

EX57. Falkirk Community Trust Policy Development Panel – Improvement Plan

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services summarising the outcomes of the discussion between the Council and Falkirk Community Trust following a review by the policy development panel. The resultant Improvement Plan was presented together with recommendations to progress the agreed outcomes.

The Executive had on 7 June 2016 (ref EX23) considered the interim findings of the policy development panel on its review of Falkirk Community Trust and had agreed to appoint an independent and external facilitator to work with the Council and Trust on the improvement areas which had been identified by the panel.

The facilitator, Stephen Philips of Burness Paull, had met separately with panel members and the portfolio holder and also with representatives of the Trust prior to holding a joint workshop on 1 September 2016.

The facilitator had subsequently provided an Improvement Plan for consideration by the Executive. The proposals set out in the plan related to strategy development and sign off, the contractual framework between the Council and the Trust and corporate governance. The Improvement Plan had been circulated to the panel, portfolio holder and Chief Executive of the Trust who had agreed its submission to the Executive for consideration

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) that, in order to develop a clear sense of joint ownership, Falkirk Community Trust is requested to work with the Council to prepare and implement a procedure for development of the overarching strategy for culture and leisure allowing for increased joint working and maximising opportunities for officers and elected members of the Council to contribute (as set out at paragraphs 4.6.1 to 4.6.3 of the Improvement Plan);**
- (2) to request that the Trust works with the Council to establish joint working groups involving Council officers, members of the Trust's Senior Management Team, Trust board members and Council elected members to develop agreed strategies in response to challenging areas of work including:-**
 - (a) approaches to income generation;**
 - (b) community engagement; and**
 - (c) treatment of Trust facilities (as set out at paragraph 4.6.4 of the Improvement Plan);**

- (3) to request that the Trust works with the Council to jointly review the existing Funding Agreement between the Council and the Trust with a focus on:-**
- (a) introducing a more detailed specification of the Trust's services;**
 - (b) agreeing a procedure for annual adjustment of the specification and services fee which allows for appropriate engagement through a defined process;**
 - (c) agreeing a more detailed change control mechanism which reflects the principle of collaboration between the Council and the Trust in response to unforeseen changes in circumstances during a given financial year; and**
 - (d) reviewing the monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure that there is full clarity with the Council's requirements
(as set out at paragraphs 4.6.5 to 4.6.7 of the Improvement Plan);**
- (4) to request that the Trust holds its Board meetings in public and publishes minutes of such meetings on its website, having regard to the need for appropriate redaction of material and private sessions where matters would be of a confidential or sensitive nature;**
- (5) to request that the Chief Executive of the Trust attends the Council's regular Corporate Management Team;**
- (6) that the Directors of the Trust and the policy development panel members should jointly explore the following proposals (set out in paragraphs 4.6.8 to 4.6.12 of the Improvement Plan):-**
- (a) that the Chair of the Trust be an elected member**
 - (b) that the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism be a standing director of the Trust**
 - (c) that efforts are made to engage elected members from across the Council with elected members being encouraged to attend Trust events and learn more about the activities of the Trust**
 - (d) that elected members on the board of the Trust are encouraged to act as a channel of communication from the Trust to other elected members**
 - (e) that appreciation of the achievements of both the Trust and the Council since the inception of the Trust are fostered; and**

(f) that the most appropriate channels of communication and response are identified in the context of ad hoc representations from individual elected members; and

to retain the support of the facilitator as required and that the Executive will receive an update report on progress and on the outcome of the discussions referred to at recommendations 2.1.3 and 2.1.6