Agenda Item 8

Falkirk Council/Falkirk Community Trust Joint Working

Falkirk Council

Title: Falkirk Council/Falkirk Community Trust Joint Working

Meeting: Falkirk Council

Date: 25 September 2019

Submitted by: Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out the actions taken following the report to Council on 26 June 2019 in relation to the joint working between Falkirk Council and Falkirk Community Trust. It identifies next steps and timelines in relation to the 2020/21 budget process.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to:-
 - 1) Note the actions taken to implement the decision made by Council on 26 June 2019.
 - 2) Note the intention to report back on the outcomes of the consultation exercise to Council on 4 December 2019.
 - 3) Agree that the deadline for submission of the Falkirk Community Trust Business Plan for 2020/21 is extended to 6 January 2020.

3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2018, Council agreed that the status of Falkirk Community Trust should remain unchanged. On 5 December 2018, Council agreed a joint vision document and an interim work plan based on 5 core tasks. This had been developed by a Joint Working Group consisting of four elected members, Councillors Meiklejohn, Munro, Reid and Spears, representatives from the Trust Board and officers.
- 3.2 The primary task for the Joint Working Group in the workplan was to undertake joint medium term business planning to help develop a savings and investment plan over the next 5 years. The context for this is the fact that Council is seeking to reduce its subsidy to the Trust by £5.65m over the next four years. This is being progressed in the context of aiming to improve access to culture and sport, improve health and well-being, secure investment in strategic buildings and the need for continued community engagement.

- 3.3 On 26 June 2019 Council considered a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on the joint working activity between the Council and Falkirk Community Trust (FCT). The report proposed a range of measures aimed at sustaining and improving culture and sport provision within Falkirk, including a proposed model for improved community leisure provision within a number of secondary schools, investment in core cultural and sporting assets, an increasing community role in the management of assets and asset rationalisation. The intention of the recommendations in the report to Council was to provide a framework for the Joint Working Group to develop a five year investment and savings plan detailing the actions required to complement the Council's 5 year Business Plan and Strategic Property Review (SPR).
- 3.4 In response to this report, the decision of Council was as follows:
 - 1. Council agrees to delay any further implementation of these proposals, until full engagement and consultation takes place, with communities, stakeholders and national bodies;
 - Council recognises that some areas will be impacted adversely and the potential cumulative effect on these communities needs further exploration, and;
 - 3. Council asks the Chief Executive to bring forward a report by the end of September.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 In line with the decision taken at the June Council meeting, a community consultation on Transforming Services opened on 16 September 2019 and will remain open until 31 October 2019. The survey, enclosed with this report as Appendix 1, is available through a number of channels and is being promoted through a social media campaign and other appropriate methods.
- 4.2 The purpose of this consultation is to test the principles that the Council and partners have been working towards with regards to changing services and ultimately reviewing assets. The outputs of previous budget consultations noted that the council should consider rationalising property if that preserved services. This consultation will seek to engage communities in what that means in practice while not at this point being specific about the impact this will have on individual communities or buildings.
- 4.3 The principles outlined are those previously agreed by Members as part of the SPR. They recognise that the Council needs to deliver services differently in order to meet future needs. They also recognise that, due to poor condition of many assets the Council is unable at present to provide the quality of services from its facilities that communities deserve. The SPR as previously agreed by Members recognises that in order to improve service delivery, the Council needs to make significant investment in buildings where it makes sense to do so. This means maximising the use of buildings such as schools and reviewing where there is overprovision, underused or poor quality buildings.

