

**DRAFT**

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2014 at 9.30 AM.**

**COUNCILLORS:**

Allyson Black  
Charles MacDonald.  
John McLuckie  
Baillie Joan Paterson  
Provost Pat Reid (Convener)

**OFFICERS:**

Fiona Campbell, Head of Policy, Technology and Improvement  
Iain Henderson, Legal Services Manager  
Colin Moodie, Depute Chief Governance Officer  
Antonia Sobieraj, Committee Services Officer  
Celia Sweeney, Corporate Policy Officer

**ALSO ATTENDING:**

Neil Brown, General Manager, and Jane Clark, Business Development Manager, Falkirk Community Trust

**S1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Baillie Buchanan.

**S2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Provost Reid and Baillie Paterson each declared a non financial interest in Item S4 as Directors of Falkirk Community Trust but did not consider that this required them to recuse themselves from consideration of the item, having had 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 S6 as a Director Central Scotland Regional Equality Council, in consequence of which he recused himself from consideration of the item, having regard to the objective test in the Code of Conduct.

**S3. MINUTES**

**Decision**

- (a) The minute of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 13 March 2014 was approved, with the addition within the members' comments narrative on the Police Scotland report, of concerns relating to the loss of support staff and the implications for frontline services; and

- (b) The minute of the meeting of the Performance Panel held on 20 March 2014 was noted.

**S4. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND: FALKIRK COMMUNITY TRUST PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL - DECEMBER 2013**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services on the performance of Falkirk Community Trust against key objectives covering the periods during 2013:- (1) April to June; (2) July to September, and (3) October to December.

Fiona Campbell provided a general overview of the report including the Trust's significant contribution to the attainment of the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan as undernoted:-

| Corporate Plan Goal  | Trust Outcome  |
|--|--|
| Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities | People are fitter, healthier and more active, more often                         |
| Further developing a thriving and sustainable vibrant economy                          | People benefit from lifelong learning opportunities                              |
| Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities | People are more creative and the potential for success and wellbeing is nurtured |
| Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to live and visit         | People are involved in caring for the area's heritage and environment            |

This overview was followed by Neil Brown providing further detail in relation to the individual reports. He thereafter, together with his colleague Jane Clark, answered members' questions.

During discussion on the reports, members welcomed the increased number of visits to the various cultural and sporting venues and the partnership arrangements currently being developed with other organisations. Clarification was sought on the measures in place to reverse the public's reduced use of libraries.

Neil Brown, in response, confirmed that there were various challenges ahead in relation to the public use of all the Trusts venues and facilities. The use of libraries was an area which required a concerted effort to rejuvenate them and their use. Consultation with library staff was underway and innovative projects within libraries were being developed. This included the organisation of author visits and the location of social media outlets within libraries. Callendar House had enjoyed an increase in visitors and this was assisted by the location within the House of the Park Gallery and the Tea Room. In relation to the Kinneil Museum, Heritage Lottery Funding had contributed to the refurbishment of various internal areas within the museum and to new exhibitions and projects.

Members thereafter highlighted the importance of detailing with future reports the valuable work undertaken within all arts, cultural and sports facilities throughout the Falkirk Council area. This would ensure that reports were fully reflective of the wideranging work within local areas. Members also stressed the value of developing partnership working arrangements, enhancing marketing and improving the venue and facility signage for all arts, cultural, sports and library facilities. This was necessary to ensure public use throughout the day including Falkirk Town Hall.

Neil Brown confirmed that a report on the use of Falkirk Town Hall would be submitted to a future Committee.

## **Decision**

**The Committee approved the reports and the further actions.**

### **S5. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND - REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services on the review of the scrutiny process agreed at the meeting of the Committee on 13 June 2013 (Paragraph S8 refers) and the options for scrutinising the Following the Public Pound arms-length and external organisations including voluntary and charitable organisations.

Fiona Campbell provided a general overview of the report which detailed the Council support to the organisations in their service provision, often in conjunction with other public organisations. The report confirmed the work in line with the Council's corporate priorities and the robust framework in place for providing and monitoring financial support. The annual financial support to the organisations from the Council currently totalled approximately £5.5m. This was coupled with non financial support including the provision of premises, equipment and employee time.

The report proposed that future reports would be presented by the service provided, with organisations and associated reports grouped under themes. This aimed to provide Members with further context by which to scrutinise each external organisation and its service delivery.

The Committee members confirmed the value of the reporting arrangements outlined within the report.

The Head of Policy, Technology and Improvement confirmed that a review of the scheduling arrangements would take place prior to meeting in August 2014 and at the request of members noted that the one officer from each organisation would be sufficient to attend.

## **Decision**

### **The Committee:-**

- (1) noted the reports; and**
- (2) agreed the scheduling arrangements detailed in the Appendix to the report for May and June subject to a review taking place prior to subsequent meetings.**

In accordance with his declaration of interest, Provost Reid left the Chair and the meeting and took no part in consideration of the following item of business. Councillor MacDonald assumed the role of Convener. Provost Reid did not re-enter the meeting.

## **S6. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND - UPDATE - CENTRAL SCOTLAND REGIONAL EQUALITY COUNCIL (CSREC)**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services providing an update on the Following the Public Pound report presented at the meeting of the Committee on 12 September 2013 (Paragraph S21 refers) on the operation of Central Scotland Regional Equality Council (CSREC). At that meeting it was agreed that an update report be presented within 6 months on the progress of the organisation in meeting its objectives and outcomes.

Celia Sweeney provided a general overview of the report including the funding of the organisation totalling £15,200 and associated 'in kind' support. The scrutiny of the organisation had identified it as medium risk. Its core funding acted as a catalyst for attracting external funding of £159k. The organisation had however experienced Board and staffing issues over the financial year 2012/13 resulting in concerns in relation to its leadership and governance arrangements.

The report highlighted the development of a wide range of projects up to the period 31 December 2013. The challenges facing the organisation however included:-

- The current inability to demonstrate significant partnership working with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils;
- The development of the organisation's core business;
- That effect of reduced core funding on the organisation's ability to attract and draw down new funding; and
- The recent changes to the Board and the impact on the organisation's leadership and governance arrangements.

The Committee discussed the importance of good governance arrangements, partnerships with other organisations, work within schools and anti sectarianism work organised throughout the Council area.

