

FALKIRK COUNCIL

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 33

Standing Order 33 enables Councillors to put questions to the Leader of the Council or the relevant Portfolio Holder on matters relating to business transacted at a meeting of the Executive or the Education Executive during the preceding cycle. Written notice of the questions must be given.

The Provost will determine the order in which questions are asked and answered. In doing so, he will endeavour to ensure a fair allocation of questions among members. Where any question seeks factual information that could reasonably have been obtained from an officer in advance of the meeting, councillors will be expected to have obtained that information and the Provost will take this issue into account when determining the order in which questions will be asked.

Answers will take the form of an oral response unless they cannot conveniently be given in that form in which case a written response will be provided and circulated at the meeting. The questioner may ask one supplementary question arising directly from the answer given.

The time set aside for questions and answers will not exceed one hour unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Provost determines otherwise. Questions not answered within the hour will receive written responses within 7 days.

If the Provost is of the opinion that a question is out of order, it will not be answered.

The following questions have been set out in the order in which they appear in the relevant minute. The Provost will determine the order in which they are answered at the meeting.

QUESTION NUMBER	MINUTE REFERENCE	COMMITTEE	TITLE OF REPORT	QUESTION	QUESTION FROM
1	EX5(b)	EXECUTIVE – 7 May 2013	ZERO WASTE STRATEGY 2012-2022	To note the Council's Zero Waste Strategy for 2012-2022 and would ask when the Portfolio holder will next meet with Directors to bring forward policy initiatives to support this?	Councillor Stephen Bird

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2	EX11	EXECUTIVE – 7 May 2013	ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS OVER £350,000 IN VALUE CONTRACT FOR GAS HEATING REPLACEMENT TO COUNCIL HOUSING PROPERTIES IN THE FALKIRK AREA (VAR-7077C Phase 3)	What monitoring has been undertaken of housing department contracts? Are there any plans to review the current policy of contract monitoring?	Councillor Steven Carleschi
3	EX12	EXECUTIVE – 7 May 2013	DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS ACCEPTANCE UNDER DELEGATED POWERS OF TENDER OVER £350,000 IN VALUE FOR THE PROVISION OF A GARDEN AID SERVICE		
4	EE6	EDUCATION EXECUTIVE – 28 May 2013	NURSERY PROVISION	With an expected increase in annual provision to 600 hours for early learning and childcare for 3 and 4 year olds – What collaborative approaches does the Education Department envisage will be enhanced or developed with partner organisations?	Councillor Gordon Hughes
5	EE8	EDUCATION EXECUTIVE – 28 May 2013	OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL	In terms of the Council's policy of the implementation of GIRFEC can the portfolio holder please advise: a) if he has recently met with representatives of Skills Scotland? b) what themes were discussed?	Councillor Gordon Hughes
6	EX17	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	RENT ARREARS DUE TO SIZE CRITERIA BENEFIT	We currently have 8285 households looking for a 1 bedroom asset, of which there were 140 available for let all of last year. How does the PH propose to satisfy this huge imbalance	Councillor Brian McCabe

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				of supply & demand?	
7	EX17	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	RENT ARREARS DUE TO SIZE CRITERIA BENEFIT	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 PH advise what happens after this initial one year period?	Councillor Robert Spears
8	EX17	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	RENT ARREARS DUE TO SIZE CRITERIA BENEFIT	While welcoming the u turn on evictions by the Labour/Tory Administration I would ask the portfolio holder why he has set this policy to run for only one year?	Councillor Steven Carleschi
9	EX19	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FORTH VALLEY INTEGRATED CARERS' STRATEGY	Paragraph 4.1 makes reference to the Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment arrangements for the Forth Valley Integrated Carers Strategy. 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?	Councillor Cecil Meiklejohn
10	EX19	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FORTH VALLEY INTEGRATED CARERS' STRATEGY	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	Councillor Cecil Meiklejohn

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				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.	
11	EX20	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE: DELIVERY OF THE DENNY EASTERN ACCESS ROAD	The new SPG on DEAR delivery is flawed. Does the PH have any alternative 'vision' to put forward to Council?	Councillor Brian McCabe
12	EX20	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE: DELIVERY OF THE DENNY EASTERN ACCESS ROAD	From the Director's report, "ALL respondents were critical of the general approach adopted by the Council". Would the PH like to comment on why he is ignoring the concerns of ALL who responded?	Councillor Robert Spears
13	EX20	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE: DELIVERY OF THE DENNY EASTERN ACCESS ROAD	Does the portfolio holder agree with the officers views that the Denny Cross 'is the most problematic junction in Falkirk Council'?	Councillor Martin Oliver
14	EX22	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	INSPIRING ACTIVE LIVES – A CLUTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY FOR FALKIRK 2013-2023	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 councils single outcome agreements and the strategy will meet the councils objectives within the corporate plan	Councillor John McNally

