



Information handbook

for Angus Community Councillors



Working Together for Angus

“Angus is a place where a first class quality of life can be enjoyed by all”

(Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:2)

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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with some of the essential background information that you will need to operate effectively as a Community Councillor in Angus. It summarises the most relevant points included in the Angus Council Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils, Policy Statements and the Good Practice Agreement, it is expected however, that you familiarise yourself with these key documents more fully over time.

To make things simpler, we have developed this information handbook to help improve the way you find the information that you need.

The handbook is split into four sections:

- general information in relation to a community council's role in working with its community and in partnership with other organisations;
- more specific information in relation to your role as a community councillor and the operating arrangements for your community council;
- guidelines for financial conduct within your community council;
- finally there are details of useful contacts and further information.

If you require assistance with a matter which is not covered in this handbook, please get in touch with us. The handbook will be changed periodically.

Section 1

1 Community Councils

1.1 Background

Community councils are the most local tier of statutory representation in Scotland. They bridge the gap between local authorities and communities, and help to make public bodies aware of the opinions and needs of the communities they represent.

Community councils were created by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The Act required local authorities to introduce community council schemes for their area outlining various arrangements including elections, meetings, boundaries, and finance. Local authorities have the freedom to tailor schemes to the particular circumstances of their area.

Local authorities and other bodies consult with community councils on issues affecting the community. These issues depend, to a large extent, on what is important to each community, however local authorities are required to consult community councils on planning applications and involve them in the community planning process.

The statutory purpose of a community council is set out in Section 51(2) of the 1973 Act, 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 legal authorities for its area, and to public authorities, the views of the community which it represents, in relation to matters for which these authorities are responsible, and to take such action in the interests of that community as appears to it to be expedient and practicable”.

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/923/0034469.pdf

It is essential however, that these views are demonstrated to be accurately representative of the community and, accordingly, community councils should have in place recognised consultative mechanisms to validate their views; and devise strategies to secure greater involvement by all sectors of the community. A community council has a statutory right to be consulted on planning applications. Licensing matters and any other matters may also be jointly agreed between community councils, local authorities and other public sector and private agencies.

A community council may also carry out other activities that are in the general interests of the community it represents. Community councils engage in a wide range of activities – their own and other meetings, commenting on public policy, publicity and promotion, dealing with enquiries and carrying out surveys of opinions.

There are currently 25 community councils in Angus and elections are held every 4 years. Community councils are established according to the 'Angus Council Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils'.

1.2 Consultation/Representation

The purpose of community councils is to represent a full cross-section of the community. It is important that community councils are seen by their local communities to be actively engaged in ascertaining local views. It should not be automatically assumed that a community councillor's own personal views on a subject will be those of the community as a whole. Therefore, in ascertaining views, community councils should ensure there is wide consultation with the community. They should also encourage local interest and participation in community debate. In this regard, community councils should be aware of the National Standards for Community Engagement and the relevant equality legislation.

1.3 National Standards for Community Engagement

In 2005 the Scottish Government commissioned the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) to develop best practice guidance for engagement between communities and public agencies. The resulting standards were published with endorsement by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise and Highland and Islands Enterprise, NHS Health Scotland, the Association of Chief Police Officers and many others. Angus Council, and the Angus Community Planning Partnership, have endorsed the use of the National Standards for Community Engagement .

The National Standards for Community Engagement set out ten statements of commitment that can be used to develop and support better working relations between communities and agencies delivering public services. They are underpinned by principles of good practice that have been highlighted by community and agency representatives across Scotland to promote equality and fairness. Whilst these standards will help to develop and support better working relationships between communities and agencies delivering public services, community councils will also find these standards helpful in relation to their relationship with their own community. Details of the standards can be found at Appendix 1. Further information can be found at: www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards

1.4 Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 provided a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. It aimed to update, simplify and strengthen the previous legislation; and to deliver a simple, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The Act bans associations from discriminating against, harassing or victimising people in a number of ways. Associations must also make reasonable adjustments to allow people with disabilities to participate. The main area relevant to community councils in which you must not discriminate, harass or victimise is:

In the arrangements associations make for selecting or rejecting new members and the terms for joining. Further information can be found at: www.equalityhumanrights.com/about-us/devolved-authorities/the-commission-in-scotland/the-commission-in-about-us/devolved-authorities/the-commission-in-scotland

1.5 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill is an exciting piece of legislation which is set to improve the way that local individuals and communities can become active citizens and, therefore, influence what is important to them.

It works at a local level to improve outcomes for communities by:

- empowering community bodies through the ownership of land and buildings and strengthening their voices in the decisions that matter to them; and
- supporting an increase in the pace and scale of public service reform by cementing the focus on achieving outcomes and improving the process of community planning.