#### **Decision**

**The Committee noted the report and that a future report would be presented to the Committee in June.**

### **S7. CONSULATION AND ENGAGEMENT - SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services on the annual scrutiny programme agreed at the meeting of the Committee on 13 June 2013 (Paragraph S8 refers) and indicating that one of the areas for scrutiny was the adequacy of the Council's approach to consultation with the public and community engagement more generally.

#### **Decision**

**The Committee agreed that the Scrutiny Panel consist of 5 members from the Administration and Opposition on a 3:2 basis.**



**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND (FPP): ADVICE SERVICES**  
**Meeting: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**Date: 13 MAY 2014**  
**Author: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the work of the external organisations who receive funding, in whole or in part, who provide debt and money advice services, and who fall within the 'Following the Public Pound' (FPP) reporting and monitoring arrangements. The reporting period is April 2013 to March 2014. It should be noted that organisations were previously reported by Service, however in order to provide Members with a strategic context, organisations will now be reported by category as outlined to Members during April's Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 External organisations are often voluntary or charitable organisations and generally, will be able to provide a better range or quality of service, or to provide services that would not otherwise be provided. The common purpose is usually to offer a wider range of services, often in conjunction with other public organisations and to provide joined-up services.

**2. ADVICE SERVICES: IMPACTS RESULTING IN DEMAND**

- 2.1 Citizens within the Falkirk Council area are faced with a range of challenges as a result of national and local changes. One of the most significant changes is Welfare Reform.

***Welfare Reform***

- 2.2 Welfare Reform is the biggest change to the Welfare system in 60 years. The main changes to the welfare system were contained in the Welfare Reform Act 2012, with the following objectives:
- The introduction of Universal Credit to provide a simple payment that will improve incentives to work;
  - A stronger approach to reducing fraud and error with tougher penalties for the most serious offences;
  - A new 'claimant commitment' showing clearly what is expected of claimants while giving protection to those with the greatest needs;
  - Reforms to Disability Living Allowance, through the introduction of Personal Independence Payment to meet the needs of disabled people today;
  - Creating a fairer approach to Housing Benefit to bring stability to the market and improve incentives to work;

- Preventing abuse of the Social Fund system by giving greater power to local authorities;
  - Reforming Employment and Support Allowance to make the benefit fairer and to ensure help goes to those with the greatest need; and
  - Changes to support a new system of child support which puts the interest of the child first.
- 2.3 There are various estimates of the impact of these changes which vary due to differences in methodology and scope. However taking an estimate that falls in the middle of the range, a Scottish Government Report estimates that once all the changes are implemented the impact across Scotland will be a reduction of £1.6 billion per year in benefit income. The estimated impact at a Falkirk Council level is £48 million per year, or £470 per working age adult claiming benefits.
- 2.4 Across the Falkirk Council area we have 19 households currently affected by the Benefits Cap which restricts their weekly income from benefits, via a reduction in Housing Benefit. The council has engaged directly with these households to assist them with dealing with this change.
- 2.5 As of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014 over 2400 council tenant households are currently affected by size criteria. Since the introduction of size criteria restrictions in April 2013, 2460 households across the Falkirk Council area have been affected by a reduction in Housing Benefit due to size criteria. This has resulted in a total annual loss in Housing Benefit of £1.196 million, averaging at £486 per household.
- 2.6 Whilst there is limited data at the moment to confirm the extent of the impact of Welfare Reform on citizens and services, a number of possible trends have been identified as follows:
- Benefits appeals: The data available so far suggests there is likely to be an increase in the number of benefits appeals supported by Falkirk Council this year; however, more data is required to confirm this trend.
  - Visits to the Salvation Army soup kitchen have increased in the second quarter of this year, however the numbers dropped again in the third quarter. It is likely that the total number of visits to the soup kitchen will have increased this year compared to last year; however data for the final quarter of the year is required to confirm this.
  - Quarterly spend from the Scottish Welfare Fund has increased each quarter so far. It is expected that this trend will continue due to the changes to the fund and increasing awareness.
  - There has been a reduction in the number of cases of rent arrears where arrears are due to Welfare Reform. This is due in the main to Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) awards made during the third quarter that mitigated impact in a significant number of cases.



- 2.7 The Council has delivered a number of interventions to help support citizen's impacted by Welfare Reform, which include Discretionary Housing Payments and the Scottish Welfare Fund and dedicated teams providing specialist support. In addition to support provided by Falkirk Council, customers are also signposted to a range of external supports, including the organisations reported within this report.
- 2.8 Since January 2013 people in receipt of working age benefits who are unemployed, are asked to comply with a range of job seeking activities by DWP. Failure to comply with the above can lead to sanctions being applied, which result in people losing benefits from four to 156 weeks (3 years). The length of sanction depends on the reason for the individual failing to comply with their claimant responsibility.
- 2.9 Between October 2012 and June 2013, 1880 sanctions were applied across the Falkirk Council area. It is estimated that approximately 1090 of these were likely to be low level, 600 intermediate level, and 190 high level.
- 2.10 Scottish Government research suggests that those who are particularly vulnerable to sanctions are also the most disadvantaged. This includes people that lack work experience or who face practical barriers to work, such as not having access to a car. Those with health problems, including mental health difficulties, are also vulnerable to sanction. Young people receive a higher proportion of sanctions compared to older age groups. Some evidence suggests that men are more likely than women to be sanctioned. Research shows that women who have experienced domestic abuse are also disproportionately more likely to receive sanctions.

### **3. ADVICE SERVICES: FALKIRK'S STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The challenge posed by Welfare Reform is significant, as people will need help to manage changes in benefit. This is part of the wider context which will impact on the demand for advice services. This includes, for example, the current economic climate's impacts on employment, impacts of domestic abuse and deterioration of health. Falkirk Council and Community Planning Partners have given a commitment to delivering services that support the most vulnerable individual across the area. The Single Outcome Agreement and Towards a Fairer Falkirk set out principles, key themes and groups; Advice services are highlighted as critical in terms of crisis intervention, early intervention and prevention.

#### ***Single Outcome Agreement***

- 3.2 The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) describes how the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership will progress whilst facing many critical challenges and competing demands. The SOA complements the Strategic Community Plan 2010 – 2015 and sets out the following key principles:
- Focus our key activity on tackling the most significant inequalities in our area and providing everyone with hope and opportunity;
  - Take action where appropriate that cross organisational and structural boundaries in order to recognise that many of the challenges and inequalities we face are inter connected.

