

### **Falkirk Council Scheme of Decentralisation – Revised Scheme 2011**

#### **What is the Scheme of Decentralisation?**

Local government in Scotland was reorganised in 1996, creating 32 unitary authorities, including Falkirk Council. When the new councils were created, the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 said that each council should produce a Scheme of Decentralisation, to show how it would bring services and decision-making closer to local communities.

#### **What did Falkirk's first Scheme of Decentralisation say?**

Falkirk Council's Scheme, published in 1997, set out a number of ways in which the Council would aim to decentralise, bringing services and decisions closer to people:

- The Council area was divided into 6 areas, each made up of a number of electoral wards.
- In each area, an Area Forum was established, bringing local Councillors, Council managers, other public sector agencies (e.g. Central Scotland Police) and local community members together on a regular basis.
- It was proposed that Council services would be organised on the basis of the six areas, so that local managers would be responsible and accountable in each area.
- One-Stop Shops would be continued, as a way of bringing service delivery closer to local communities, although no commitment was made to expand the number of One-Stop Shops because they can be an expensive way of decentralising services.

#### **Decentralising in Our Area**

Falkirk Council provides a range of services to local individuals and communities across the Council area. We have a network of local offices, facilities and service delivery teams, as well as services that are delivered directly to your home. We will continue to ensure that we organise in a way that makes sense to our communities and also provides efficient and effective service delivery. Information on our local office network and our services can be found on the Council's web site, in libraries or by contacting our contact centre.

To deliver services that are value for money, we need to make sure that decisions about them are taken appropriately. The Council takes decisions in a range of forums e.g. Committees and also by delegating certain decisions to officers where this makes sense to do so. Information on these matters can be found in the Council's Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders.

Falkirk Council is committed to listening to local people and responding to their views. We want to ensure that our services are responsive to the needs of people in their local communities. In practice, this means:

#### *Information*

We will use a range of different means to provide people with information about our services:

- We will continue to publish Falkirk Council News, as the majority of people tell us that this is an important source of information about services.
- We will use the local press where appropriate.
- We will ensure that our website has up to date and accessible information about all our services.

- We will provide information through local facilities such as our One-Stop Shops, libraries and community centres, as appropriate.

#### *Consultation*

We will use a range of different methods to consult with people about the services we provide:

- We will send questionnaires to our Citizens Panel up to four times each year, to give us feedback on services and gain information about local priorities and issues.
- We will use online consultation methods where appropriate, to increase efficiency, but we will always consider the needs of people who do not have access to the internet.
- We will continue to consult with local communities or communities of interest in relation to particular issues and changes to services. This will include consulting with Community Councils, as well as other local community organisations.
- We will always report the results of consultations and what has changed as a result of people's views.

#### *Engagement and Empowerment*

We will work with local communities to address local issues together in a range of ways:

- We will continue to support community organisations to identify local issues and either address them directly or work together with the Council to address them.
- We will offer particular support to those community organisations with a statutory role – Community Councils, Tenants Organisations and Parent Councils.

#### *Service Delivery*

We will deliver services in various ways that are convenient, efficient, effective and customer focussed. We will do this by:

- Using new ways of providing services to local people.
- Providing information on how to access Council services using a variety of means e.g. the Council's web site, publications, contact centre etc.
- Review our local service access points to make sure they continue to deliver quality services that people want and need.
- Work with local partners to make sure that we are more effective in the ways we deliver services.