- 4.4 The target audience for the consultation is those who live or work within the Falkirk Council area. It is important to understand their needs and views on the proposed delivery of services in a smaller number of better maintained buildings. Co-location of services will be fundamental to this to enable investment in the property portfolio. The aim is to understand how this can work in each community. Members of the Working Group were consulted on the survey at meetings on 13 August and 11 September 2019. A short electronic animation will accompany the online consultation and sets out the nature and extent of the challenges facing the Council and Trust in relation to the number of facilities, their condition and potential investment needs.
- 4.5 In addition to the survey, focus group sessions are planned in three areas in order to better understand the effect of applying the principles, namely Denny, Bo'ness and Grangemouth. It is also proposed to undertake a focus group session with young people to ascertain their views and insights.
- 4.6 In relation to the consultation requested by the Council in relation to other stakeholders, Trust officers have arranged an engagement event with local clubs, groups and organisations who contribute to the development and delivery of culture and sport in the area. The meeting will be held at FTH on Tuesday 8 October at 6.30pm. Every effort will be made to encourage a good attendance. Clubs will also be asked to promote awareness of the online consultation. Parents and participants will be encouraged to share their views and opinions directly through the online questionnaires.
- 4.7 At a national level the relevant national agencies such as Sport Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland and Creative Scotland as well as many national governing bodies of sport have been contacted for their views. They have until the end of October to respond. Individual follow up meetings have been offered where the body wishes to feedback more directly.
- 4.8 Following this general consultation exercise the Council will then further engage with specific communities to work through how the principles will change the way services are delivered in their area. In the first instance, this consultation will again focus on communities in Bo'ness, Grangemouth and Denny.

To achieve the above, the Council, Trust and appropriate partners will prepare a prospectus for each town that will seek to address the following:

- Identifying the current and future use of schools as community resources first and foremost
- The needs of those communities now and in the future
- Identifying properties that are underutilised, in poor condition or not used by that community
- Identifying what services need to be provided in each community e.g. older persons lunch clubs, health and well being activities, advice and support services etc.
- What is the provision of assets in the future for that community including areas for investment, disposal and other use?

The consultation in each community will seek to engage a range of people from those who use our services at the moment, those who are part of existing community groups and those who may use our buildings in the future. Engagement activity will seek to involve significant numbers of people in these exercises. The outcome of this work will be to supply a set of recommendations for consideration by the Council and its partners.

4.9 This work will be taken forward as part of the Enabled Communities workstream in the Council's Business Plan and will be supported by appropriate community engagement.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 The Trust is required to submit its annual business plan and associated documents by 15 November each year, in accordance with the Funding Agreement. This allows time for Council Officers to review the proposals, to have discussions with political groups and for the Council to consider its initial response and feedback at the December Council meeting. The Trust then has an opportunity to adjust its proposals to reflect the Council feedback and resubmit the plan for formal approval as part of the Council's budget setting process.
- 5.2 Council has given a commitment to work together with the Trust to prepare a five year investment and savings plan and this work remains ongoing. The next steps will be informed by the community consultation exercise, and in this context it is considered inappropriate to ask the Trust to submit its Business Plan 2020/21 without having due regard to the output of the initial consultation feedback. The outcomes of the first stage consultation and the proposed next steps will be reported to Council on 4 December 2019.
- 5.3 It is proposed that Council postpones its requirement of the Trust to submit its Business Plan from 15 November 2019 until 6 January 2020. This will allow additional time for the Joint Working Group to reflect on the consultation feedback, to discuss the implications and to offer initial direction and guidance to the Trust on the way ahead. The Trust would then be in a position to prepare an initial one year business plan for Council's consideration as part of the budget setting process. This would be considered by Members at the Council meeting provisionally set for 22 January 2020, allowing for final decisions as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process.
- 5.4 Beyond this, there is an urgent imperative for the joint working group to be in a position to make recommendations early in the new year that takes cognisance of the consultation feedback, strategic property perspective, investment and savings proposals from the Council and Trust and the overall financial position at the time.

6. Implications

Financial

6.1 The Trust will be limited in the savings options it will be able to bring forward without an agreed strategic framework being agreed. This will be particularly so for 2020/21 where the Budget timescale is very constrained.

It is consequently important that this is progressed to enable the Trust's target savings contribution to be timeously delivered.

Resources

6.2 Significant effort and resources will be required to progress all elements of the consultation and develop the joint five year business plan. Any additional resource requirements will be identified through the Joint Working Group.

