

## MINUTE of

### The Special Meeting of EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Held at 3.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on Thursday  
17 August 2023.

#### **Present:**

Councillor Andrew Anderson	Councillor David Macdonald (*)
Councillor Caroline Bamforth (*)	Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Tony Buchanan	Provost Mary Montague
Deputy Provost Kate Campbell	Councillor Andrew Morrison (*)
Councillor Paul Edlin	Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Annette Ireland (*)	Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Chris Lunday (*)	

Provost Montague in the Chair

#### **Attending:**

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement); Andrew Reid, Community Council Liaison Officer; Jamie Reid, Head of Communities and Transformation; Colin Sweeney, Democratic Services Manager and Liona Allison, Assistant Committee Services Officer.

(\*) indicates remote attendance.

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors Angela Convery, Betty Cunningham, Danny Devlin and Gordon Wallace.

*Councillor Cunningham had attempted to join the meeting by telephone. However, due to technical difficulties, a link to the meeting could not be established and therefore, the Provost included Councillor Cunningham amongst those Members who had intimated their apologies for absence.*

#### **PROVOST'S OPENING REMARKS**

The Provost recognised that many would still have been busy during the Council's recess and acknowledged the unseen work of those involved in the Placing Requests Appeals Panel (officers, Councillors and lay people).

#### **WELCOME TO NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Provost welcomed to the meeting, the Council's new Chief Executive, Steven Quinn, who had joined the Council on 14 August 2023.

#### **WELCOME TO NEW COMMUNITY COUNCILS' LIAISON OFFICER**

The Provost also welcomed to the meeting, the Council's new Community Councils' Liaison Officer, Andrew Reid, who had joined the Council in June 2023.

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**539.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

## BROOM, KIRKHILL and MEARNSKIRK COMMUNITY COUNCIL – CHANGE OF NAME

**540.** Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships, which sought its approval for Broom, Kirkhill and Mearnskirk Community Council to change its name to “Mearns East Community Council” to reflect the demographic changes within its area.

The Community Council’s Constitution stated that the name of the Community Council shall be Broom, Kirkhill and Mearnskirk Community Council however, due to the development of Maidenhill, there had been a significant population change within the Community Council’s area.

Accordingly, and for reasons of inclusiveness and representation, the Community Council wished to include Maidenhill within the name of the Community Council. However, the name ‘Broom, Kirkhill, Mearnskirk and Maidenhill Community Council’ was too long.

Procedurally, a Community Council can propose to change its name by approving a resolution to that effect at a meeting of the Community Council, subject to such a resolution receiving approval by East Renfrewshire Council.

The Community Council had followed due process and had voted unanimously in favour to change its name to ‘Mearns East Community Council’ at a meeting held on 9 May 2023.

**RESOLVED**, that the decision of Broom, Kirkhill and Mearnskirk Community Council to change its name to ‘Mearns East Community Council’, be approved.

## REVIEW OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL SCHEME OF ESTABLISHMENT

**541.** Under reference to the Minute of the special meeting of the Council held on 26 April 2023 (Page 499, Item 433 refers), the Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the outcome following public consultation undertaken on the revised Community Council Scheme of Establishment and associated Community Councillor Complaints Procedure. The report sought approval for the revised Scheme or agreement to further consultation.

At the special meeting of the Council, held on 14 December 2022, Council had agreed to open the Community Council Scheme of Establishment for a limited review of the section primarily dealing with complaints and the associated Code of Conduct. Subsequently, at the special meeting of the Council, held on 26 April 2023, Council approved the draft revised Community Council Scheme of Establishment and associated Community Councillor Complaints’ Procedure and that public consultation on both proceed. A further special meeting of the Council then held to decide whether to amend the Scheme in accordance with the revised proposals, as approved or subject to further revision to take account of any of the representations received from either community councils or the public.

Consultation on the Scheme closed on 23 June 2023 and two responses to the consultation received.

### i) Thornliebank Community Council Representation

The first response, received from a member of Thornliebank Community Council, was supportive of the changes and expressed the view that the proposals within the review of the scheme of establishment made sense and should overall, be implemented. The member also stated that these would make keeping order and discipline during the

course of group meetings easier and that this should help avoid incidents seen in previous community council meetings where disruptive and disrespectful behaviours on occasion, occurred.

ii) Broom, Kirkhill and Mearns Kirk Community Council Representation

The second response, from a member of the Broom, Kirkhill and Mearns Kirk Community Council was 'accepting' of the changes but also suggested numerous other changes to the scheme (all but one of the suggested changes fell out with the scope of the review).

The suggested change that fell within the scope of the review proposed that the written Scheme of Establishment detail the particular mechanisms and procedures to adopt during the course of an investigation into a complaint. The Scheme provided the regulatory authority for the investigation of a complaint but did not define how a complaint be investigated. That level of detail was in the procedure itself at Appendix 3 to the Scheme.

The main changes to the Scheme related to the removal from the Scheme itself of the process for dealing with complaints and the creation of a new stand-alone Community Councillor Complaints Procedure. This had the benefit of meaning that any future changes to the complaints procedure would sit outside the lengthy and time-consuming process for making changes to the Scheme of Establishment.

To bring it more into line with the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Community Councils' Code of Conduct had been reviewed and updated.

If the revised proposals were approved with no further changes, the new version of the Scheme would be approved at that stage and no further consultation would be required. In the event the Council agreed to further revisions to the Scheme to take account of any of the representations received, a further period of consultation would be required.

In response to a query by Councillor Ireland as to why the Complaints Procedure had not been attached to the report, Officers conceded that this had been an oversight on their behalf. Officers went on to suggest that the recommendation be made clearer in that the complaints' procedure be separated out from the actual Scheme for the establishment of Community Councils. There was no complaints procedure included in the papers for today's meeting since there had been no changes to that and Council had considered it at the June meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the revised Community Council Scheme of Establishment and associated Community Councillor Complaints' Procedure, be approved for implementation, with no further changes and that the Complaints Procedure be separated from the Scheme as a standalone document.

**PROVOST**