- Pursue a preventative and early intervention approach which we know will be more effective at tackling the root causes of inequality;
  - Ensure that we deploy our collective effort and resources in securing local outcomes;
  - Be both transparent and accountable to local people and communities, giving them a say and a meaningful role and contribution in realising our vision; and
  - Be both innovative and creative in the solutions we develop and the way in which we change services to meet the demands of the modern world.
- 3.3 In order to realise our desired outcomes we have focused our attention and activity on tackling the area's greatest challenges i.e.
- Economic recovery, growth and employment;
  - Early years and children;
  - Safer, Stronger Communities and reducing re-offending;
  - Health outcomes and Physical Activity;
  - Older people; and
  - Poverty and welfare reform.

### ***Towards a Fairer Falkirk***

- 3.4 The Poverty Strategy 'Towards a Fairer Falkirk' was approved by Members in March 2011. There are two main strands of the Poverty Strategy: Financial Security and Well being, and Employability. Other areas of work covered by the Poverty Strategy are Charging and Concessions, the Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment process, the Living Wage and Welfare Reform.
- 3.5 The Poverty Strategy notes that we see being fair as meaning that:
- Some services will be targeted to ensure that the most disadvantaged in our communities have the same opportunity to reach their full potential;
  - Our employees understand the barriers that poverty imposes on individuals and on communities and will work to identify and reduce discrimination and disadvantage;
  - We understand the impact of our decisions on budgets, policies, and activities to improve the lives of our most vulnerable and specifically those in poverty; and
  - Communities and individuals are enabled to participate as equals in society.
- 3.6 Poverty impacts on people's lives. Some of the impacts of poverty on peoples lives are that they can:
- become isolated from family and friends;
  - lack hope and feel powerless - having little control over the decisions that affect their day to day life;
  - lack information about the support and services available to them;
  - have problems in getting their basic needs met and accessing decent housing, health services and schools and life long learning opportunities;

- live in an unsafe neighbourhood with high levels of crime and violence and poor environmental conditions or in a remote and isolated rural area;
- go without basic necessities because they may not be able to afford essentials like heat and electricity or to buy healthy food or new clothing or to use public transport;
- be unable to afford to buy medicines or visit the dentist;
- live from day to day with no savings or financial reserves for times of crisis such as repairing cookers, washing machines;
- are exploited and forced into illegal situations;
- experience discrimination; and are unable to participate in normal social and recreational life such as going to the cinema or sports events or visiting friends and family.

3.7 Research also shows that people who experience poverty are more likely to experience relationship or family breakdown. People who are better off can pay to get the help and advice they need from specialist providers. People who are on low incomes, do not have this options and need access to free and immediate advice services. It is important for our communities that the Council continue to provide a range of advice services so that people can get help and support they need, not only for welfare benefits but also in relation to employment, education, training, consumer advice, health services, housing, and when relationships or families break down.

3.8 Through the Fairer Falkirk Fund we provide additional resources to help support a number of organisations to provide the advice people need. The service provided by the three local CABx for the financial year 2013-14 resulted in £14,030,372 worth of debt being consolidated through a range of strategies including pro-rata reduced offers, token payments, Debt Payment Plans, write off, etc. All strategies reduce the amount of money going to finance the debt allowing the families more income to live from.

#### 4. OVERVIEW OF FUNDED ORGANISATIONS: ADVICE SERVICES

4.1 The table below shows the 5 External organisations that received Council support during 2013/2014, either via 'in kind' support or by direct financial support.

| App. | Organisation                                 | Funding Purpose                   | Total Support Received 13/14 |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1    | Macmillan Money Advice                       | Forth Valley Money Advice Project | £50,000                      |
| 2    | Falkirk Credit Union                         | Project                           | £56,000                      |
| 3    | Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureau               | Core                              | £196,321                     |
| 3    | Grangemouth & Bo'ness Citizens Advice Bureau | Core                              | £129,612                     |
| 3    | Denny & Dunipace Citizens Advice Bureau      | Core                              | £122,463                     |
| 4    | Denny & Dunipace CAB on behalf of CABx       | Veterans Support                  | £20,000                      |
|      | <b>Total Funding</b>                         |                                   | <b>£533,396</b>              |

## **5. ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANISATIONS PERFORMANCE**

- 5.1 An individual report is attached for all of the External organisations shown above. Each report provides an overview of the service provided, the agreed objectives or outcomes, performance information during the reporting period and a financial overview. It should be noted that audited accounts for 2013/2014 have not yet been prepared for any of the organisations.
- 5.2 As part of the support allocation assessment process, External organisations are allocated a risk rating based on governance arrangements, financial management and past performance. The ratings are low, medium or high and provide Monitoring Officers with an indication of the minimum level of monitoring and support which should be established. External organisations deemed as low risk, are monitored at least annually, medium risk external organisations should be monitored at least quarterly and high risk, at least monthly. Monitoring is recommended to take the form of regular reports, which measure performance against outcomes and/or objectives and provide financial monitoring information. Monitoring Officers are also required to hold meetings with the external organisation throughout the year.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 As set out within the report to this Committee on 13 June 2013, 'Following the Public Pound: Scrutiny Committee Role and Reporting Schedule', Members are invited to consider each organisation's report and select from the following options for each external organisation:
- A. Approve report and acknowledge progress by the external organisation in meeting Council priorities;
  - B. Request further information on specific aspects of the service provided; or
  - C. Request action with follow-up for subsequent Scrutiny Committee consideration.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Members are asked to:**

- 7.1 **Consider individual reports for external organisations and select an option from those presented in 6.1.**

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**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

Date: 7 April 2014  
Ref: ABC070414LM – FFP  
Contact Name: Fiona Campbell

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Falkirk 01324 506004 and ask for Fiona Campbell.



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| <p align="center"><b>FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE &amp; NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b><br/> <b>FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT</b><br/> <b>2013/14</b></p> |
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|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Organisation Name    | Partnership between Stirling, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire Councils, NHS Forth Valley and Macmillan Cancer Support. |
| Project              | Forth Valley Macmillan Money Matters Project   |
| Agreement Dates      | 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014  |
| Name of Lead Officer | Linda Scott  |

## **A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS**

### Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

To offer easily accessible information and advice on money matters and financial wellbeing to cancer patients, their carers and families living in the Forth Valley area and to increase income available to these client groups.

### List of Agreed Outcomes

Increase the income of cancer sufferers and their families living in the Forth Valley area by providing debt management and benefit advice. This enhances the lives of those affected by ensuring that their financial wellbeing is secured at a time of a diagnosis of cancer and that individuals remain financially included.

### Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

The project advisors understand the experiences and needs of cancer patients and their families and are trained to give expert advice to people experiencing these difficult circumstances and can ensure that the person has easy access to other Macmillan services. The project also has direct links with health professionals, which means they get referred at the point of diagnosis and are seen quickly. The project receives referrals for specialist advice to cancer sufferers and their families from Falkirk Council's Advice Service. The local CABx make referrals on occasion to the project but will normally deal with applicants themselves, normally because they have established a relationship previously with the individual or because they are also offering a range of other advice services to the individual so it is preferable that the CAB advisor deals with all aspects, including, where relevant making grant applications to Macmillan on behalf of clients.

## **B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES**

### Summary of Key Achievements

For the financial year 2012-2013, the project helped support 1495 of cancer patients / their families living in the Forth Valley area. The project was successful in generating additional income of £3,268,306 for these clients.

In the Falkirk Council area, 748 of clients were assisted and £1,843,116 of additional income secured.

We are awaiting the final outcome figures for the last quarter of 2013/14 but for the period 1.4.13 to 31.12.13, the project helped support 346 individuals and generated £634,625 of additional income for these people.

### Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

The project is managed by Stirling Council. The council began a significant change at the outset of 2013/14. During quarter 1, there was a major organisational restructure resulting in voluntary severance application and a high staff turnover, including the loss of experienced team members along with an officer move. There was a reduced capacity within the team to manage the cases and there was a downturn in the number of client referrals during this period from 268 to 219. All of this affected the performance of the project, particularly during quarter two of 2013/14. A new Manager with overall responsibility for advice services at Stirling, took up his position in October 2013 and the service is now almost back to running as normal. Members of the Project anticipate the performance for quarter four will improve significantly.

### How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities

The project has contributed to the following Council's Poverty Action Outcome of providing support to some of our most vulnerable citizens and improving their financial security by maximising the income of those households and improving benefit uptake and debt management.

This project enhances the lives of its service users by ensuring that their financial wellbeing is secured at a time of a diagnosis of cancer. By ensuring that individuals remain financially included, the project's intervention ensures that benefit income continues to be claimed from central government and utilised within local communities.

### List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance

See text under "Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation" above.

### How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer

Six monthly.

## **C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

### Total Support Provided (Financial & In- Kind Contributions)

£50,000 from Falkirk Council

The project also received £32,000 NHS Forth Valley and £100,000 from Stirling, which includes management support and funding in kind (office space, HR support, IT support, equipment, pool car vehicles). MacMillan provided support, training and guidance for the team and access to the other Macmillan cancer support services. Clackmannanshire Council did not provide funding for 2013-14 but have agreed to provide £16,000 of funding for 2014-15, giving a total funding package amount of £198,000.

The pattern of work activity for the year was an approximate 50/30/20% split across Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire respectively.



|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <u>Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts</u>  |                |
| n/a – finances are managed by Stirling Council  |                |
| <u>Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by Organisation</u>  |                |
| No known risks at present.  |                |
| <u>Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)</u>  |                |
| Low   |                |
| <b>D CONCLUSIONS</b>  |                |
| <u>Summary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year</u>   |                |
| The project has ensured that the needs of citizens are met and all targeted outcomes have been achieved. A funding commitment from all partners involved has been made for 2014/15 to ensure the successful ongoing delivery of this project. |                |
| <b>E COMPLETED BY</b>   |                |
| <u>Name</u>   | Linda Scott    |
| <u>Designation</u>  | Policy Officer |
| <u>Date</u>   | 10 April 2013  |



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| <p align="center"><b>FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE &amp; NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES<br/>FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT<br/>2013/14</b></p> |
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|                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Organisation Name    | Falkirk and District Credit Union |
| Project              | n/a                               |
| Agreement Dates      | 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014     |
| Name of Lead Officer | Linda Scott                       |

## **A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS**

### Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

Falkirk and District Credit Union's (FDCU) is the largest in the Falkirk Council area. Its main aims are to promote savings and offer reasonable credit to its members and to help members to manage their money.

### List of Agreed Outcomes

Increase the number of credit union members.  
Increase the number of collection points in the Falkirk Council area.  
Increase the number of loan agreements taken out by members.

### Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

It is not within the Council's statutory remit to provide the products and services offered by credit unions.

## **B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES**

### Summary of Key Achievements

FDCU adult membership numbers has increased by 426 junior savers by 104 in the last financial year. The total amount of loans granted has increased by approximately 100% for the same period. All collection points were maintained during 2013-14 and four new collection points are planned for 2014-15.

We provided funding to FDCU for a new IT system, which will be live in the first quarter of 2014. This will offer on-line banking and budgeting services for the first time. FDCU is also updating its loan policy to make it easier to apply and more accessible to members.

### Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

FDCU is run largely by a board of voluntary members assisted by one part-time admin officer. Fairer Falkirk funding for the year provided an additional part-time admin officer along with a proportion of our Financial Inclusion Development Officer resource. The organisation would struggle to cope with the needs of the business without these additional resources. It would also have been unable to update its ICT system to provide access to the types of products and services that members of the public now seek. The organisation needs to continue to grow and we will continue to work closely with it over the coming year to develop a sustainable business plan and growth strategy.

### How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities

FDCU contributes to the Council's poverty outcomes in the area of financial security by:

- Ensuring our citizens have increased choices when it comes to financial products and services;
- Increasing people's understanding of the consequences of the choices they make with regards to their finances;
- Maximising the income of households that rely on benefits; and
- Reducing levels of personal debt.

### List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance

n/a

### How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer

Our staff work very closely with FDCU on a weekly basis and attend most monthly Board meetings. Formal review meetings are held on a six monthly basis.

## **C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

### Total Support Provided (Financial & In- Kind Contributions)

£56,147 from Falkirk Council (£45,000 of this was for the purchase of the new ICT system referred to above).

The credit union received income from loans to members, membership fees and donations but did not receive any other funding for 2013-14 year. It applied for Big Lottery funding for the ICT system but was unsuccessful due to the large volume of applications.

### Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts

Year ending 30 September 2013.

Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by Organisation

The organisation is largely dependent on continued funding and involvement from its voluntary board members and other volunteers.

Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)

Medium. Quarterly monitoring arrangements in place including information on performance outcomes and financial statements.

**D CONCLUSIONS**

Summary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year

The funding provided to FDCU has ensured that the needs of citizens are met and all targeted outcomes have been achieved.

