

Response from various members, Clovenfords Community Council

1. How your Community Council can ensure it considers equality and inclusion as part of its work
 - Let common sense prevail.
 - I don't think this is a significant issue for our CC but certainly could be for others.
 - Anyone who resides within the borders of Clovenfords & District CC are welcome at any CC meeting.
 - Unsure

2. Reference to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
 - A brief guidance (link) to the Act should be included.
 - Yes – CCs have an important role to play in strengthening local democracy and giving people a bigger voice in decisions which affect them.
 - Not sure I need empowerment thank you every much!!
 - Unsure

3. Reference to Sub-Committees of Community Councils
 - No response
 - Yes, some guidance would be helpful.
 - Has not been relevant to date but should a sub-committee need to be formed it would be useful to have guidelines.
 - Unsure

4. Should there be reference to wider localities/Area Partnerships?
 - No response
 - Yes, CC members need to know about these, and when and how to get involved.
 - Not sure
 - Yes, collaboration and co-operation across Community Councils should be encouraged.

5. Should there be a formula for determining the number of members of a Community Council (based on population and geography)?
 - The existing table works, so why change it.
 - No – local conditions should govern the numbers and, to be effective, the CC should have minimum 6, and no more than 12 members.
 - I'm not sure how it is worked out now. We have 12 and I would have thought that was adequate bearing in mind the difficulty in enrolling anyone. The number of members ought to reflect the size of the residents in that area
 - Yes

6. Should there be reference to the ability to hold on-line meetings as well as physical meetings?
 - On-line meetings already take place. It would be more useful to state who is responsible for arranging these (i.e. SBC).
 - Yes, but only if absolutely necessary. On-line meetings are not satisfactory and should be a last resort.
 - I think this is necessary now, given the recent lockdowns. There is no clear guidance.

- Yes
7. The Working Group considers that the term of office for a Community Council should be 3 years (with options for Community Councillors to stand for re-election). Should the term be fixed or should there be rolling elections (i.e. an annual election with 1/3 of members standing down each year)?
- Fixed.
 - A good idea in theory but, in practice, there should be no constraints. Otherwise there could be real difficulties getting effective CCs established.
 - We struggle to get people ever 3 years, it would be a waste of time holding yearly elections. If a third stood down, we'd not have enough left or are we talking about Office Bearers? Three years is about right but maybe have a maximum of 3 years as an office bearer.
 - 3 yearly elections would be fine, but there should be no requirement for members to compulsorily stand down/not stand for re-election as this would risk losing expertise and potentially not having enough members for the community council to continue.
8. Should there be a limit on the number of times someone can be an office bearer?
- No, why discourage anyone from remaining on the CC?
 - No, same argument as 7 above.
 - Yes, I think so. They can still sit on the committee but just rotate the roles.
 - No
9. Should training for Community Councillors be compulsory and who should provide that training?
- Definitely not. It should be offered. It is difficult enough to find sufficient people for CCs. Encourage not Discourage.
 - No – but should be made available and councillors encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities. This could be done online. CCs would be more effective with trained and knowledgeable members.
 - No, I'm not sure what the training would involve, unless for Treasurer or Secretary.
 - Yes, SBC should provide training.
10. Should Community Councils be required to hold an annual survey/event to gather local views on a number of different issues relevant to their particular area?
- If people have opinions they should advise the CC members. My experience is that people let me know about their concerns!
 - This is a very good idea.
 - No. I think a survey could be conducted as and when necessary. I've been on the committee c.5 years and we've only done 2 surveys. How would we decide what the survey would be about every year. How wonderful we all are on the CC?
 - Yes
11. Should a complaints procedure be included in the Scheme?
- No. People are put off by procedures.
 - No, there are other ways dissatisfaction can be registered.

- Yes
- Yes

12. Should there be any changes to the co-option of members to Community Councils?

- No. It works so don't change it.
- No
- My understanding is that co-opted members should be allowed to serve for a particular role. It has been suggested that we co-opt people to increase the numbers but don't think that is the original idea!! Hazy on this one.
- No

13. Should the Code of Conduct for Community Councillors involve sanctions should these be broken?

- CCs are volunteers. How do you threaten a volunteer? If sanctions/punishments are employed they can just leave.
- Loss of office should be enough.
- If CC Code of Conduct is broken I think members should be asked to stand down. That should be sufficient as I assume it will be minuted.
- Yes

14. Should Scottish Borders Council's website include links to where Community Councils publish their agendas and minutes?

- If people are interested they will find out themselves.
- Yes
- That would be useful. We publish them on the website. Not sure how a link would show that they are published on the noticeboard
- Yes

15. What funding should be available for Community Councils and for what purpose?

- As much as possible! Let CCs decide how the funds are spent. SBC receive a copy of the CC accounts annually. If SBC are not happy with the CC spends then SBC can withhold further funding until any problems are resolved.
- Difficult question! CCs need funds to function, and the ability to claim funding for ad hoc events and needs. Difficult to predict ahead. A formal system for claiming and getting funding should be in place.
- This depends on what services SBC provide. Discussion over strimming is an example. Why did we need to buy a strimmer? Should SBC not be strimming the areas we are? Funding should be to augment things for residents, ie, Christmas, wreath, flowers, surveys. Are we going to have to provide any maintenance for Caddonfoot Road?
- Funding should be available for facilitating local engagement, holding local events, floral enhancements, and other activities for the benefit of the area.

16. Should on-line banking be included?

- No comment.
- Yes

- Yes. CCs don't need to do it but rules ought to be set out, ie, 2 out of 3 signatories for all transactions
- Yes

17. Should there be job description/role profiles for Community Councillors and office bearers?

- No. Outgoing OBs normally give a handover to their replacement. That is sufficient.
- Yes, if properly done.
- Yes. I had notes given to me but nothing formal. It would be of great help to outline the responsibilities of each office bearer. Also as roles change year on year the responsibilities are verbally changed – bit like Chinese whispers. Or things are not mentioned as they don't happen every year.
- Yes

18. Should details of the Scottish Borders Community Council network be included in the Scheme?

- No response
- Yes
- No opinion either way – not sure what they do.
- Yes

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General comment

Please do not lose sight of the fact that CC members are volunteers. Anything that creates complications or difficulties is likely to deter people. Keep It Simple.

PS: Your efforts are appreciated.