



# **Agenda Item 5**

**Following the Public Pound:  
Falkirk Community Trust**

**Falkirk Council**

**Title:** Following the Public Pound: Falkirk Community Trust  
**Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee (External)  
**Date:** 11 December 2020  
**Submitted By:** Director of Corporate & Housing Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update of the performance of Falkirk Community Trust (the Trust) in line with Following the Public Pound guidance and Council procedures. The report covers the performance of the Trust between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 although performance information for the period July to September 2020 is provided to demonstrate the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on Falkirk Community Trust's activities

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee considers the performance of the Trust, and select a course of action from the following options:**
- (1) Approve the report and acknowledge progress by the Trust in meeting Council priorities;**
  - (2) Request further information on specific aspects of the service provided; or**
  - (3) Request a follow-up report for future Scrutiny Committee consideration.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Each organisation that the Council funds or that is considered an Arm's Length External organisation is subject to monitoring in line with 'Following the Public Pound' guidance. This means the Council making sure that the funding it allocates is being used for the purposes allocated and that it represents best value in terms of supporting the Council achieve its priorities and outcomes.

- 3.2 The Council's new corporate plan contains three priorities, which are summarised as follows:
- People – Communities: raising aspiration and ambition and reducing the impact of poverty on children and their families;
  - Place – Enterprise: growing our economy, improving the neighbourhoods we live in and promoting vibrant town centres; and
  - Partnership – Innovation: working with communities to deliver better services, empowering, and enabling people to be self reliant and promoting stronger, more self-reliant communities.
- 3.3 The Trust provides help to progress the outcomes associated with the Plan by encouraging local people to become more active and improve their own wellbeing and confidence. This in turn can help them make a more positive contribution to their communities. It is hoped that more active lifestyles will mean that people are less likely to experience illness and be able to remain fit and active as they grow older.
- 3.4 The Trust provides cultural, recreation, sports and library services on behalf of Falkirk Council. The provision of these services are set out in a 25 year agreement between the Council and the Trust established in 2011. The Council provided support of £10.9m in 2019/20 (£0.187m less than 2018/19) and has 5 members on the Board of the Trust.
- 3.5 As well as providing the services noted above, the Trust also has responsibility for:
- The provision of sports, heritage and arts development programmes, health and fitness and outdoor learning and delivery of the active schools programme;
  - The development and lead delivery of strategies and plans in respect of culture, sports, strategic parks and library services. The Trust also contributes to wider Council policy development, where appropriate;
  - Leading on the development of the following strategies for the Council.
    - The Culture and Sports Strategy – 2014 to 2024;
    - The Arts Delivery Plan – 2016 to 2021;
    - The Public Arts Strategy;
    - The Heritage Delivery Plan for Falkirk – 2015 to 2018;
    - The Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy;
    - The Library Service Development Plan – 2016 to 2020; and
    - Master planning for major sites and Management Plans for each strategic park.

#### 4. Considerations

- 4.1 The performance and monitoring reports attached gives an overview of the service provided by the Trust, the agreed objectives or outcomes performance information during the reporting period and a financial overview set out. The Committee should consider this report and then determine from the options set out in para 2.1 any further information or action required.
- 4.2 The Council's Chief Finance Officer is the key liaison officer within the Trust. This role includes meeting with the Trust's Chief Executive on a regular basis and responsibility for monitoring provision of service.
- 4.3 The Trust provides quarterly and annual performance reports to its Audit and Performance Sub Group. This provides the source of information for this report.
- 4.4 The following table provides a summary of Trust performance against targets over the reporting period 2019/20 (appendix 3). A traffic light system is used within the table and the supporting appendices to categorise how well performance has met target. Explanation of each indicator is set out in more detail in the appendices.

Reporting Period	On or above target performance 		0% to 10% below target performance 		10% or more below target performance 	
	<i>No. of indicators</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>No. of indicators</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>No. of indicators</i>	<i>% of total</i>
April 2019 to March 2020 ( indicators)	11	34%	10	31%	11	34%

- 4.5 The Trust's key year-end performance highlights in 2019/20 against target, include:
- Participants in programmed activity at the Helix, 111% of target achieved
  - Admissions to Stenhousemuir Health and Fitness, 109% of target achieved
  - Admissions to Muiravonside Country Park, 109% achieved
  - Sports Development participant sessions, 107% achieved
  - Outdoor Activities participant sessions, 106% of target achieved
  - Active Schools distinct participants, 104% achieved
  - Participants in cultural service activities, 103% achieved

4.6 Some of the areas where performance was not as forecast include:

- Visits to Kinneil Museum, 55% of target achieved
- Admission to Neighbourhood Sports Centre, 72% of target achieved
- Visits to Helix, 75% of target achieved
- Admissions to Bo'ness Recreation Centre, 77% of target achieved
- Admissions to the Hippodrome, 79% of target achieved
- Usage of public access terminals in libraries, 81% of target achieved

4.7 Some of the Trust's performance highlights are reported in its annual report provided at Appendix 1, include:

- Customer income increased from the previous year by 5.5% to £8,210,882
- Completed the £1.2m refurbishment of the upper floor at the Mariner Centre to include the first immersive Les Mills studio in the country.
- Finalists in three of the nine categories of the annual Community Leisure (UK) awards
- Attracted grants and fundraising totaling £810k
- Retained five star Tripadvisor reviews for the Helix and Callendar House
- Introduced an online ticketing system for FTH, the Hippodrome and major external events
- Reacted quickly and effectively when closing facilities down due to the pandemic whilst communicating and supporting customers and staff where possible

4.8 A copy of the Trust's Final Financial Reports and Statements has been provided. Income for the period totalled £20.15m (compared to £19.4m in the previous year), of which £10.9m is funding from the Council. In addition, the Trust's wholly subsidiary, Falkirk Community Trading Limited, achieved a surplus of £293k for the year. The Trust's overall costs stood at £20.36m compared to £19.83m for 2018/19. This is set out in appendix 2.

The focus of the Committee's attention is the performance of the Trust during the financial year 2019/20. The impact of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown were beginning to impact on the Trust. Appendix 4 sets out the Trust's performance in the period July to September 2020 and is included from contextual information.

## 5. Consultation

Nil

## **6. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 6.1 An assessment of the financial implications for the Trust is summarised at para 4.8, and in more detail at Appendix 2.

### **Resources**

- 6.2 An assessment of the resource implications for the Trust is noted within the report at paragraph 4.8.

### **Legal**

- 6.3 The Trust must continue to meet the requirements of the Scottish Charities Regulator, OSCR.

### **Risk**

- 6.4 If services are not provided by the Trust, then there is a risk of not being able to attain our outcomes.
- 6.5 Nil

### **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 6.6 Nil

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Following the Public Pound. It demonstrates the continuing performance the Trust is achieving against most of its key indicators and its financial performance.

---

### **Director of Corporate & Housing Services**

Author Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager  
[brian.pirie@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:brian.pirie@falkirk.gov.uk)

Date: 2 December 2020

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Falkirk Community Annual Report, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Appendix 2 – Falkirk Community Trust Financial Reports and Statements 2019/20

Appendix 3 – Falkirk Community Trust Performance, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Appendix 4 – Falkirk Community Trust Performance, July to September 2020

### **List of Background Papers:**

**The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973**

- Following the Public Pound Guidance