People feel better when they can influence what happens in their local community. People in a community know what is best for that community. When given the right support, people can feel more confident and learn new skills. The overarching purpose of this Bill is to reduce the amount of barriers which sometimes exist and to make it easier for people to get the public services they want and deserve.

Further information can be found at:
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/engage.

1.6 Communicating with the community

Public Notice of Meetings

All meetings of community councils are open to the public and public notice of each meeting stating the business to be discussed (ie an agenda) should be posted prominently within the community council area. Such notice may be by newspaper advertisement or by notice displayed in a public place (including on social media/website) or a place to which the public have general access within the community council area. This should be made available at least 10 days before the date of the meeting. Community councils should hold at least six meetings per year, and more if appropriate.

Community Council Minutes

A draft minute should be circulated within 21 days of the date of the meeting to community council members and your Community Council Liaison Officer (see section 4). Approved minutes should be made available in places in the area to which the public have general access within the community council area (including social media/website).

Press

Reporters from the local press often attend community council meetings. However, community councils should also consider issuing press releases to highlight items to be discussed at community council meetings, conclusions reached at community council meetings and to raise awareness of local matters.

Websites

With regard to making use of the internet/websites, the Angus web portal (www.angusahead.com) can be used to promote the community council and its activities. This facility is free of charge. Community council activities may also be promoted using Angus Council's social media outlets. To promote a particular event/activity, get in touch with your Community Council Liaison Officer. Angus Council strongly recommends that community councils use websites as a way of raising awareness of their work in the local community. Training and assistance can be provided via your Community Council Liaison officer (see Section 2, 1.6).

1.7 Communicating with Angus Council

Written Communications

Community councils should communicate with Angus Council in accordance with the Angus Council Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils - unless there is a specific agreement or an issue is a specific departmental issue, all correspondence must, in the first instance, be directed through your Community Council Liaison Officer.

Routine Enquiries

Routine enquiries should be directed through ACCESSLine – 08452 777 778, the local ACCESS office or online at accessline@angus.gov.uk

Community Council Minutes

Copies of draft community council minutes should be sent within 21 days of the date of the meeting to members of the community council, local elected members and your Community Council Liaison Officer. The minutes can be sent either by post or e-mail and contact details are listed in Section 4.

Electronic Communications

In order to reduce the amount of paperwork received, and to make communications more timeous and effective between community councils and Angus Council, community councils can opt to communicate electronically. To assist those community councils that do wish to communicate electronically, and to provide an incentive to others, Angus Council offers a one off grant to community councils for the purchase of computer equipment and an additional annual allowance.

2 Angus Council

2.1 Background

Angus Council is one of 32 local authorities in Scotland. In Angus, council services and staff have been grouped into three 'Directorates', and one Chief Executive's Unit, to respond and deliver the services the citizens of Angus expect (see Appendix 2). Angus Council serves the community through eight multi-member wards, which are represented by 29 councillors.

Angus Council is committed to working with, and supporting, community councils in Angus and has a range of responsibilities in relation to Angus community councils:

- it is responsible for setting up the community council scheme which sets out the framework for how community councils in Angus should work;
- it makes contributions towards the expenses of community councils;
- it arranges training for community council members; and
- it provides a Community Council Liaison Officer as a single point of contact.

2.2 Consultation/representation

Angus Council recognises that community councils have an important role to play in acting as the local voice for their community. Community councils ensure that the council is as well informed as possible on local opinion on a range of issues before it makes its decisions.

With the intention of strengthening the relationship between Angus Council and Angus community councils, a policy statement on Angus Council's relationship with community councils has been agreed by both Angus Council and Angus community councils. The policy states that Angus Council will consult with community councils on appropriate issues and provide feedback. Consultations are made available through:

Have Your Say Website

Angus Council has created a 'Have Your Say' area of its customer-facing website (www.angus.gov.uk) which lists current consultation exercises that can be commented on, and those that have been completed in recent years. (www.angus.gov.uk/info/20011/have_your_say).

What's New List

An Angus Council 'What's New List' is sent to community councils on a weekly basis. This includes a list of current consultations and community councils can decide which consultations are relevant for them to respond to.

Bi-annual Meetings

These meetings are held each year with the purpose of allowing an exchange of views on matters of general concern to community councils, as well as providing an opportunity to Angus Council to consult/report on policy initiatives (www.angus.gov.uk/info/20032/community_councils/246/community_councils).