**E COMPLETED BY**

Name

Linda Scott

Designation

Policy Officer

Date

25 April 2014



**FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT  
2013/2014**

|                      |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Organisation Name    | Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureaux |
| Project              | Core Funding                    |
| Agreement Dates      | 1 April 2013 - 31 March 2014    |
| Name of Lead Officer | Lesley MacArthur                |

## **A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS**

### Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

The Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) are the largest independent voluntary sector providers of information and advice services in the Falkirk Council area. The CABx have a strong ethos to provide advice which is free of charge, confidential, impartial and independent. The information and advice is generalist but, in some areas such as debt advice, a specialist service is also provided. Advice provided includes welfare benefits (43%), money and debt advice (28%), employment (7%), housing (4%), Legal (4%), Relationships (3%), Financial Products (3%), utilities and communication (2%), and consumer issues (2%)

The CABx in the Falkirk Council area run as three independent bodies, each with their own Board of Management. The CABx collectively, have a staff resource of around 20, employed on a full and part time basis. The main focus for staff is to manage the service, provide specialist and complex advice and also to recruit, train and support volunteers. The CABx also work with between 60 - 80 volunteers at any given time.

Although there are 3 independent bureau with separate management committees and structures, the organisations work closely together on a range of issues for example volunteer recruitment, funding, marketing. Joint working is managed via a Joint Action Group, which has an appointed Chair and is attended by the Managers of each bureau, a member of each bureau board, CAS Advisor and Council Officer, as required. A Joint Strategic Plan has been developed (recently updated to 2014-2017) and incorporates the actions following recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel process undertaken in 2013.

It should be noted that although the CABx receive funds from Corporate & Neighbourhood and Social Work Services, the funds are used collectively by each bureau to achieve outcomes. Additional funds for the ASAP project are reported separately.

### List of Agreed Outcomes

Although the Bureaux receive a number of strands of funding from the Council, they currently operate to a single key outcome, which is:

Every Citizen in the Falkirk Council area will have access to advice services which are adaptable to suit national reform and local interpretation, and ensures that no individual 'falls through the gaps'.

The single key outcome relates directly to the Falkirk Council Poverty Strategy, Towards a Fairer Falkirk. We expect the bureaux to consider the target groups and areas identified in the strategy and all the work that they do.

In achieving the overarching outcome, the CABx provide:

- A wide range of general and specialist advice is available from appropriately trained and qualified staff and volunteers.
- Outreach and community based services and activities are established and delivered in line with emerging need.

#### Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

The CABx provide a wide range of generalist and specialist services over and above the scope of current Council provision. In addition, the CABx offer individuals with choice by providing a means of advice which is independent from Council services, which is where for example, the housing or debt problem may be.

### **B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES**

#### Summary of Key Achievements

| <u>CLIENTS – April 13- Mar 14</u>   | Denny & Dunipace |              | Falkirk             |              | Grangemouth & Bo’ness |              |                     |
|---|------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------|
|   | 3080             |              | 5305                |              | 4659                  |              |                     |
|   | 848              |              | N/A                 |              | 995                   |              |                     |
|   | 13111            |              | 17037               |              | 12681                 |              |                     |
|   | 942              |              | N/A                 |              | 989                   |              |                     |
|   | 606              |              | 2113                |              | 1143                  |              |                     |
|   | 2097             |              | 3599                |              | 2468                  |              |                     |
| <u>CLIENT GAINS– April 13- Mar 14</u>   |                  |              |                     |              |                       |              |                     |
| Bureau – Benefit gains  |                  | £751,334.21  |                     | £925,408     |                       | £1,813,047   |                     |
| Bureau – other gains  |                  | £169,562.04  |                     | £163,715     |                       | £87,316      |                     |
| Bankruptcy/Trust Deeds  |                  | £298,357.26  |                     | £1,338,652   |                       | £292,374     |                     |
| Number of Bankruptcy/Trust Deed   |                  | 9            |                     | 57           |                       | 13           |                     |
| <u>WELFARE BENEFITS April 13- Mar 14</u>  |                  |              |                     |              |                       |              |                     |
| Welfare Benefit Appointments  |                  | 136          |                     | 337          |                       | 212          |                     |
| Home Visits   |                  | 7            |                     | 35           |                       | 6            |                     |
| Benefit Checks  |                  | 244          |                     | 420          |                       | 557          |                     |
| Mandatory Reconsiderations  |                  | 0            |                     | 10           |                       | 26           |                     |
| Appeals Representation  |                  | 2            |                     | 12           |                       | 120          |                     |
| Won   |                  | 1            |                     | 7            |                       | 71           |                     |
| Lost  |                  | 1            |                     | 4            |                       | 49           |                     |
| Adjourned during tribunal   |                  |              |                     | 1            |                       |              |                     |
| <u>Number of Hours Outreach Sessions and New Contacts (Jan – March 14 only)</u> |                  | <u>Hours</u> | <u>New Contacts</u> | <u>Hours</u> | <u>New Contacts</u>   | <u>Hours</u> | <u>New Contacts</u> |
|   |                  | 152          | 44                  | 220          | 98                    | 331          | 364                 |
| <u>Referrals (Jan – March 14 only)</u>  |                  |              |                     |              |                       |              |                     |
| To External Agencies  |                  | 3            |                     | 48           |                       | 103          |                     |
| Confirmed Take-ups  |                  | 3            |                     | 42           |                       | 48           |                     |
| To Food Bank  |                  | 30           |                     | 36           |                       | 56           |                     |
| Confirmed Take-ups  |                  | 30           |                     | 36           |                       | 56           |                     |



|  |    |    |    |
|--|----|----|----|
| <b><u>VOLUNTEERS– April 13- Mar 14</u></b> |    |    |    |
| No. of New Volunteers                      | 8  | 2  | 13 |
| No. Active Volunteers                      | 27 | 24 | 15 |
| No. of Volunteers commencing training      | 7  | 0  | 13 |
| No. of Volunteers completing training      | 2  | 8  | 5  |
| No. of Volunteers leaving                  | 9  | 11 | 9  |

#### Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

Partly due to the extensive training provided, the CABx face an ongoing issue of high turnover of volunteers. Many volunteers make use of the opportunity of gaining the training and experience as a stepping stone into employment, which is a positive outcome for the volunteer, but a challenge for the CABx. The demand on volunteers has also increased due to the increasing complexity in cases.

