

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2013 at 9.30 AM.**

**COUNCILLORS:** Allyson Black  
Baillie William Buchanan  
Charles MacDonald  
John McLuckie  
Baillie Joan Paterson  
Provost Pat Reid (Convener)

**OFFICERS:** Margaret Anderson, Director of Social Work Services  
Danny Cairney, Accountancy Services Manager  
Iain Henderson, Legal Services Manager  
Derek Kelly, Senior Committee Services Officer  
Lesley MacArthur, Corporate Policy Officer  
Des McCart, Service Manager  
Colin Moodie, Depute Chief Governance Officer  
Mary Pitcaithly, Chief Executive  
Andrew Wilson, Community Planning Manager

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Neil Brown and Jane Clark, Falkirk Community Trust

**S23. APOLOGY**

No apologies were intimated

**S24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Black declared a non financial interest in item S26 as a board member of Grangemouth CAB and indicated that she would take no part in the discussion or decision making on this item of business.

Provost Reid and Baillie Paterson declared non financial interests in item SC27 as directors of the Falkirk Community Trust but did not consider that this required them to recuse themselves from consideration of this item, having regard to the objective test in the Code of Conduct and the relevant specific exclusion contained in the code.

Provost Reid declared a non financial interest in item S28 (13) as a former director of Open Secret and indicated that he would take no part in the discussion or decision making on this item of business.

## **S25. MINUTE**

### **Decision**

**The minute of the meeting held on 12 September 2013 was approved.**

In accordance with her declaration of interest, Councillor Black left the meeting at this point.

## **S26. SCRUTINY PANEL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX FALKIRK**

Falkirk Council had, at its meeting on 26 June 2013, agreed to establish a pilot scrutiny panel to examine the role of the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) within the Falkirk Council area.

Comprising of Provost Reid; Baillie Paterson and Councillor McLuckie, the Panel, had, defined its scope as “How well do CABx work together in order to deliver consistent services across the Falkirk Council area?”

The Panel had taken evidence at public sessions and heard from Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS); the three local CABx and partner agencies.

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services summarising the scrutiny process; chronicling the evidence submitted, and, appending the Report for the Scrutiny Panel which included recommendations for the Committee to consider.

### **Decision**

**The Committee agreed the following recommendations for referral to the Executive with a view to officers working with the CABx to incorporate any actions arising from the recommendation in the Strategic Joint Action Plan:**

### **Outreach**

- **Outreach should be revised and modernised to maximise access to vulnerable groups, particularly for those who would not otherwise access the service;**
- **The CABx identify further opportunities for targeted outreach, to work alongside other service providers in the Falkirk Council area;**
- **CABx work with Council Officers to identify rooms within Council buildings across the area, which can regularly be used as interview rooms; and**
- **CABx ensure that the availability of home visits is publicised.**
- **A decision to be reached locally as to what CAB office should represent the interests of the residents of Larbert/Stenhousemuir.**

### **Working with other agencies**

- In conjunction with other agencies, consider the development of a client signposting and referral tracking system; and
- Provide the opportunity for advice providers to participate in a planning group, which will develop a strategic approach to provision of a consistent pathway of advice across the Falkirk Council area. This could include CABx, Community Advice, Department of Work and Pensions, Homelessness Welfare Advice Team.

### **Pace of Change**

- Joint Action Group continue the excellent work;
- JAG consider the use of the totality of the resource in terms of funding, staff and volunteers to ensure that best value is being achieved; and
- JAG provides Members with a follow-up report in 6 months regarding progress and any further proposed actions.

### **Communication between CABx and Community Advice Services**

- Ensure that communication between agencies is adequate and consistent; and
- Ensure that procedures across agencies in terms of referrals are clear and consistent.

### **Premises**

- Council Officers work with Falkirk CAB to consider alternative premises arrangements for the future.

Councillor Black re-entered the meeting at this stage.