2.3 Angus Council Customer Care Standards

Good communication with customers is important to Angus Council. Angus Council aims to respond to letters, phone calls and emails as swiftly as possible and has the following standards in place:

- we will respond to letters within 15 working days. If a full response cannot be given within that time you will be given a target date for a full response;
- we will answer phone calls as quickly as possible and any telephone message will be responded to promptly, wherever possible within one working day;

- we will reply to emails within one working day, either to answer your query or to inform you when a full response will be given. The Council aims to respond in full within 15 working days but if we are unable to do so we will give you a target date for a full response.

Angus Council will also, where deemed appropriate, copy Angus Councillors in relevant wards, in to email correspondence. This is to ensure a 'joined-up' way of working between community councils and Angus Council.

3 Community Planning

3.1 Background

Since 2003, community planning has been the statutory process for the planning and delivery of public services, including making policy for the long term, and encouraging change and improvement.

Angus Community Planning Partnership has a strong record of partnership working with public, private and voluntary sector agencies. This co-ordinated approach is the essence of community planning, working together to plan, improve and deliver the services required by communities.

The Angus Community Planning Partnership provides a framework to help achieve this. The Angus Community Planning Partnership was established in 1998.

In the current Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement there are 5 priority areas identified critical to the county's future.

Communities that are:

- Prosperous and Fair.
- Learning and Supportive.
- Safe and Strong.
- Caring and Healthy.
- Sustainable.

The Angus Community Plan and Single outcome Agreement details the co-ordinated approach and joint actions needed to address these areas.

The Local Government in Scotland Act, through the duty of community planning, requires the council to invite and encourage community bodies, including community councils and other public sector bodies within Angus area to participate in community planning. It is particularly important that communities are engaged in the process at a local level as it is here that agencies can come together and work with their communities to address local issues.

Angus Council employs Communities Officers which work in every geographical area serviced by the local authority. Communities Officers can play an important part in supporting you to address local issues, as well as introduce solutions to any issues you may be facing. Working together with the Community Council Liaison Officer, Communities Officers are available to support you in making a difference to your local area. All requests for support should be directed via your Community Council Liaison Officer.

3.2 Consultation/representation

Angus Community Planning Partnership is committed to working with community councils for the good of the Angus community and in pursuit of the aims and priorities of the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement. Community councils play an important part in community planning, given their role to represent their local area, to consult with and express the views of their community.

More information on community planning in Angus please visit: www.angus.org.uk.

Section 2

1 How your community council works

1.1 Background

The main operating arrangements for community councils are contained in the Angus Council Scheme for the Establishment for Community Councils and, therefore, community councillors should familiarise themselves with this document. Highlighted below are the key points about working procedures and the support that Angus Council offers to assist community councils to operate as efficiently and effectively as they can.

1.2 Constitution

Each community council should have a constitution, which is an agreed set of working procedures. The Angus Council Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils provides a framework for the operation of community councils in Angus and also includes a model constitution and standing orders, which apply to all Angus community councils. Community councils may choose to draw up their own constitution, in accordance with the model constitution and standing orders, however any details therein cannot conflict with the Scheme itself. All constitutions should be forwarded to your Community Council Liaison Officer for counter signing by Angus Council.

1.3 Finances

All community councils receive an annual administration grant from Angus Council. The amount of the grant is based on the population of the community council area. The financial year for community councils runs from 1 April to 31 March. Angus Council allows the use of suitable local, council-owned premises for community council meetings free of charge. Where Angus Council premises are deemed not suitable or are not available, Angus Council will provide financial support for the hire of suitable local halls or other premises for meetings of community councils. A photocopying grant is included in the community council administrative grant issued each year by Angus Council. Photocopying facilities are also provided for community councils in Angus Council's 'Communities Directorate' offices at a preferential rate. Day to day, domestic photocopying can be accommodated at local ACCESS Offices free of charge by prior arrangement. Where larger volumes of copies are required the community council should consider using their photocopy grant or Angus Council's Print & Design Unit. In this regard, Angus Council may also arrange, through its Print & Design Unit, supplies of stationery and provide specialist advice on printing of documents for community councils. Community councils should contact the Print & Design Unit directly for advice and information, and with regard to any charges.

Community councils have the power to raise money and obtain funds by means of contributions, donations, subscriptions, deeds of covenant, legacies or grants.

Community councils should meet to approve, or otherwise, a statement of its accounts for the previous financial year ending 31 March within three months of the end of such year. Community councils should also meet to approve, or otherwise, a report (prepared by the Chairperson) on the activities of the community council during the preceding financial year. Both of the above should be submitted to Angus Council no later than 31 July in the year following the end of the appropriate financial year.

1.4 Meetings

It is up to individual community councils to decide the number of community council meetings it will hold in a year, however, a community council should not hold any less than six meetings in any one calendar year. Outlined below are key points in respect of holding community council meetings:

Community councils should ensure that the local community is made aware of the dates and times of meetings and items to be discussed, and that there is opportunity for members of the public and special interest groups to participate in the meetings of community councils.

