

### **FC13. QUESTIONS**

The questions put to the Leader of the Council and portfolio holders and their answers are recorded as appendix 1.

## APPENDIX 1

### FALKIRK COUNCIL

### QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 33

Standing Order 33 (of the transitional Standing Orders relating to meetings) enables Councillors to put questions to the Leader of the Council or the relevant portfolio holder on matters transacted at a meeting of the Executive or the Education Executive during the preceding cycle. The table below details the questions asked and answered at the meeting.

| ORDER QUESTION TAKEN | COMMITTEE / MINUTE REFERENCE                           | TITLE OF REPORT/ QUESTION<br>(name of Member)   | ANSWER   |                            |
|----------------------|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| 1                    | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX23</b> | <b>FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/13 – PROVISIONAL OUTTURN</b><br><br>What discussion have you and your resources portfolio holder had with the Chief Finance Officer concerning the creation of a cap on the burgeoning under spend of this council's budget and to institute a viring of unallocated under spends to services where they can be most practically employed?<br><br>Councillor Tom Coleman | The Leader confirmed that he holds regular meetings with the Chief Finance Officer, and that services already have power to vire budgets up to £350,000.   | W<br>tal<br>fin            |
| 2                    | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX23</b> | <b>FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/13 –PROVISIONAL OUTTURN</b><br><br>Is the Council Leader satisfied at the explanation of the Development Services overspend when it has been identified that the replacement bus service has been provided for and funded from reserves?<br><br>Councillor Robert Spears   | The Leader responded that he was satisfied with the explanation.   |                            |
| 3                    | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX19</b> | <b>FORTH VALLEY INTEGRATED CARERS' STRATEGY</b><br><br>Paragraph 4.1 makes reference to the Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment arrangements for the Forth Valley Integrated Carers  | The portfolio holder for Health and Social Care confirmed that the outcome of the Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment would be reported to the Executive. She also stated that the charges did not apply to | Ca<br>ad<br>mi<br>en<br>of |

| ORDER<br>QUESTION<br>TAKEN | COMMITTEE<br>/ MINUTE<br>REFERENCE                              | TITLE OF REPORT/<br>QUESTION<br>(name of Member)  | ANSWER  |  |
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|                            |   | <p>Strategy.</p> <p>Given that as a result of the Welfare reforms many carers now have to pay the current Council Administration Care Charges, despite massive underspends in the Social Care budget, can the portfolio holder advise of the outcome of the Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment on these charges?</p> <p>Councillor Cecil Meiklejohn</p>   | carers.   |  |
| 4                          | <p>EXECUTIVE –<br/>18 June 2013</p> <p>REF:<br/><b>EX19</b></p> | <p><b>FORTH VALLEY<br/>INTEGRATED CARERS'<br/>STRATEGY</b></p> <p>Falkirk Council pays one of the lowest rates for Kinship Care Allowance in Scotland, and we have a policy of placing children with family members where even possible. Can the portfolio holder advise me if there are any plans to utilise some of the £1m underspend in Social Work's budget to remedy that situation, considering that there was a national recommendation to pay Kinship Carers at the same rate as foster carers.</p> <p>Councillor Cecil Meiklejohn</p> | The portfolio holder for Health and Social Care confirmed that there were no current plans and that the flat rate had increased in 2011 to £40 per week.  | Is<br>ass<br>dis                                   |
| 5                          | <p>EXECUTIVE –<br/>7 May 2013</p> <p>REF:<br/><b>EX5(b)</b></p> | <p><b>ZERO WASTE STRATEGY<br/>2012-2022</b></p> <p>To note the Council's Zero Waste Strategy for 2012-2022 and ask when the portfolio holder will next meet with Directors to bring forward policy initiatives to support this.</p> <p>Councillor Stephen Bird</p>  | The portfolio holder for the Environment confirmed that he had discussed this a week ago with the Director and that he speaks with Mr. Baird (Waste Strategy Co-Ordinator) regularly.           | W<br>94<br>po<br>bu<br>an<br>fo<br>bu<br>str<br>en |
| 6                          | <p>EXECUTIVE –<br/>18 June 2013</p> <p>REF:<br/><b>EX34</b></p> | <p><b>CLOSURE OF AVONDALE<br/>ADVANCED WASTE<br/>TREATMENT FACILITY</b></p> <p>To ask the Environment Portfolio holder what Policy initiatives are planned to meet the likely 4% drop</p>   | The portfolio holder for the Environment confirmed that the Council had secured £113,000 funding in March this year and would continue to seek additional funding. He also stressed the need to | W<br>Co<br>fo<br>fo<br>is                          |

| ORDER QUESTION TAKEN | COMMITTEE / MINUTE REFERENCE                     | TITLE OF REPORT/ QUESTION (name of Member)  | ANSWER  |                      |
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|                      |  | in recycling figures for the current year.<br><br>Councillor Stephen Bird   | recycle and promote recycling.  |                      |
| 7                    | EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013<br><br>REF: <b>EX22</b> | <b>INSPIRING ACTIVE LIVES – A CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY FOR FALKIRK 2013-2023</b><br><br>When does the portfolio holder see the Policy Development Panel being up and running?<br><br>Councillor Brian McCabe  | The portfolio holder for Culture and Leisure confirmed that the Chief Executive had written to members in August seeking nominations and that officer support was in place.   | Me<br>the<br>Co      |
| 8                    | EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013<br><br>REF: <b>EX22</b> | <b>INSPIRING ACTIVE LIVES – A CLUTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY FOR FALKIRK 2013-2023</b><br><br>Given the importance of this ten year strategy document on inspiring ACTIVE LIVES, by the Community Trust, can the portfolio holder confirm that the Trust as a policy advisor to the Council shares the council's single outcome agreements and the strategy will meet the council's objectives within the corporate plan including full and equal participation by all stakeholders?<br><br>Councillor John McNally | The portfolio holder for Culture and Leisure stated that the Trust had confirmed that it does meet the outcome objectives. He indicated that the task of the Panel was to ensure the strategy was a good fit with the Single Outcome Agreement. | Ca<br>pr<br>pit      |
| 9                    | EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013<br><br>REF: <b>EX23</b> | <b>FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/2013- PROVISIONAL OUTFURN</b><br><br>Following the implementation of a buy back policy for ex council properties can the portfolio holder advise what progress has been made?<br><br>Councillor Steven Carleschi   | The portfolio holder for Housing confirmed that the Scheme had been successful to date.   | Ca<br>co<br>pu<br>be |
| 10                   | EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013                         | <b>FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/2013- PROVISIONAL</b>  | The portfolio holder for Housing confirmed that the   | W<br>all             |

