

Dumfries and Galloway Council Overview

Support to Community Councils

Introduction

Community Councils play an important part in local democracy and Dumfries and Galloway Council invests significant time and resource to supporting them.

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of Dumfries and Galloway Council and Community Councils.

Further information is available on the Council's website at www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils

Statutory Purposes of a Community Council

The statutory purposes of Community Councils established under the Scheme are set out in Section 51(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as follows:

"In addition to any other purpose which a Community Council may pursue, the general purpose of a Community Council shall be to ascertain, co-ordinate and express to the local authorities for its area, and to public authorities, the views of the community which it represents, in relation to matters for which those authorities are responsible, and to take such action in the interests of that community as appears to it to be expedient and practicable".

Role of Dumfries and Galloway Council

Create a Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway with the provision of Boundary Maps.

Consult with Community Councils on various issues in particular planning and licensing applications.

Advise Community Councils of any major works being undertaken by DGC or any utility works they know of.

The Amended Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway

The Amended Scheme that you are operating under agreed after extensive consultation with Community Councils at a meeting of Dumfries and Galloway Council on 25 September 2018 and was implemented on 1 November 2018.

The Scheme supports the operation of Community Councils and operates as the Community Council's Constitution. It sets out the basic role and purpose of Community Councils and the rules that are expected to be complied with, including in relation to complaints and the conduct of Community Councillors.

The document is made up of 16 Sections and 3 Schedules. The 16 Sections provide useful information to support Community Councils in their roles and responsibilities and the Schedules provide information on the permitted membership such as, minimum and maximum numbers, the Code of Conduct and the Independent Complaints Procedure.

Please refer to and use the Scheme.

Agendas and Minutes

Agendas and minutes should be made available to everyone in the community, including Community Councillors and Elected Members. These can be displayed on notice boards and/or online e.g. Facebook page or Community Council website. There are timescales to follow for the production of Agendas and Minutes and a copy of all minutes must be emailed to Dumfries and Galloway Council at Community.Councils@dumgal.gov.uk.

Meetings

All meetings are open to the public and should follow the procedures and timescales as laid out in the Amended Scheme with standard items of business being included on the agenda.

Provision should be made for members of the public to be invited to speak at an appropriate time on the agenda.

Community Councils are required to hold a minimum of 6 meetings per year including an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Support available to Community Councils from Dumfries and Galloway Council

Ward Officers

We have 12 Ward Officers across the region who are there to support local communities, Elected Members and partner organisations within a Council ward.

A Ward Officer can help you or your community with:

- community engagement - including running Ward Events and community meetings, supporting consultations and involvement
- community development and empowerment - including assisting communities to prioritise what's important to them, making informed choices about community assets and volunteering with the council in their locality
- community planning - coordinating and working with local partners and supporting Local Rural Partnerships

Details of your Ward Officer can be found [here](#) and are available to meet with you in person and can attend meetings of your Community Council.

Communication and Information

A dedicated mailbox Community.Councils@dumgal.gov.uk – this is for enquiries about the Constitution and sending in your minutes.

A dedicated webpage www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils - this includes information such as contact details for Community Councils; Information on Insurance; FAQ's.

Telephone 030 33 33 3000

A regular Community Council Newsletter – articles and news stories are welcome, particularly about sharing good practice or lessons learned.

Training in the roles and responsibilities of a Community Council are available.

Community Council Enquiry Service (CCES)

Any enquiries about any Council Service should be submitted through the CCES.

The Enquiries are directed to the most appropriate person to respond within 20 days.

There is satisfaction and tracking system in place.

Community Planning and Engagement Service

October 2019