No business should be transacted at a meeting of the community council other than that specified in the notice of the meeting. However, there is provision in the standing orders for a matter of urgency to be raised.

No business should be transacted at a meeting of the community council unless at least 1/3 of the current voting membership is present. If, after 15 minutes of the advertised time for the start of a meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting should be adjourned until such a date and time as the Chairperson may decide.

Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of a community council should be drawn up by the Secretary and approved at the next meeting of the community council. Minutes of all meetings should be sent to communityplanning@angus.gov.uk or your Community Council Liaison Officer (see section 3).

Community councils shall ensure, so far as is reasonable and practicable, that meetings are held in premises accessible to all members of the community, including those with disabilities.

1.5 Insurance

Community councils should consider the need for public liability insurance. Angus Council can assist community councils in the provision of suitable insurance, providing cover for members in relation to their activities and also to cover against accident in relation to travel on

community council business and in relation to events organised by community councils. Community councils should contact Angus Council's Insurance Team direct for any further information or advice on insurance.

1.6 Training

To assist community councils to fulfil their role, Angus Council is committed to providing training for community councillors, either in respect of the specific operation of council departments or in the promotion of good practice by community councillors in areas of general interest such as running meetings, taking minutes, financial accounting, information technology, community engagement, planning and equalities etc.

1.7 Publicity

All community council meetings should be open to the public and public notice of each meeting shall be given at least ten days before the meeting. This could be by newspaper advertisement, by notice displayed in a public place, or local notice boards, etc. Community councils should publicise their meetings and activities, and items of interest to their communities.

2 Your role as a community councillor

2.1 Background

Your role as a community councillor is essential to the effective and efficient operation of the community council and these next few pages outline your role as a community councillor.

As stated, the purpose of a community council is to ascertain, co-ordinate and express the views of the community to Angus Council and other public bodies. Therefore, your role as a community councillor is to establish and represent the views of your community. It is not about offering your own personal views on a subject. In practice, this will involve discussing issues with people in the community to clarify their views and assess the strength of feeling on various topics. Also, as a community councillor you should promote the community council and make yourself accessible to the local community. Community councillors are expected to attend community council meetings on a regular basis and, if you are not able to attend, you should give your apologies to the Secretary or Chair.

2.2 Code of Conduct for Community Councillors

You should make sure that you are familiar with, and that your actions comply with the principles set out in the code of conduct for community councillors as included in the Angus Council Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils which states that:

“Members shall at all times act in such a manner as not to bring disrepute on the community council. During meetings they shall act courteously towards other members and members of the public and shall respect the authority of the Chairperson. Members shall observe the Code of Conduct for members of Angus Community Councils”.

Further expectations with regard to the following matters are outlined in the Code including:

- community leadership
- duty to uphold the law
- community interest
- selflessness
- integrity and propriety
- hospitality
- decisions
- objectivity and decision making
- accountability
- openness
- confidentiality
- stewardship
- participation
- declarations
- relations with Angus councillors
- relations with Angus officers
- political affiliations
- personal conduct.

2.3 Office Bearers

For a community council to function it must appoint office bearers to undertake certain duties and the responsibilities of these positions are summarised below.

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Planning Contact

The Secretary and the Treasurer need not be community council members. A community council may make such payments to the Secretary and Treasurer as they may from time to time decide and arrange for the provision of clerical services.

Chairperson

The chair has particular responsibility in relation to the management of the community council including ensuring:

- meetings are run competently
- discussion and decision making is democratic and everyone is able to participate in the meetings
- relevant matters are discussed and appropriate decisions are made
- compliance with the code of conduct by all community councillors.

The Chairperson shall hold office until their term of office as a member expires, or they resign, and is eligible for re-election as Chairperson. Any casual vacancy in the office of Chairperson shall be filled as soon as convenient by the community council. At a meeting of the community council the appointed Chairperson will chair the meeting. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the vice-Chairperson if applicable should chair. Where both the Chairperson and vice-Chairperson are absent from a meeting, the members present should choose who will chair.

The Chairperson may warn any members of the public who interrupts the proceedings of a meeting and may order the removal of that person should such interruption be continued and, in the event of any disorder arising at any meeting, the Chairperson shall be entitled to adjourn the meeting until a date and time as he or she shall decide.

If any member of the community council disregards the authority of the Chairperson, obstructs the meeting, or, in the opinion of the Chairperson acts in an offensive manner at a meeting, the Chairperson may move that such a member be suspended for the remainder of the meeting. If seconded, such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately without discussion.