#### How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities

The services provided by the CABx are directly in line with the Single Outcome Agreement and Towards a Fairer Falkirk. The CABx service is available to all citizens within the Falkirk Council area, however the bureaux target vulnerable groups via outreach services and working in partnership with other specialist service providers, for example Women's Aid, Signpost Forth Valley, Homestart Denny, Forth Valley acute hospital and Council services including CLD and Community Advice. Service is provided for those in crisis, however a considerable amount of work is now in place to support prevention and early intervention, for example provision of advice on financial capability and working with CLD regarding literacy and numeracy skills.

An additional aspect of working with other agencies includes supporting clients to CABx access the Falkirk Foodbank. Most of the referral made have resulted from a problem with benefits. It could be a delay in processing a new claim, a failure to make benefit payments on the due date or because a sanction has been applied. When clients present to the CABx they often have no food at all. Clients are given up to 3 day food parcel by Falkirk Foodbank. The CABx then deal with the benefit problem, which may be applying for a short term benefit advance if there is a delay in processing a new claim, or investigating why a payment has not been received on the due date, or applying for a hardship payment if a benefit has been sanctioned.

The CABx are currently participating a joint project with Falkirk Council's Advice Service to form Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits Advice Support Unit (FAWBASU) and also a project supporting people with mental health issues accessing Caledonia Clubhouse and Falkirk and District Association for Mental Health. Both of these project support vulnerable groups identified within the Towards a Fairer Falkirk strategy and add value to current provision within the area, mitigating the impacts of welfare reform.

#### List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance

There have been no areas of shortfall in performance. It should however be noted that the bureaux ability to deal with the high demand on the service, coupled with the complex nature of cases is an ongoing challenge. Client contact numbers have slightly reduced as a result of the time taken to support individual cases.

How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer

The CABx provide quarterly monitoring returns. In addition the monitoring officer attend Board meetings, when possible and is a members of the Joint Action group which meets quarterly. There is also regular ah-hoc communication between the CABx and other Council Officers.

**C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**Total Support Provided (Financial & In- Kind Contributions)

In 2013/2014, financial support provided to the CABx from Falkirk Council was £457,396 and in-kind support was £11,000. This comprises:

| <b>CAB</b>                            | <b>Denny &amp; Dunipace</b> | <b>Falkirk</b>       | <b>Grangemouth &amp; Bo'ness</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Core                                  | £62,097                     | £105,213             | £68,246                          |
| Income Maximisation                   | £9,624                      | £9,624               | £9,624                           |
| Fairer Falkirk Fund                   | £40,742                     | £81,484              | £40,742                          |
| ASAP – Falkirk                        | £20,000                     |                      |                                  |
| Maintenance – Building                | £10,000                     |                      |                                  |
| Peppercorn rent                       |                             |                      | £11,000                          |
| <b>Total Council</b>                  | <b>£142,463</b>             | <b>£196,321</b>      | <b>£129,612</b>                  |
| <b>Other sources of funding 13/14</b> |                             |                      |                                  |
| CAS                                   | £14,673                     | £10,974              | £14,147                          |
| Lottery                               |                             | £190,000 (area wide) | £25,185                          |
| Charitable Trusts                     | £16,500                     |                      | £4,848                           |
| Patient Advice Support Service        | £3,500                      | £4,500               | £2,500                           |
| Public Donations                      |                             |                      | £1,000                           |
| <b>Total other</b>                    | <b>£177,136</b>             | <b>£401,795</b>      | <b>£177,292</b>                  |

Proportion of Falkirk Council Funding against total income was 62%.

Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts

Audited accounts for 2013/2014 have not yet been prepared. The most recent audited accounts submitted are 2012/2013.

Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by OrganisationOperational risk/challenges

- Increased demand on the service especially in dealing with complex cases, in particular Welfare, debt, housing and employment issues and changes to Bankruptcy Legislation
- Ongoing training and support for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure effective referral systems are in place between local agencies.

- Falkirk CAB are working towards moving premises. This will be an expense to the bureau, which will require careful management. There may also be a challenge in service continuity during the transition period. Based on current plans, the new premises will be refurbished by December 2014. This is subject to securing additional funding and support to take the project forward.

#### Financial risk/challenges

- Secure external sources of funding to augment core provision. Applications are made jointly and by individual bureau. An issue regarding sustainability and continuity of service can arise, for example, Support and Connect funded project which funds additional resource to support people through the benefit appeal process is due to end on March 2015.
- Maintaining core service with standstill budget has resulted in bureaux having to make use of an element of reserves. There is an element of risk to this strategy as it is difficult to re-build reserves to an acceptable level.
- Grangemouth and Bo'ness Bureau received an additional on-off payment of £35,000 in 2012/2013 to support service delivery during 2013/2014. Payment was approved by Members and was allocated as to the bureau had maintained existing service level at the end of a short term period of funding by making use of reserves. The bureau has worked effectively to ensure that they will be able to deliver service at existing levels during 2014/2015.

#### Structural

- The CABx continue to operate as 3 independent organisations. The ongoing work of the Joint Action Group ensures that a consistent service is provided across the Falkirk Council area and efficiencies are achieved by joint initiatives regarding joint marketing and campaigning, recruitment and training of volunteers, sourcing external funds.

#### Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)

Medium

## **D CONCLUSIONS**

#### Summary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year

Despite the challenges of increasing demand on service, the CABx have worked consistently well during 2013/2014. The CABx willingly participated in a Scrutiny Panel which reviewed ***'How well do Citizens Advice Bureaux work together in order to deliver consistent services across the Falkirk Council area?'***. The recommendations made as a result of the panel have been developed into actions which the bureaux are progressing. The CABx have developed strong partnership links with Council services and other local service providers, which has enhanced overall provision across the area.

| E COMPLETED BY     |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Name</u>        | Lesley MacArthur         |
| <u>Designation</u> | Corporate Policy Officer |
| <u>Date</u>        | 09/04/14                 |

|   |
|---|
| <p align="center"><b>FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES<br/>FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT<br/>2013/14</b></p> |
|---|

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Organisation Name    | Falkirk Armed Services Advice Project – Denny CAB |
| Project              | Falkirk Armed Services Advice Project             |
| Agreement Dates      | 1 March 2013 – 31 March 2014                      |
| Name of Lead Officer | Caird Forsyth                                     |

## **A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS**

### Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

- Appoint Armed Services Advice Project, Project Officer
- Market availability of the service to services/organisations and community
- Raise awareness amongst generic CAB advisers about particular needs of armed services/veterans community
- Build relationship with local veteran support services

### List of Agreed Outcomes

- Appointment of Armed Services Advice Project, Project Officer
- Preparation of marketing material
- Contact services in Falkirk Council area and advise of project and confirm referral process
- Promotion of project – giving presentations / providing information stands as required in the Falkirk Council area
- Meet with clients referred / self referred providing advice / assistance as required

### Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

Provides bespoke advice service for veterans resident in the Falkirk Council area assisting them to access services provided by the council or charitable services provided by veterans charities who operate throughout Scotland. The project is staffed by ex forces personnel and is part of a network that operates throughout Scotland. Those presenting to the service often have complex needs relating to their service within the forces which the adviser can relate to. The service is viewed by clients as understanding their particular needs.

