

A12. Falkirk Council Annual Accounts 2018/19 and Falkirk Temperance Trust Accounts 2018/19

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer presenting the unaudited annual accounts of the Council and Falkirk Temperance Trust for the financial year ended 31 March 2019 for approval. These had, in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014, been submitted to the auditor by the deadline of 30 June 2019 and published online for inspection.

The committee considered the Annual Accounts, members welcomed the new layout and format, praising in particular the management commentary and annual governance statement as being particularly helpful. Stephen Reid explained that the external audit team would report on the accounts in September 2019 as part of the audit process.

Following a question in regard to the common good fund the Chief Finance Officer provided an update on the current position in regard to Kilns House and undertook to provide detail on the sale of the property.

The committee highlighted the significant long term debts to the Council, in regard to Northfield Quarry and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The Chief Finance Officer explained that there were debts dating to Local Government regulations in 1996, and the creation of the National Fire Service in 2013 respectively and explained how these would be treated in accounting terms.

Following a question in regard to the Falkirk Temperance Trust, the Chief Finance Officer undertook to clarify the definition of the area covered by the term 'Falkirk' – i.e. whether it was limited to the former burgh or was in fact the council area. Mr Smail then, following a question, stated that the contracts for the Council's four PFI schools would end in 2026. However the contracts contained trigger points at which the Council was obliged to advise the contractors of its intentions post 2026. The Head of Planning and Resources confirmed that a group had been established to consider the Council's options and to set out proposals.

The portfolio holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism highlighted the ongoing work to market Falkirk as a tourism destination.

Following a question in regard to the impairment losses set out in the Accounts, the Chief Finance Officer undertook to provide further detail.

Decision

The Committee considered the Unaudited Annual Accounts, noted the public inspection period and that the Unaudited Annual Accounts will be submitted to the Council's External Auditor by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2019.