Secretary

The main duties of the Secretary will include:

- convening meetings
- booking rooms
- dealing with correspondence (both in and out)
- preparing the agendas for meetings
- taking minutes for meetings unless a minute Secretary has been appointed
- distributing agendas and minutes

The Secretary will be responsible for the minutes of meetings, posting and displaying and advertising of notices of meetings, and is the official correspondent of the community council. Community councils may choose to appoint a minute Secretary as well as their community council Secretary. The Secretary shall forward minutes (after approval) within 21 days to the Community Council Liaison Officer, local elected members and other places in the area where information can be readily available. A template for minutes is included in Appendix 3. The Secretary should keep councillors of Angus Council, whose electoral ward or part of whose electoral ward lies within any part of the community council area, informed with regard to any relevant matter arising at a meeting of the community council. The Secretary should also keep the Community Council Liaison Officer and chief officers of appropriate departments of Angus Council informed (as appropriate) with regard to any relevant matter arising at a meeting of the community council. The Secretary should keep the Community Council Liaison Officer of Angus Council informed of the names and addresses of the members of the community council and persons appointed by the community council as Chairperson, vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and planning representative. The Secretary shall hold office until the appointment is terminated by the community council or resigned, on one month's notice.

Treasurer

The main tasks of the Treasurer include to:

- advise the community council on financial matters
- control and account for the community council's finances
- oversee bookkeeping
- prepare the annual accounts.

The financial year of the community council shall be the year commencing on 1st April and ending on 31st March in the year immediately following. The Treasurer shall prepare a statement of income and expenditure for the period of the financial year immediately preceding which shall be submitted to the community council not later than three months immediately following, duly audited.

The 'auditor' (independent examiner) of the accounts must not be a member, hold any other office of the community council or be related to a community councillor. The auditor should be someone who is suitably experienced in accountancy (preferably a qualified accountant). A community council may make such payments to the auditor as they may from time to time decide. A copy of the audited accounts as approved by the community council shall be sent as soon as practicable thereafter to the Community Council Liaison Officer but no later than 31st July immediately following.

The Treasurer shall keep complete records of the income and expenditure of the community council and shall report on a regular basis as to the income and expenditure to the community council.

The Treasurer shall pay into a bank account in the name of the community council all monies received on behalf of the community council and shall pay out of that bank account all the expenses of the community council. It is provided that the community council may specify from time to time a sum not exceeding £50 as an imprest for petty cash payments, and may open such deposits or investment accounts as it may deem necessary.

All cheques drawn on the bank account shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the Chairperson, whom failing, one other member.

The Treasurer shall submit to each meeting of the community council for approval a list of all payments made as a matter of urgency since the last meeting and any accounts due and payable by the community council.

The Treasurer shall keep records of all heritable and moveable property acquired by the community council, by gift, purchase or otherwise. The Treasurer shall hold office until the appointment is terminated by the community council or resigned, on one month's notice.

Angus Council is committed to consulting community councils as part of its statutory duties in respect of planning applications, and has developed a system for circulating planning applications to community councils. This includes community councils appointing one person as their point of contact for all planning matters. Planning applications can be accessed on the Council's website or at ACCESS Offices.

Planning Contact

The main tasks of the Planning Contact include:

- act as the official correspondent for planning consultation
- ensure relevant planning matters are discussed and appropriate decisions are made
- ensure that the community council responds in accordance policy and timescales.

Specific arrangements are made by Angus Council for consultation on planning applications and each community council should ensure that a Planning Contact person is appointed and that the name and contact details of the Planning Contact are sent to both Angus Council's planning division and the Community Council Liaison Officer as soon as any appointment of a Planning Contact is made or details of the Planning Contact are changed.

Section 3

1 Financial Guidelines

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to provide community councils with simple instructions on the minimum level of documentation and records, which should be maintained.

1.2 Recording of receipts and payments

As a bare minimum, the Treasurer should maintain records of all receipts and payments in a cash book using separate pages for each. Ideally this should be extended to include separate identifying columns for cash and bank. Depending on the detail required this could be further expanded to provide a fully analysed cash book, detailing the main categories of receipts and payments, e.g. grant income, postages, photocopying etc.

Good practice when bookkeeping is to record all transactions as quickly as possible and in as much detail as necessary. Wherever possible an invoice or till receipt should be received for every payment made, numbered sequentially and carefully filed. Where an invoice or till receipt is not available, a pro-forma voucher should be raised by the Treasurer detailing what the payment was for and signed by the person receiving payment.

As with payments, receipts should be supported by appropriate documentation, which should be numbered sequentially and carefully filed. All cash/cheques should be given to the Treasurer as soon as possible. The Treasurer should issue a receipt (keeping a copy) detailing the amount of the receipt, what it relates to and who it has been received from. This is particularly important where cash (as opposed to cheque) is involved.

