

## **SE8. Following the Public Pound - Poverty & Equalities**

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services providing information under the Following the Public Pound

arrangements for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 for the Council's outcome to make our area a fairer and more equal place to live.

Funding was provided to four external organisations to provide services which could not readily be provided by the Council. As part of the Following the Public Pound arrangements, reporting statements were prepared by the relevant monitoring officer for consideration by the committee.

The organisations were:-

Organisations	Monitoring Service	2018/19 Funding
LGBT Youth Scotland	Children's Services	£29,750
Falkirk CAB	Corporate and Housing Services	£168,490
G'mouth & Bo'ness CAB	Corporate and Housing Services	£98,360
Denny & Dunipace CAB	Corporate and Housing Services	£92,810
Armed Forces Project - Denny CAB	Corporate and Housing Services	£18,000

The report set out the Council's obligations in regard to equalities and its outcomes set out in the equalities outcomes statement. Similarly the report set out the four key outcomes set out in the poverty strategy 'Towards a Fairer Falkirk 2019-2024'.

The monitoring officers gave an overview of the services provided by each organisation and their respective performances since last reported.

Following an overview of LGBT Youth Scotland's Community Development Project members sought further information on the roll-out of the project beyond Falkirk and Braes High Schools. Mark Meechan explained that the roll-out was limited by capacity but it was intended that the project would be rolled out beyond these two high schools.

Following an overview of the work of the 3 Citizens Advice Bureaux, Sally Buchanan confirmed, in response to a question, that there was some overlap between the services provided by the Council's hubs and the CAB. Currently demand outstripped the services both could provide and it was positive that there was overlap because this offered choice to individuals.

Nevertheless it was intended that service provision would be reviewed. In the meantime it was not an issue, she added that a difference was that the aim of the hubs was to be proactive and to prevent by offering advice before an issue became a problem.

Members highlighted the decrease in funding since 2014/15 and asked what impact this had had on service provision. Sally Buchanan stated that one outreach had closed in this period. She added that although the Council's funding had decreased, monies had been provided by the Scottish Government and the Department for Work and Pensions to provide specialist advice. This, which welcome, would not mitigate the impact of the reduction in core funding.

### **Decision**

**The committee noted the report and acknowledged progress by the external organisation in meeting Council priorities.**