

## **EX46. Local Governance Review – Policy Development Panel**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which invited the establishment of a policy development panel to consider the implications of the Local Governance Review, make recommendations and prepare a response to the review.

At the meeting of Council on 6 December 2017 there was discussion on whether the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils should be reviewed in light of the quadrennial community council elections. It was suggested that a policy development panel could be established for this purpose and taking cognisance of the Local Governance Review.

At its meeting of 27 June 2018 Council considered a motion asking that officers investigate the possibility of establishing Area Committees and a Petitions Committee. Council agreed to explore the options through by expanding the remit of the existing policy development panel on Community Councils to include consideration of a Petitions Committee and Area Committees within the context of the Local Governance Review.

The Local Governance Review was launched jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA in December 2017 and invited public sector bodies to consider and identify reforms and powers which could be implemented to strengthen local democracy and decision making. The outcomes of the Review could have far reaching implications for local democracy in Falkirk and across Scotland.

It was proposed that the remit of the policy development panel included:-

- the implications of the Local Governance Review
- drafting a response to the Local Governance Review for approval by the Executive
- the role of community councils in local decision making and the current arrangements for establishing community councils in light of the thrust of the Local Governance Review and having regard to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- the advantages and disadvantages and any other issues in connection with forming a Petitions Committee and/or Area Committees
- any other changes that would enhance participation and engagement and improve local governance.

### **Decision**

#### **The Executive:-**

- (1) **agreed the creation of a policy development panel to consider the Local Governance Review with a remit as set out in section 4.6 of the report;**

**(2) agreed that composition of the policy development panel would be:-**

**2 – SNP**

**2 – Labour**

**1 – Conservative**

**(3) noted that the Leader of the Council would chair the policy development panel.**