Additionally, a list should be prepared of any assets held by the Community Council, such as laptops etc. This should be retained by the Treasurer and updated at least annually or as required.

2 Annual accounts

Annual accounts should be prepared at the end of each financial year (ending 31st March) summarising the receipts and payments made during that year.

The use of receipts and payments accounts is recommended. By definition, this will only include physical receipts and payments made during the period, not transactions which have still to be concluded. Any transactions not concluded by close-of-business on the final day of the financial period must be accounted for in the following financial year. Ideally, every effort should be made to make all payments and receive all income before close of business on the last day of the relevant accounting year. If exceptionally there is a significant payment due but not made by the financial year-end then an appropriate note should be made to the accounts.

The annual accounts should show opening bank and cash balances, summarised details of receipts and payments for the year and the closing bank and cash balances. Appropriate vouchers should be retained as evidence for each transaction.

3 Audit of annual accounts

These accounts require to be audited by someone who is suitably experienced in accountancy (preferably a qualified accountant). They must not be a member of the community council or related to a community councillor in any way.

The auditor should confirm the bank and cash balances and examine all documents for authenticity, propriety, etc. to verify the accounts and sign and date them with a statement saying:

“I have examined the books and records of the XXX Community Council for the period April XXX to March XXX and have found the above statement to be correctly stated and sufficiently vouched.”

4 Bank accounts and cash

Each community council should open a bank account in the name of the community council. Community councils are encouraged to select a bank account which is the best available to them. The account should be operated with two signatories required for each cheque, with a minimum of three persons designated as signatories for ease of operating the account. This should always be the Treasurer and two other designated officers of the community council.

Signatories should not sign blank cheques but the cheque should be prepared by the Treasurer and presented to another signatory along with appropriate documentary evidence relating to the payment. The signatory should sign the cheque and endorse the documentation with the cheque number and the payment date to show the payment has been made.

Cash held by the community council should be kept to a minimum and always held in a lockable container.

5 Example of a basic layout for a cash book

INCOME			
Description	Ref.	Chq No./Cash	Total (£)
Balance c/f 1 April 14			300.00
Grant Angus Council	4		700.00
TOTAL			1000.00

EXPENDITURE			
Description Ref.	Ref.	Chq No./Cash	Total (£)
Forfar Dispatch	1	00145	75.00
Arbroath Stationery		Cash	25.00
Arbroath Herald	3	00146	150.00
Abbey Pens Ltd.	5	00147	30.00
Donation to Bloggs		Cash	175.00
Balance c/f 31 March			450.00
TOTAL			550.00

“Ref.” refers to the sequential numbering mentioned in 1.2 above

6 Example of preferred layout for annual accounts

XXX Community Council

Statement of income and expenditure of XXX Community Council for the period 1 April XXX to 31 March XXX.

Income	£
Council Grant	XXX
Other donations	XXX
Income from fund raisers	XXX
Other income	XXX
Bank/building society interest	XXX
Total income	XXX
Expenditure	XXX
Postages	XXX
Hall Hire	XXX
Advertising	XXX
(Surplus)/deficit for the period	XXX
Opening balance	XXX
Closing balance as at xx/xx/xx	XXX
Requested by	
Bank account	XXX
Cash in hand	XXX
	XXX

Prepared by _____

Date _____

Auditor's certificate

I have examined the books and records of the XX Community Council for the period April XXX to March XXX and have found the above statement to be correctly stated and sufficiently vouched.

Signed by _____

Date _____

Section 4

Angus Council's Community Council Liaison Officer is:

Community Engagement Support Officer
Communities Directorate
Community Planning
William Wallace House
Orchardbank Business Park
Forfar
DD8 1WH
T: 01307 476128
E: communityplanning@angus.gov.uk

Contacting Angus Council:

Routine/general enquiries should be directed through ACCESS Angus via
ACCESSLine – 08452 777 778

Your local ACCESS Office

Email – accessline@angus.gov.uk

Twitter – www.twitter.com/anguscouncil

Facebook – www.facebook.com/anguscouncil

See the councillor information page if you wish to contact your local Councillor
(www.angus.gov.uk/info/20033/council_and_councillor_information)

Insurance – riskteam@angus.gov.uk

Further Information

A number of documents are referred to in this handbook. Full copies can be obtained as follows:

By contacting ACCESSLine on 08452 777 778

By contacting the Council's Community Council Liaison Officer (details above).



Appendix 1

National Standards for Community Engagement

1 INVOLVEMENT:

we will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement.

2 SUPPORT:

we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.

3 PLANNING:

we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.

4 METHODS:

we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

5 WORKING TOGETHER:

we will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently.