## **B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES**

### Summary of Key Achievements

- Ongoing marketing activities of the service across the Falkirk Council area
- Accepting referral and self referral of / from veterans seeking help who are resident in the Falkirk Council area.

- Providing a range of advice to 180 veterans between 01/04/2013 and 31/03/2014. The top issues cited are benefits, debt and employment, however clients also present with a wider range of issues, including, housing, legal, education, relationship, war disability pension and AFPS 75 Pension/AFPS 05 Compensation Scheme.

An example of the type of support provided is outlined below:

#### Case Outline

Client is an army veteran. After a severe injury and numerous operations to both his knees the client retired with a 60% War Disability Pension. Client was also awarded DLA High Rate Mobility and Low Rate Care. Client applied for ESA in Sep 2012 but was only awarded 6 points for his mental health issues and had been found not to have a limited capability for work. Client had a long running dispute with the DWP over their decision not to award him ESA which had left him exhausted and worn out. The Client had managed to bring his case to an Appeal Tribunal and was now anxious that he would not be able to get a positive outcome at the tribunal hearing. The client and his family were currently living with a family member, the client was in debt to extended family members.

#### Assistance Given

When the client contacted ASAP he was in poor physical and mental health and felt (in his words) that no one was listening to him. The ASAP Support Officer was able to reassure the client and offer support through the mental health organisation "Breathing Spaces". The ASAP Support Officer arranged to represent the client at the ESA Appeal Tribunal and worked with him to prepare and build his case for the appeal hearing.

#### Positive outcomes

ASAP Support Officer represented the Client at the ESA Tribunal and won the appeal. The Client was placed in the Support Group and awarded £2000 ESA Back payments. The client is now being assisted to re-apply for ESA.

The ASAP Support Officer organised a visit to the Client from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency to review and try and increase his current War Pension Status. If successful this will increase the client's income and remove his dependency on Employment Support Allowance completely.

Although still in a great deal of physical pain the client's mental health is in a better state and he now feels that he is supported and being listened to. With the ESA back payments he was able to clear his debt to his family members.

Once the client Benefit situation is stabilised he will be in a position to look for a rental property for him and his family. The ASAP Support Officer continues to work with the client and coordinate the help from the various organisations assisting the Client.

#### Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

Service not previously available within the communities of Falkirk and provision has allowed access to a client group who may previously have travelled for advice or attempted to deal with problems on their own and possibly not reaching conclusion. Service needs to continually market availability and extend availability of the service by raising awareness of issues for veterans with generic CAB workers.

|   |
|---|
| <p><u>How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities</u></p> <p>SOA – Health Inequalities and Physical Activity – Reduced health inequalities and equitable access to health care and support</p> <p>Falkirk Councils commitment to Armed Services Community Covenant – provision of help for veterans within our community experiencing difficulty with a range of issues including Health, Debt and Housing.</p> |
| <p><u>List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance</u></p> <p>None found / recorded</p>   |
| <p><u>How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer</u></p> <p>ASAP Project Officer and Manager of Denny CAB attend quarterly meetings of Falkirk Armed Services Community Covenant Group and with the Lead Officer and Falkirk Council Veterans Champion (Depute Provost Cllr John Patrick) on a quarterly basis.</p>   |
| <p><b>C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW</b></p>  |
| <p><u>Total Support Provided (Financial &amp; In- Kind Contributions)</u></p> <p>£20,000 from Falkirk Council</p> <p>£7,730 From CABx</p> <p>Project also has access to national support (Training, Conferences/Seminars and Peer Group Meetings) that is provided for ASAP by Poppy Scotland.</p>  |
| <p><u>Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts</u></p> <p>The audited accounts for the period 2013/2014 have not been developed.</p>   |
| <p><u>Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by Organisation</u></p> <p>Continuation of the service dependant on funding with the challenge of ensuring that generic advisers are trained/briefed</p>  |
| <p><u>Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)</u></p> <p>Medium</p>   |

| <b>D CONCLUSIONS</b>   |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <u>Summary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year</u><br><p>Since January 2013 the advisor employed by CAB for ASAP has engaged with the client group using his particular services background to advantage and success for clients. As knowledge of the service spreads through the community, the demand on the service has increased.</p> |                                 |
| <b>E COMPLETED BY</b>  |                                 |
| <u>Name</u>  | Caird Forsyth                   |
| <u>Designation</u>   | Policy Officer Substance Misuse |
| <u>Date</u>  | 07 April 2014                   |



**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX: SCRUTINY PANEL FOLLOW-UP**  
**Meeting: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**Date: 13 MAY 2014**  
**Author: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 A report was presented to Scrutiny Committee on 10 October 2013, providing Members with information about process, evidence and recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Panel focusing on Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx), which considered ***'How well do Citizens Advice Bureaux work together in order to deliver consistent services across the Falkirk Council area?'***
- 1.2 Following Scrutiny Committee referral of the report to the Executive in November 2013, Members asked that the recommendations be developed into actions. The actions have been incorporated into the CABx Strategic Joint Action Plan, which describes a shared vision for service delivery across the Falkirk Council area. The plan is appended to this report as appendix 1. The purpose of this report provides Members with an update on the progress made against the recommendations.

**2. SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CABX PROGRESS**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Panel made conclusions and recommendations under the following headings:
- Outreach
  - Working with Other Agencies
  - Pace of Change
  - Communication between Community Advice Service and CABx
  - Premises
- 2.2 During the past 6 months, the CABx have continued to work together via the Joint Action Group. The detail of the conclusions and recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel are set out below, along with the progress made against each, to date. Appendix 2 also provides a summary performance report.

