

FALKIRK COUNCIL

EXTRACT OF MINUTE of MEETING of the POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009 at 10.30 a.m.

PR87. ECONOMIC DOWNTURN – ACTION PLAN

With reference to Minute of Meeting of Falkirk Council held on 10 December 2008 (Paragraph FC87 refers), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 6 January 2009 by the Chief Executive (a) summarising additional measures aimed at ameliorating the impact of the economic downturn in the local area, and (b) attaching as an appendix, the approved Action Plan detailing the support packages for local businesses.

Councillor Gow, seconded by Councillor Fry moved the recommendations as contained in the Report.

By way of an amendment Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Kenna moved the following:-

“It is recommended that Committee –

- (1) Notes comments and intended actions for the suggested additional items of business support covered by this report and agrees to make the following changes to the existing recommendations.
- (2) Agrees the action plan as outlined in the report with the following amendments:
 - 2.1 To include non VAT rated businesses in all areas of business support.
 - 2.2 To instruct officers to bring a report back to Committee as soon as possible on the establishment of a council loan fund along similar lines as the BP loan fund that will provide short term opportunities for new and existing companies.
 - 2.3 To recommend to full Council that the Council’s Economic Development Committee must alter its membership and role to recognise the challenging times we live in. It has to become a Committee of entrepreneurial challenge containing the best of the best with representatives of local businesses large and small, those entrusted with the provision of business support and any other relevant stakeholder if we are serious about tackling the problems we have within the local economy.
 - 2.4 To note the concerns expressed by the Grangemouth Independent Retailers Association and agree to investigate these concerns accordingly, reporting back to the first available meeting of the Economic Development Committee. In particular officers are asked to produce a comparator

between public and private sector ground rents/lease costs and report findings and proposals back to members.

On a division, 3 Members voted for the Motion and 4 for the Amendment.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** in terms of the Amendment, namely:-

NOTED the comments and intended actions for the suggested additional items of business support covered in the Report.

AGREED the action plan as outlined in the Report with the following amendments;

- (1) to include non VAT rated businesses in all areas of business support;
- (2) that Officers report back to Committee as soon as possible on the establishment of a Council Loan Fund along similar lines as the BP loan fund that will provide short term opportunities for new and existing companies;
- (3) to recommend to Falkirk Council that the Council's Economic Development Committee must alter its membership and role to recognise the challenging times we live in. It has to become a Committee of entrepreneurial challenge containing the best of the best with representatives of local businesses large and small, those entrusted with the provision of business support and any other relevant stakeholder if we are serious about tackling the problems we have within the local economy; and
- (4) to note the concerns expressed by the Grangemouth Independent Retailers Association and agree to investigate these concerns accordingly, reporting back to the first available meeting of the Economic Development Committee. In particular Officers are asked to produce a comparator between public and private sector ground rents/lease costs and report findings and proposals back to Members.