6 SHARING INFORMATION:

we will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants in a way that suits them.

7 WORKING WITH OTHERS:

we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement.

8 IMPROVEMENT:

we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants.

9 FEEDBACK:

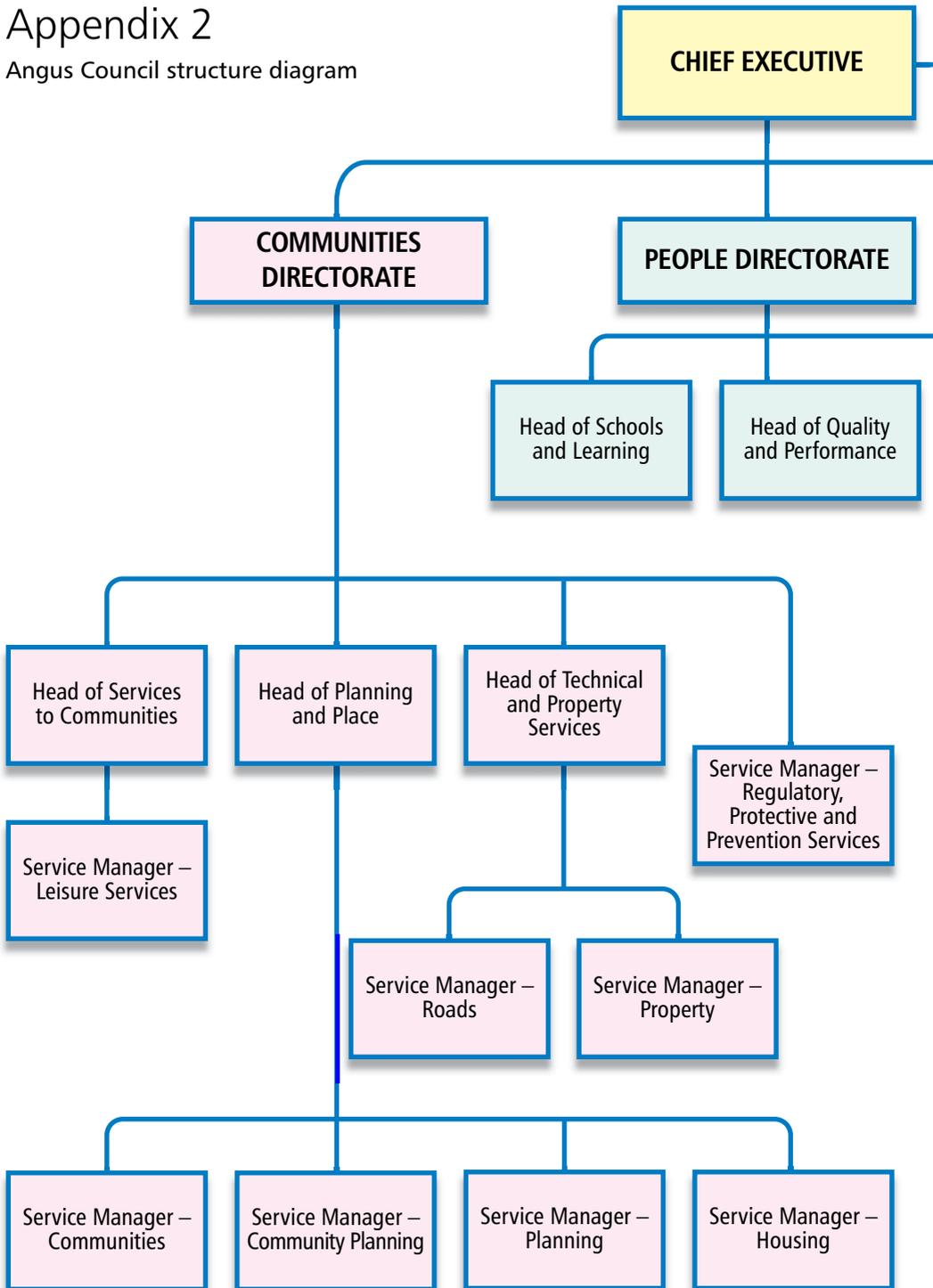
we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected in appropriate and relevant ways for them.