Legal

6.3 None.

Risk

6.4 The risks associated with the backlog maintenance issues of culture and sports assets are well understood by both the Council and the Trust. Ongoing underinvestment has left buildings vulnerable to service failure and reinforces the need to take a long term and strategic approach to the delivery of culture and leisure services.

Equalities

6.5 An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) is not specifically required for this report, but such assessments will be a critical element of the detailed work to be done in planning future service provision and the approach to assets.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

6.6 At this stage, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this report, however sustainability and environmental implications will be an integral part of planning future service provision and the approach to assets.

7. Conclusion

This report sets out the actions taken since the Council report on 26 June 2019, the consultation now underway and the next steps in relation to the Trust's Business Plan for 2020/21. Following on from this, there remains an urgent need to develop the five year investment and savings plan that the Council and the Trust are committed to taking forward as part of the joint working arrangements.

Chief Executive

Author: Kenneth Lawrie Date: 16 September 2019

Appendices

• Appendix – Service Consultation Context -Transforming Service Delivery

List of Background Papers: Falkirk Council/Falkirk Community Trust Joint Working Group Files.

Service Consultation Context

Consultation

Context

In the last number of years the Council's budget has reduced. This has led to the Council seeking to make significant savings and think about what services we deliver and how we deliver them very differently. A consequence of this is:

- Funding to key partners has been and will continue to be reduced significantly. For the Council this
 means making savings of nearly £76m over the next five years. For the Falkirk Community Trust the
 Council has asked that it look to reduce the Councils commitment by £5.6m 50% of the Trusts current
 funding from the Council
- The reduction in resources will result in the Council becoming a smaller organisation with fewer employees, less buildings and different services.
- The Council and partners are seeking to change the way we deliver services to reduce expenditure but at the same time increase income. This will mean integrating services to reduce overheads including reducing the number of buildings that we currently deliver services from.

In addition to budget pressures we know that how we deliver services is sometimes not what we would want in effectiveness, the environment in which those services are delivered or in a way that makes sense to local communities, customers and citizens.

When consulting on the Councils budget, people have indicated that they would accept closure of buildings if that preserved services. This does not mean keeping all services that we deliver at the moment. It does mean that services will be delivered differently, not from the same locations or potentially to the same extent they are delivered at the moment. It may also mean some services moving on line where it is possible to do so.

The Council and Trust have recognised that we need to do things differently. We have invested in some services such as Advice Hubs, Mariner Leisure Centre and Stenhousmuir Gym – giving a better service to our customers, in a better environment and in a more joined up way. We are now consulting on continuing that work in the following ways:

- Agreeing a significant programme for investment in key buildings across the Council area to improve the quality of facilities and services
- Creating community campuses at secondary schools in the area while seeking not to duplicate services and facilities provided through specialist buildings
- Closing and disposing of facilities and buildings that are not fit for purpose i.e. where they are of poor quality, underutilised, duplicate other facilities in the area or are too expensive to invest in.
- Supporting local organisations to more be more directly engaged in the management and operation of community facing assets where it makes sense for them to do so

We are consulting the people who live and or work within Falkirk and who access the public sector buildings, to understand community needs and deliver services in a smaller number of better maintained buildings. Colocation of services will be fundamental to this to enable investment in the property portfolio and as it is in line with the direction of travel set out by Scottish Government. We want to understand how we can make this work in each community.

It is the first step to ensuring transformational coproduction of services is taken forward ensuring local people are at the heart of the design, development, and delivery of service provision across the Falkirk Council area.

Questionnaire

https://say.falkirk.gov.uk/chief-executive-office/transforming-service-delivery-consultationworking/consult_view/

Animator

https://tool.animaker.com/animo/eTNx7B8XCekE

Transforming Service Delivery

Overview

Falkirk Council and Community Trust provide a number of services, such as advice and support services, education, and sports and recreation facilities, from a range of buildings across the Falkirk Council area.

