

**ANNUAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL BY-ELECTION**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an update for partners to note on the membership of community councils in Oban, Lorn & the Isles following the annual community council by-elections.
- 1.2 The 2014 annual by-election has resulted in an increase in those community councils with 100% membership by increasing the figure from 5 (pre-election) to 8 (post-election). In respect of the other 6 community councils taking part in the by-election, 4 did not manage to increase their membership as there were no nomination papers received by the Returning Officer and 2 increased their numbers by a total of 5 candidates. There will be one contested election for Oban Community Council which will become one of the 8 community councils in Oban, Lorn & the Isles with 100% membership following a postal ballot of the electorate in Oban. The Oban Community Council contest has commenced with the issue of postal ballot papers on 10 November 2014, polling concluding at 4pm on 27 November 2014 and the results being declared at the count on 28 November 2014
- 1.3 The Council has undertaken to provide an annual by-election for community councils to increase their membership levels and formalise any co-option undertaken at an AGM by the community councils.

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 At present there are 17 established community councils in the Oban, Lorn & the Isles Area. 16 community councils were offered opportunity to opt into the 2014 annual community council by-election process in effort to strengthen their membership or otherwise to allow any co-opted members the opportunity to put themselves forward as a candidate in the election. Tíree Community Council, having only recently been established following a contest, did not require to participate in this year's by-election.
- 2.2 This report provides partners with information about the annual by-election process and the impact that this has had on membership of community councils.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Oban, Lorn & the Isles Community Planning Group note that the 2014 annual by-election has taken place and as a result 16 new community councillors will be elected to 5 serve on different community councils in the area.

**4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 Sixteen community councils in the Oban, Lorn & the Isles area were offered opportunity to participate in the 2014 annual community council by-election. Of those 16, 4 indicated that they had no vacancies to advertise, 3 did not respond to the offer and 9 opted in to the process seeking to fill a total of 30 vacancies.
- 4.2 The nomination process commenced on 9 October and concluded on 27 October. A total of 18 valid nominations were received and were in respect of the following community councils:

Mull – 0 candidates for 3 vacancies  
Oban – 8 candidates for 6 vacancies  
Luing – 0 candidates for 2 vacancies  
Kilninver & Kilmelford – 0 candidates for 1 vacancy  
Kilmore – 1 candidate for 3 vacancies  
Lismore – 0 candidates for 4 vacancies  
Appin – 3 candidates for 3 vacancies  
Connel – 2 candidates for 2 vacancies  
Ardchattan – 4 candidates for 6 vacancies

- 4.3 From the detail above it can be noted that there will be 4 uncontested elections and one contest for Oban Community Council as they have attracted more candidates than vacancies. Because of this, a postal ballot for the Oban electorate is being organised at present with postal ballot packs being sent out on Monday 10 November, polling closing at 4pm on Thursday 27 November and a count taking place on 28 November 2014.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 A total of 10 candidates will be elected to serve on 4 different community councils at 11am on 27 November 2014. A further 6 candidates will be elected following a postal ballot of the Oban electorate, results of which will be announced on 28 November 2014.
- 5.2 The 2014 by-election has had varied success in that it has increased the number of community councils with 100% membership from 5 to 8 and filled 53.3% of the vacancies advertised although on the downside, the process was not successful for 4 of the participating community councils whose numbers did not increase. However, 2 of the community councils participating did attract a total of 4 nominations which the Returning Officer was unable to accept either because the nominees did not appear on the 1<sup>st</sup> September register or, as in one case, the nomination was not received before the close of nominations. It has been suggested to those community councils that they could take part in a further by-election which will take place in the first quarter of 2015, albeit this was being organised for a community council in the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islands area which recently became inquorate.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy – None, the holding of annual by-elections are consistent with policy
- 6.2 Financial – There is an expense associated with running annual by-elections, particularly when contests arise and this will inevitably put pressure on the election budget.
- 6.3 Legal – None, annual by-elections are required to comply with the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils.
- 6.4 HR – None, while this creates additional pressure on staff in terms of increased workload, the staffing resource is contained to existing postholders.
- 6.5 Equalities – In accordance with existing election franchise, nominations are only accepted from those over 18 who are resident within the community council boundary. This accords with election rules.
- 6.6 Risk – Contested elections do increase pressure on annual budgets
- 6.7 Customer Service – Elections are advertised on the website, in local papers and community councils also promote within their own area. Nominees can lodge nomination papers at their local service points, by post or by email therefore there

should be at no disadvantage due to remoteness.

**Executive Director of Customer Services**  
**Policy Lead – Councillor Robin Currie, Community & Culture, and Strategic Housing**

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