10 MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

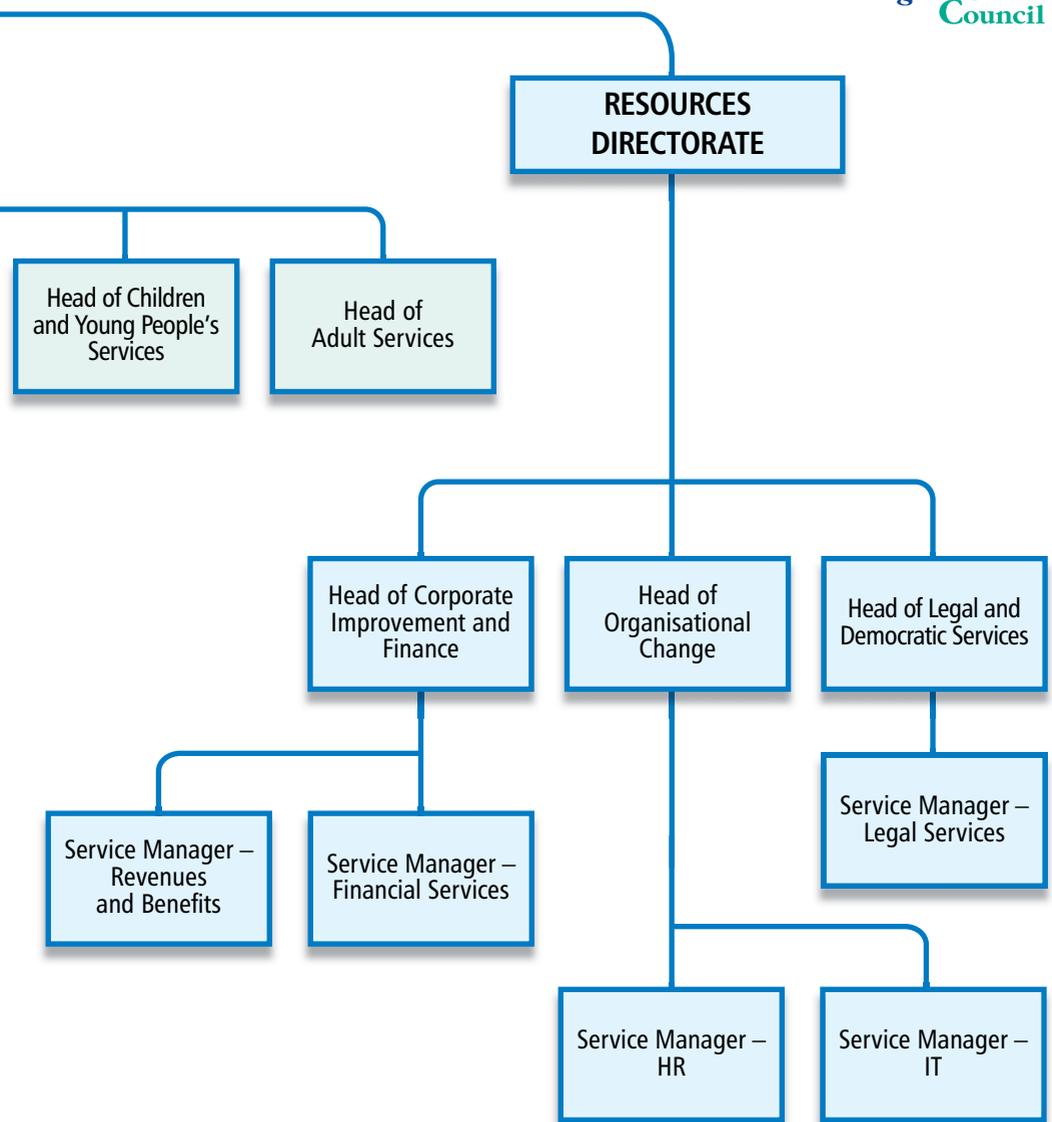
we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the National Standards for Community Engagement.

Appendix 2

Angus Council structure diagram



- Service Manager – Economic Development
- Service Manager – Communications
- Service Manager – Governance



Appendix 3

Template for Minutes

Minutes of Community Council Meetings Template

(name) Community Council

Meeting held on (date) at (time) in (venue)

In attendance:

List community councillors and others in attendance.

Apologies:

List community councillors and others who have submitted their apologies.

AGENDA

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of previous meeting to be approved by community council. To be proposed and seconded.

Matters Arising

To give update/progress on matters discussed at previous meeting which are not included on the agenda.

Local Councillor Update

Updates by local elected members in attendance.

Correspondence

List of correspondence received.

Planning Applications

Planning Contact to provide summary of planning applications. Community council to agree response if appropriate.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer to give summary of current financial situation.

Other agenda items

Business that requires to be discussed at the meeting.

AOCB

Any other items for discussion that not included on the agenda.

Date of Next Meeting

Confirm date, time and venue of next meeting.

- 1 'Auditor' refers to a trusted person, e.g. a retired Bank Manager, to look over your annual accounts and view all income/expenditure with receipts. Angus Council does not need copies of any receipts. An auditor in this instance does not have to be provided from a private firm/something that you pay high expense for.