We are currently reviewing how we can deliver services differently in order to make better use of our public buildings so that we can invest in, and improve, the services and facilities we provide. This may involve moving some services, sharing properties with other public sector organisations or closing buildings so that we can invest in remaining buildings and improve these.

To make sure we make the right decisions, we need to better understand how communities are using the services and buildings we provide. This survey gives you the chance to tell us your views.

For further information on how the information you provide will be used, please read our privacy notice <http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/privacy/council-democracy/citizen-space.aspx> .

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- you have read the privacy notice
- you agree to take part

Visiting Council and Community Trust Buildings

1 How often do you visit a Council or Community Trust operated building?

Please select only one item

Daily
 Weekly
 Fortnightly
 Monthly
 Once every few months
 Once a year
 Never

2 Which Council or Community Trust operated buildings do you visit? Select all that apply.

Please select all that apply

Hub Community Centre Town/Community Hall Swimming pool	
Gym and other sporting facilities Falkirk Town Hall Social Work Office	
School/Nursery Care home Library Parks	
General office (for example, Abbotsford House or Municipal Buildings)	
Other (please specify)	
If other, please specify.	

3 What are the main reasons you visit Council and Community Trust operated buildings? Select all that apply.

Please select all that apply

Physical activity Entertainment Learning	
Attending community groups and organisations	
Payments (for example, rent, Council tax) Advice (for example, housing, r	noney)
Appointments (for example, social work) Planning & building warrants	
School or nursery Visiting family or friends Work Other	
Not applicable	

4 If you visit Council and Community Trust operated buildings, in which areas are these buildings located? Select all that apply.

Please select all that apply

Airth Avonbridge Bainsford Banknock Bo'ness Blackness
Bonnybridge Brightons California Camelon Carron
Carronshore Denny Dennyloanhead Dunipace Falkirk
Grangemouth Greenhill Haggs & Longcroft Head of Muir
High Bonnybridge Langlees Larbert Laurieston Maddiston
Polmont Redding Reddingmuirhead Rumford Shieldhill
Skinflats Slamannan Standburn Stenhousemuir Torwood
Wallacestone Westquarter Whitecross Other (please specify)
If other, please specify.

Visiting Council and Community Trust Buildings (2)

5 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would be prepared to travel further to use improved leisure and recreational facilities, such as swimming pools and gyms Please select only one item	0	\bigcirc	0	0	0
I would be prepared to travel further to attend my local community group or organisation if it was based in a building with better quality facilities <i>Please select only one</i> <i>item</i>	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	\bigcirc
The closeness of Council and Community Trust buildings to my home is more important to me that the quality of service/facilities they provide Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
I would rather access Council and Community Trust services and facilities nearer my home even if this meant their quality was poorer Please select only one item	0	0	0	0	0

6 What, if anything, would prevent you from using Council and Community Trust services and facilities outwith your local area? Select all that apply.

Please select all that apply

Reliability of public transport Frequency of public transport
Cost of public transport Cost of driving Parking cost
Parking availability I have a disability that would make it difficult
Unfamiliarity with other areas Other (please specify)
If other, please specify.

Using buildings more effectively

7 The Council and Community Trust should look at how they can make better use of its public buildings. This may involve moving some services or sharing properties with public sector organisations, closing buildings and investing in remaining buildings.

Please select only one item

Strongly agree	O Agree	O Neither agree nor disagree	O Disagree
O Strongly disagre	e		

8 Council and Community Trust services should share buildings and resources.

More Information

By sharing buildings and resources, the Council and Community Trust can make significant savings that can be used to improve the services and facilities we provide.

For example, you might:

- Access money, housing and benefits advice in the same building you pay your rent or council tax: or
- Attend fitness classes, go swimming or attend your local community group at schools;

Please select only one iter	m		
O Strongly agree	O Agree	O Neither agree nor disagree	O Disagree
O Strongly disagre	e		

9 People will receive a better service if different Council and Community Trust services share buildings and resources.

More Information

By sharing buildings and resources, the Council and Community Trust will make significant savings that can be invested into improving services, and maintaining and upgrading buildings and the facilities they provide.