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|                      | REF:<br><b>EX23</b>   | <b>OUTTURN</b><br><br>Can the portfolio holder advise if the criteria for Housing Incentive Scheme to encourage downsizing has been effective to date? How many applications have been approved?<br><br>Councillor Steven Carleschi  | scheme, which was optional, had been successful and that 8 applications had been approved since its introduction.   |                      |
| 11                   | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX30</b>            | <b>ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE: DENNY TOWN CENTRE</b><br><br>Does the portfolio holder believe that the built environment should enable free movement and not discriminate against elderly, infirm and disabled?<br><br>Councillor Martin Oliver  | The portfolio holder for Economic Development indicated that he agreed.   | W<br>be<br>me        |
| 12                   | EDUCATION<br>EXECUTIVE –<br>28 May 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EE8</b> | <b>OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL</b><br><br>In terms of the Council's policy of the implementation of GIRFEC can the portfolio holder please advise:<br>a) If he has recently met with representatives of Skills Scotland?<br>b) What themes were discussed?<br><br>Councillor Gordon Hughes   | The portfolio holder for Education confirmed that no meetings had been arranged.  | W<br>pla<br>Se<br>Sk |
| 13                   | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX32</b>            | <b>ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS £350,000 IN VALUE CONTRACT FOR NEW BUILD HOUSING AT WINDSOR ROAD, FALKIRK (FAL-6961)</b><br><br>To ask the Portfolio holder for Housing when he last met with the Council's Building Design Manager to discuss the works taking place at Windsor Road, Summerford?<br><br>Councillor Colin Chalmers | The portfolio holder for Housing stated that he had not met officers regarding the developments, and that he was satisfied that officers were carrying out satisfactorily professional roles. | W<br>be              |
| 14                   | EXECUTIVE –   | <b>FINANCIAL POSITION</b>  | The portfolio holder for  | W                    |

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|                      | 18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX23</b>                | <b>2012/2013- PROVISIONAL OUTTURN</b><br><br>The fitting of aids and adaptations appears to be outwith the normal PI's for the contracted department which often means that disabled applicants generally have longer to wait for such as showers than able bodied tenants waiting for scheduled repairs.<br>Does the portfolio holder have any plans to rectify this?<br><br>Councillor David Alexander | Housing responded that the average timescale for completing work for a level access shower was 39 days and this was within the target set. He added that an occupational assessment was required before any work on aids and adaptations would begin. | to<br>po<br>fo<br>to              |
| 15                   | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX24</b> | <b>ACTUARIAL VALUATION OF THE INSURANCE FUND AND UPDATE ON MUNICIPAL MUTUAL INSURANCE</b><br><br>The triennial valuation of the insurance fund has recently been completed. What is the rationale behind the allocation of monies to this fund in the light of the consultant's conclusions?<br><br>Councillor Tom Coleman   | The portfolio holder for Resources responded that the Council had taken a prudent stance given the potential for future liabilities.  | Gr<br>un<br>an<br>to<br>es<br>dis |
| 16                   | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX20</b> | <b>DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE: DELIVERY OF THE DENNY EASTERN ACCESS ROAD</b><br><br>The new SPG on DEAR delivery is flawed. Does the PORTFOLIO HOLDER have any alternative 'vision' to put forward to Council?<br><br>Councillor Brian McCabe  | The portfolio holder for Economic Development answered in the negative.   | Th<br>to<br>wi<br>au<br>co        |
| 17                   | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX29</b> | <b>TAX INCREMENTAL FINANCING (TIF) INITIATIVE</b><br><br>Can the portfolio holder explain the inclusion of Glenbervie within the TIF proposal?   | The portfolio holder for Economic Development confirmed that since the completion of the road works the marketability of the area had increased, but required investment. Early investment  | W                                 |

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|                            |  | Councillor Robert Spears   | via TIF will require to be the subject of a business case.   |                                       |
| 18                         | EXECUTIVE –<br>18 June 2013<br><br>REF:<br><b>EX17</b> | <b>RENT ARREARS DUE TO<br/>SIZE CRITERIA BENEFIT</b><br><br>It's been recognised that there will be a loss of half a million pounds to the HRA caused by the 1 year non-eviction stance on the bedroom tax. Can the portfolio holder advise what happens after this initial one year period?<br><br>Councillor Robert Spears | The portfolio holder for Housing stated that after a year there were 403 cases of rent arrears due to welfare reform of bedroom tax. He indicated that he intended to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and local MSPs seeking their support for the proposal that the Scottish Government utilises budget underspends to mitigate the impact of the bedroom tax. | Ho<br>ho<br>be<br>als<br>Ca<br>O<br>M |