

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Municipal Buildings,
Falkirk, FK1 5RS

Falkirk Council

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the above named committee to be held in the **Municipal Buildings, Falkirk on 1 September 2008 at 7:00pm.**

Rose Mary Glackin
Acting Director of Law and Administration Services

27 August 2008

BUSINESS PART 1

1. MOTION

(a) Tourism Events

Council notes with disappointment the failure of the current Labour/Tory Administration to bid for a share of the special £5m fund set up by the SNP Government and administered by Events Scotland to assist local authorities organise tourism events for the Year of the Homecoming in 2009.

Council notes that under the previous SNP/independent Administration income from Tourism rose by over 6% a year due in the main to the development of the My Future's in Falkirk economic development strategy and the ability to develop major projects such as the Helix and the MOD.

Council therefore calls for;

1.A commitment from the Administration that it will in the future seek to take advantage of opportunities that come the way of local government such as the Events Scotland fund.

2.Will bring forward to the relevant scrutiny committee a strategy paper for the maximisation of tourism potential around the national Year of the Homecoming strategy by no later than the next cycle of committee meetings.

(b) Discontinued Bus Services

In order to meet the terms of the authority's Equal Opportunities policies to say nothing of our stated goals and values Council agrees to the following.

1.To bring forward a detailed financial report committing the Council to the re-instatement of all bus services discontinued where the bus passenger criteria was not met but where the usage was greater or equal to the usage of the recently reinstated last bus to Slamannan.

(c) Office Accommodation

The Johnston Press have become synonymous with Falkirk and as such are a key employer within the town.

Council notes with disappointment the snubbing of the company at the Falkirk Stadium and believes that positive action is required to keep the company HQ in the Falkirk area.

Council also notes the shortage of modern office accommodation within the Falkirk area and therefore believes that the dithering by the current Labour/Tory/Independent coalition before finally implementing the terms of the Strategic Property Review concluded by the previous SNP/Independent Administration was a grave error of judgement.

Council also notes the delay in bringing forward details of the Henry Boot proposals for Westfield which, we believe, contains proposals for office space within the first phase as another contributing factor in the failure of the Administration to find alternative accommodation for the Johnston Press HQ.

Council therefore instructs the appropriate Community Service staff to bring forward a report to the first available Economic Development Committee outlining the steps taken to date to assist Johnston Press relocate and the options open to Falkirk Council to assist and avenues currently being investigated.

(d) Falkirk Rugby Club

Falkirk Council congratulates Falkirk Rugby Club for their achievements on and off the pitch over the past few years.

In particular Falkirk Council welcomes the club's youth development work with youngsters which often sees over 150 local kids taking part in club sessions during the week.

The Council also welcomes the recent award of £200,00 from the Sportsotland for the upgrade of existing facilities and the provision of new facilities at Sunnyside.

We view this as an opportunity to establish a mutually beneficial

partnership with the club similar to those established with Stenhousemuir and Falkirk Football Clubs.

Council therefore agrees to open up discussions between the club and authority with a view to a Council contribution to the programme and report back to the appropriate committee in due course.

(e) Gas/Electricity Disconnections

Council notes with some disquiet the content of the recently published Ofgem report. This report indicated that:

" The number of gas and electricity disconnections rose to 8,324 in 2007 from 3,270 in 2006

" The total number of customers not reconnected the same quarter almost doubled to 4,028

" The number of pre-paid meters installed under warrant rose by almost 20,000.

With energy costs rising by double digit inflation this year the situation for those suffering financial hardship will only get worse.

Council believes that these trends are unacceptable and calls on both the Westminster government to intervene to change the policy of disconnection through legislation, if required.

Council also calls on our local Westminster representatives to raise the issue with the relevant ministers with a view to the production of an action plan to assist those most vulnerable from power disconnections.

Meeting requisitioned by Councillors Alexander, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, Meiklejohn, Oliver and Thomson.

(Contact for further information – Brian Pirie Ext. 01324 506110)