notice online, in libraries and in the Customer Contact Centre will confirm the formation and membership of the community council. This will include details of the first meeting to be held and, if practicable, will be combined with the notice at item 5 above.	Per 5.

7	If contested, last date for withdrawal of a nomination.		4pm on 11/10/2025
8	Notice of Poll if contested.	Where the number of validly nominated candidates exceeds the maximum number of members, public notice online, in libraries and in the Customer Contact Centre will confirm the place date and time at which a poll will be held, and a time and place in each case for a count. If practicable, this notice will be incorporated in the notice at item 5 above.	As soon as practicable following following 7.
9	Polling date if contested.	Officers are liaising with the community council to link in with the normal cycle and venue for their meetings.	27/10/25
10	First meeting following election if uncontested.	Officers are liaising with the community council to link in with the normal cycle and venue for their meetings.	Per 9
11	Count if contested community.	These will be held as soon as practicable following any poll, however where polls are held in close succession, the counts for more than one community council may be held on the same day.	As soon as practicable following 9.
12	Declaration of Result if contested election.	Public notice online, in libraries and in the Customer Contact Centre. If practicable, this will include details of the first meeting to be held.	As soon as practicable following 11.
13	First meeting following election if contested.	Officers are liaising with the community council to link in with the normal cycle and venue for their meetings.	24/11/25