## **S27. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND: FALKIRK COMMUNITY TRUST**

The Council had previously agreed that the scrutiny of those organisations which received full or part funding be undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive presenting information about the agreement between the Council and Falkirk Community Trust for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, in line with Following the Public Pound procedure.

Details were given of the organisations objective and service outcomes; performance; financial overview and policy and risk implications. The Committee also considered the Trust's performance report for 2012/13 together with its Annual Report and Financial Statement

## **Decision**

The Committee noted the progress and performance of the Trust during the period 2012/13. The Committee also requested a report on the current and planned use of Falkirk Town Hall.

### **S28. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND (FPP) – 2012/13 MONITORING REPORT**

Council had previously agreed that the scrutiny of those organisations which receive full or part funding by Falkirk Council would be undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee. The committee had agreed a reporting schedule based around the service which provides the financial support.

The committee considered a report by the Director of Social Work Services presenting individual reports on 13 organisations which receive funding from Social Work Services. Each report set out the service provided, the agreed outcomes/objectives, performance information and the financial support from Social Work Services.

In terms of the Following the Public Pound framework a monitoring officer had been appointed by the funding service to each of the external organisations.

The monitoring officers were in attendance and were invited to give an overview of the role of their organisation, its funding arrangements together with performance and risks.

Members of the committee then asked questions of the monitoring officer with regard to the performance of the organisation. Committee was invited, for each organisation to (1) approve the report and acknowledge the progress made by the organisation; (2) request further information on specific aspects of the organisation; or (3) request action with follow up at a future meeting of the Committee.

A summary of the discussion and outcome for each organisation is given below:-

- (1) Barnardo's – Cluaran**  
**Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £464,579**  
**Monitoring Officer – Matthew Davies**

The committee approved the report and acknowledged its progress in meeting Council objectives.

- (2) Barnardo's – AXIS services**  
**Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £110,952**  
**Monitoring Officer – Matthew Davies**

The committee approved the report and acknowledged its progress in meeting Council objectives.

- (3) Who Cares? Scotland**  
**Total support offered by Falkirk Council - £27,970**  
**Monitoring Officer – Jenny Kane**

- (4) Quarriers  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £86,200  
Monitoring Officer – Jenny Kane

The Committee noted the disparity in information provided by Quarriers compared with Who Cares? The Committee was satisfied with the information provided in relation to Who Cares? And that this was a useful service. Further information was required in relation to Quarriers. A further report should be provided in relation to both services given the potential for linkages between them.

- (5) Signpost  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £45,000  
Monitoring Officer – Matthew Davies

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made in meeting Council objectives.

- (6) SACRO  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £81,296  
Monitoring Officer – Matthew Davies

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made in meeting Council objectives.

- (7) CAHMS NHS Forth Valley  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £63,630  
Monitoring Officer – Morag O'Dwyer

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made in meeting Council objectives.

- (8) Independent Living Association  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £29,604  
Monitoring Officer – Margaret Petherbridge

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made in meeting Council objectives.

- (9) Princess Royal Trust for Carers  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £141,898  
Monitoring Officer – Suzanne Thomson

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made in meeting Council objectives.

- (10) WRVS  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £10,400  
Monitoring Officer – Liz McGhee

The committee approved the report and acknowledged its progress in meeting Council objectives.

- (11) **Falkirk and District Association for Mental Health**  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £177,777  
Monitoring Officer – Carole Jones (presented by Marion Reddie)

The committee approved the report and acknowledged its progress in meeting Council objectives.

- (12) **Alzheimer Scotland**  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £63,219  
Monitoring Officer – Susan Nixon

The committee approved the report and acknowledged its progress in meeting Council objectives.

In terms of his declaration of interest, Provost Reid vacated the chair and left the meeting at this stage. Baillie Paterson, assumed the chair.

- (13) **Open Secret**  
Total support provided by Falkirk Council - £149,442  
Monitoring Officer – Carole Jones (presented by Margaret Anderson)

The committee agreed that a further, more detailed report be submitted to future meeting of the Scrutiny committee.