

1. What is Renfrewshire Community Council Forum?

Renfrewshire Community Council Forum (the Forum) is a gathering of up to two members from each of the active community councils in Renfrewshire.

2. What is its purpose?

The Forum meets to discuss matters of common interest to all community councils and aims to:

- foster positive contact and exchange of information between community councils and external organisations;
- articulate a collective voice for community councils on matters of common interest;
- develop partnership working between community councils; and
- develop and promote membership of community councils.

3. Who is eligible to attend Forum meetings?

Each community council in Renfrewshire can appoint two of its members to attend Forum meetings. Substitutes are allowed should appointed members be unable to attend.

Community councils nominate members to attend at the AGM in November each year.

Meetings are not open to members of the public.

4. Who else attends meetings?

The Senior Committee Services Officer with responsibility for Community Councils attends Forum meetings to help discussion and provide advice.

The Forum invites guest speakers to attend and discuss a wide range of topics of interest to all community councils.

5. When and where are meetings held?

The Forum meets in February, May, August and November each year, on a Monday evening at 6pm in Renfrewshire House.

The Senior Committee Services Officer (Community Councils) arranges meetings and issues an agenda to all members at least seven days before each meeting—setting out the date, time, venue and business to be considered.

6. Who is in charge?

The Chairperson is in charge and is responsible for controlling meetings and the business to be considered.

The Secretary is responsible for communications between the Forum and organisations, for example, invitations to guest speakers.

At the AGM each year, the members who make up the Management Committee select a Chairperson and a Secretary.

The Management Committee comprises up to one-third of the members and is elected by members at the AGM each year.

7. How can I participate at meetings?

Read each agenda—find out if your community council has any questions/views about the topics on the agenda that you can put forward at the meeting.

At the meeting, raise your hand or indicate to the Chairperson that you would like to speak and the Chairperson will invite you to do so at an appropriate time.

8. How do I get an item on the agenda?

Find out the facts surrounding any issues that your community council would like to raise at the Forum—ignore gossip and speculation. Contact the Chairperson to request that the topic be added to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting and provide a copy of any supporting documents.

Be prepared to speak at the meeting about the topic you have raised and to answer questions from other members.

9. Are there any 'ground rules' for members?

Members are expected to:

- bring their copy of the agenda to each meeting
- listen
- do not dominate or 'hog' discussion
- seek clarity and ensure understanding
- avoid repetition and keep discussion focused and 'on point'

- ensure that information is evidenced—and not based on anecdote or myth
- show respect and courtesy by challenging ideas and not individuals
- be honest
- be practical
- use plain English
- ensure there is only one speaker at a time
- be aware of 'pet projects'
- be aware that silence is agreement

Contact

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10. What should I do after each meeting?

Let your community council know the outcome of the Forum's discussions—try to reflect these as accurately as possible.

The Senior Committee Services Officer (Community Councils) will send a Minute of the meeting to your community council.

Make sure your community council complies with any requests by the Forum for information or action.

A Quick Guide to Renfrewshire Community Council Forum