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				including full and equal participation by all stakeholders?	
15	EX22	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	INSPIRING ACTIVE LIVES – A CULTURE AND SPORT STRATEGY FOR FALKIRK 2013-2023	When does the PH see the Policy Development Panel being up and running?	Councillor Brian McCabe
16	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/13 – PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	There are a fair number of departments who have substantial underspend in this economically challenging time. Is it the policy of this administration to actively promote underspend?	Councillor Brian McCabe
17	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/13 – PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	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?	Councillor Robert Spears
18	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/13 – PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	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?	Councillor Tom Coleman
19	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/2013- PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	Following the implementation of a buy back policy for ex council properties can the portfolio holder advise what progress has been made?	Councillor Steven Carleschi

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20	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/2013- PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	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?	Councillor Steven Carleschi
21	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/2013- PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	The fitting of aids and adaptations appears to be outwith the normal PT'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. Does the portfolio holder have any plans to rectify this?	Councillor David Alexander
22	EX23	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	FINANCIAL POSITION 2012/2013- PROVISIONAL OUTTURN	In terms of the council's Equality Policy, does the portfolio holder agree that the example below is clear breach of this policy? A new tenant who signs up for their new home on a Monday afternoon has their rental payments commence that same day, where as a new tenant signing up on a Tuesday morning gets a rent free period through to the following Monday.	Councillor Steven Carleschi
23	EX24	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	ACTUARIAL VALUATION OF THE INSURANCE FUND AND UPDATE ON MUNICIPAL MUTUAL INSURANCE	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	Councillor Tom Coleman

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				consultant's conclusions?	
24	EX27	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	SITES SURPLUS TO OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Under the council's asset management plan assets surplus to operational requirements are generally required to be placed on the market in order to be subject to negotiated sale, when did this policy change?	Councillor Tom Coleman
25	EX29	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	TAX INCREMENTAL FINANCING (TIF) INITIATIVE	Can the PH identify how much of the TIF will be spent west of the Falkirk Wheel?	Councillor Brian McCabe
26	EX29	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	TAX INCREMENTAL FINANCING (TIF) INITIATIVE	Can the PH explain the inclusion of Glenbervie within the TIF proposal?	Councillor Robert Spears
27	EX30	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE: DENNY TOWN CENTRE	Does the portfolio holder believe that the built environment should enable free movement and not discriminate against elderly, infirm and disabled?	Councillor Martin Oliver
28	EX30	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE: DENNY TOWN CENTRE	Falkirk Councils Equality Policy extends to the built environment, therefore can the Portfolio holder advise to why there have been so many barriers designed into the new look Denny Town Centre?	Councillor John McNally
29	EX32	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS £350,000 IN VALUE CONTRACT FOR NEW BUILD HOUSING AT WINDSOR ROAD, FALKIRK (FAL-6961)	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?	Councillor Colin Chalmers
30	EX34	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	CLOSURE OF AVONDALE ADVANCED WASTE TREATMENT FACILITY	To ask the Environment Portfolio holder what Policy initiatives are	Councillor Stephen Bird

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				planned to meet the likely 4% drop in recycling figures for the current year?	
31	EX35	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	SPEND-TO-SAVE PROPOSAL – INSTALLATION OF SECURITY ALARM AT MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK	Vandalism and theft from council premises cost this council substantial amounts of money each year, what proposed additional measures is the council considering undertaking with regard to this problem.	Councillor Tom Coleman
32	EX35	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	SPEND TO SAVE PROPOSAL INSTALLATION OF A NEW SECURITY SYSTEM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS.	Under the councils best value policy can the leader of the council (or Resources Portfolio holder) please advise how this can be demonstrated when the long term future of the building has still to be determined?	Councillor Tom Coleman
33	EX36	EXECUTIVE – 18 June 2013	CENTRAL DEMOLITION LTD – LAND AT HIGH BONNYBRIDGE	Prior to the removal from council ownership of the 5.285 acre recreational greenspace at Broomhill Road High Bonnybridge, what instructions were given to officers to initiate a traffic impact assessment relation to its potential intended commercial use?	Councillor Tom Coleman