Please select only one item					
Strongly agree	O Agree	O Neither agree nor disagree	O Disagree		
Strongly disagre	е				

10 More Council services, like applying for a Council house or nursery place, should be made available online.

Which services would be available online?

- Request a repair to your Council home
- Apply for a Council house
- Apply for a nursery place
- Report flytipping
- Apply for a parking permit

Please select only one item

Strongly agree	O Agree	O Neither agree nor disagree	O Disagree
O Strongly disagre	e		

Community Activity & Access

11 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Schools should be the main venues of activities for communities outside school hours <i>Please select only one</i> <i>item</i>	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
The Council and Community Trust should close buildings that are poorly used Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0
The Council and Community Trust should close buildings that are in a poor condition and too expensive to upkeep Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
The Council and the Community Trust should invest in the buildings that can be used for the biggest variety of activities (for example, schools and leisure centres) <i>Please select only one</i> <i>item</i>	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc

Print Survey - Falkirk Council - Citizen Space

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Communities should be given the opportunity to run and manage Council or Community Trust buildings that are facing closure <i>Please select only one</i> <i>item</i>	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0
If a Council or Community Trust owned building in my area was facing closure, I would be willing to volunteer with my community to manage and run the building. <i>Please select only one</i> <i>item</i>	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	0

12 In the coming years, the Council and Community Trust may be unable to afford the operation and upkeep of a range of buildings throughout the area. What should we do with these buildings? Please rank the following options from 1 to 3, with 1 being your preferred option.

	1	2	3
Sell or lease Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Transfer to the community to manage and run Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0
Transfer to a voluntary sector organisation to manage and run Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0

About You

13 Where do you live?

Please select only one item

Airth Avonbridge Bainsford Banknock Bo'ness Blackness
Bonnybridge Brightons California Camelon Carron
Carronshore ODenny ODennyloanhead ODunipace OFalkirk
Grangemouth Greenhill Haggs & Longcroft Head of Muir
High Bonnybridge Langlees Larbert Laurieston Maddiston
OPolmont ORedding OReddingmuirhead ORumford OShieldhill
Oskinflats Oslamannan Ostandburn Ostenhousemuir OTorwood
Wallacestone Westquarter Whitecross
If other, please specify.

14	What	is	your	age?
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Please select only one item
○ Under 16 ○ 16-24 ○ 25-44 ○ 45-64 ○ 65 or over
15 What is your employment status?
Please select only one item
Student C Employed / self-employed Not employed and looking for work
O Not employed and not looking for work O Apprentice/ training O Retired
Other (please specify)
If other, please specify

16 Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness, or a learning disability, which you expect to last for 12 months or more?

Please select only one item

Yes No ODon't know

17 Do you have time to answer some questions about this survey?

Please select only one item

○ Yes ○ No

Thank you for your feedback

18 How well do you feel you understood the following aspects of the survey?

	Fully Understood	Partially Understood	Didn't Understand
Purpose Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0
The questions asked Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0
How my views will be used Please select only one item	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc

19 How would you describe the length of time it took you to complete the survey?

) Too short

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Please select only one item
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\frown		\frown	
()	Too long	() Just right	(
\bigcirc	loo long		

20 Where did you hear about this survey?

Please select all that apply

Falkirk Council Website Newspape	er 🗌 Twitter 🗌 Facebook 🗌 Snapchat
Instagram Community organisation	n 🗌 Poster 🗌 Leaflet
At school or college Word of mouth	n People's Panel
Falkirk Council staff Other	

21 How much influence do you think the survey results will have over any decisions made about Council buildings?

Please select only one item		
A strong influence	O Some influence	O No influence

22 Overall, how would you rate this survey?

Please select only of	ne item			
Very good	O Good	O Average	O Poor	Very poor