

SE20. Following the Public Pound – Falkirk Towns Ltd and Falkirk Environment Trust

The committee considered a report by the Director of Development Services presenting updates on Falkirk Towns Ltd and Falkirk Environment Trust which fall within the Following the Public Pound reporting and monitoring arrangements.

Annual reporting statements were provided for each of the organisations.

Prior to discussion on Falkirk Towns Ltd, Councillor Nicol declared a non-financial interest as the spouse of a Grangemouth business owner, and stated that he considered that this required him to recuse himself from consideration of the item with regard to the Councillor's Code of Conduct. Councillor Nicol left the meeting at this point.

The committee asked about the provision of a handyman service to carry out small repairs. Rhona Geisler advised that the post was funded by the Falkirk Business Improvement District (BID) levy. Whereas the funding from the Council was allocated to Falkirk Towns core costs such as staffing. The handyman post responded quickly to occurrences of graffiti and similar issues. This work was a priority for BID businesses.

Members asked if there were representatives from other town centres in the district on the organisation, particularly if there was scope for more events outwith Falkirk town centre. Rhona Geisler advised that the BID company and levy payers were all drawn from Falkirk town centre by the nature of the organisation. Therefore monies raised had to be spent there. There was a joint working agreement in place for services provided in other town centres. She highlighted that there had been discussions regarding the possibility of a BID organisation being created in Bo'ness but that it would be for local businesses to take forward themselves.

The committee discussed if it was possible to condition that the funding was also used in some of the district town centres. Rhona Geisler stated that such matters had been part of previous budget discussions. Where funding was allocated without condition it was up to the company to determine how to spend. It was therefore up to Council to determine if any conditions should be attached. However, she advised that the funding was allocated for the core service delivery and to reallocate it would have an impact on the ability of the organisation to operate.

Following consideration of and decision making on the report on Falkirk Towns Ltd, Councillor Nicol re-joined the meeting.

Decision

The committee approved the reports and acknowledged progress by the following organisations in meeting Council priorities:-

- (1) Falkirk Environment Trust**
- (2) Falkirk Towns Ltd**