### 3. OUTREACH

- 3.1 The panel concluded that traditional forms of outreach i.e. staff and or volunteers providing a service within community based buildings on scheduled days and times are not always an effective use of resources. Over the past years, the CABx have established and publicised traditional outreach in a range of areas across the Falkirk areas, however client numbers making use of the provision are sporadic and generally very low.
- 3.2 Through working with other organisations, the CABx should provide an alternative form of outreach which would specifically target vulnerable groups of people who may not have been able to access the services of CABx.
- 3.3 It is important that clients are able to choose which bureau or outreach service they approach, based on convenience and any other relevant factor. In order to ensure equity of access to the CAB service across the Falkirk Council area, CABx must continue to operate on the basis of client need rather than by the boundaries which indicate areas of coverage.
- 3.4 Recommendations and progress to date:

*Outreach should be revised and modernised to maximise access to vulnerable groups, particularly for those who would not otherwise access the service*

#### **Progress to Date:**

- 3.5 CABx continue to test a range of outreach formats to assess what is the most accessible service for clients and the best use of resources. This includes open and appointment based outreach in various communities and facilities. Evaluation has highlighted that targeting specific client groups who are engaged with other agencies is generally most effective. The exception has been the Bo'ness outreach which continues to be well attended. Reasons include:
- Bo'ness has a significant population that is on the outskirts of Falkirk Council area.
  - CAB has had an outreach service in Bo'ness at varying venues for over 10 years, so is well established, with the current venue being by far the busiest.
  - The outreach is based in Dean Road Health Centre, which is visited by a large number of the population many of which have issues over and above their health, resulting in referrals from GPs and publicity.
  - Significantly, the outreach is available for 2 x 3 hours sessions each week. Traditionally most outreach services are provided for 2 or 3 hours once a week, due mainly to financial/resource restrictions. The Fairer Falkirk Fund has helped maintain the service levels at Bo'ness.

*The CABx identify further opportunities for targeted outreach, to work alongside other service providers in the Falkirk Council area*

**Progress to date:**

- 3.6 There has been an increase in the number of organisations who are now using the CABx to provide outreach services to their own clients. This has been introduced by proactively promoting the CABx service to organisations. New contact has been established with, for example, Y-People, Remploy, Silver Bairns and Signpost Forth valley. Service is provided when required.

*CABx work with Council Officers to identify rooms within Council buildings across the area, which can regularly be used as interview rooms*

**Progress to date:**

- 3.7 Outreach services are currently delivered in Bankier, Bonnybridge and Kersibank Community Education Centres. The service is evaluated on a quarterly basis and amended to suit the needs of the client group. The Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits Advice Support Unit (FAWBASU) has now established points for outreach delivery within each Council ward providing an ability to provide specialist support to clients based on need and demand. A series of roadshows have recently taken place in One Stop Shops which highlighted CAB services to staff and clients. The roadshows were particularly well received by Council staff, who were interested in the breadth of support provided.

*CABx continue to operate on the basis of client need rather than by designated geographical boundary*

**Progress to date:**

- 3.8 Area wide initiatives are currently being delivered by the CABx, which include FAWBASU, ASAP, Fuel Poverty and Welfare advice for those with mental health issues. The bureaux identify a lead bureau and work collaboratively to ensure that clients from across the area have access to the services.

*CABx ensure that the availability of home visits is publicised*

**Progress to date:**

- 3.9 Home visits have increased during the past year. The service is available to people who have a specific reason for not being able to access a service within bureau offices, for example, terminal illness and frailty due to old age. Home visits are resource intensive and pose a challenge to the CABx.

#### **4. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

- 4.1 The Panel received information regarding the signposting and referral systems that are currently in place between CABx and other agencies. It would appear that there remains a potential for clients to fall between services. There may be a range of reasons for this, for example, high level of demand on services and therefore the potential inability to provide a smooth transition between agencies.

4.2 Recommendations and progress to date:

*In conjunction with other agencies, consider the development of a client signposting and referral tracking system*

**Progress to date:**

- 4.3 Referrals to other services are now tracked via quarterly monitoring returns. The majority of referrals made are to FAWBASU and the Food bank. Referrals are tracked and uptake is monitored. It is more difficult to follow-up clients who have been signposted to other agencies. There has been limited progress in adopting a wider referral tracking system although it is anticipated that this will partly be supported in line with service development in connection with the impact of welfare reform.

*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*

**Progress to date:**

- 4.4 CABx are keen to participate in relevant forum which may be developed in relation to the impacts of welfare reform. The CABx and other local providers are currently considering the formation of a practitioner's forum and managers currently attend the DWP form. The CABx have been represented via FAWBASU in recent information exchange established through the Drugs and Alcohol Partnership.

## 5. PACE OF CHANGE

- 5.1 Members were very pleased with the work which is being taken forward by the Joint Action Group (JAG) and commend the CABx for the improvements in joint working over the past 2 years. It is however, noted that some of the actions within the JAG strategic plan are not progressing quickly and therefore the results of the joint work are limited in some areas. In addition, Members were not provided with evidence which showed that resources are being used in the most effective way, either by individual bureau or collectively.

5.2 Recommendations and progress to date:

*JAG continue the excellent work*

**Progress to date:**

- 5.3 JAG continues to meet on a quarterly basis and have recently updated the Joint Strategic Plan which describes the CABx collective direction up to 2017.

*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*

**Progress to date:**

- 5.4 The CABx are now working together in a range of areas which contribute towards efficient use of resource for example, joint recruitment and training of volunteers, joint funding applications.

## **6. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CABX AND COMMUNITY ADVICE SERVICES**

- 6.1 During Panel meetings, information was provided to Members which highlighted some inconsistency in procedures between CABx and Falkirk Council's Community Advice Service. This was particularly in relation to referrals and suggested that there was a need to improve communication between agencies.

- 6.2 Recommendations and progress to date:

*Ensure that communication between agencies is adequate and consistent*

### **Progress to date:**

- 6.3 The joint project between Falkirk Council's Community Advice Service and CABx, FAWBASU has enabled enhanced communication and co-ordination of service provision. The FAWBASU Steering Group, which meets on a monthly basis. The Community Advice Manager for Welfare Benefits participates within the group along with CABx Managers.
- 6.4 Debt advice statistics are recorded across Council and CABx services on a quarterly basis. A future action is for further analysis of this information to analyse trends.

*Ensure that procedures across agencies in terms of referrals are clear and consistent*

### **Progress to date:**

- 6.5 Referral processes have now been developed for the FAWBASU project and being effectively used by CABx and Council.
- 6.6 There remain some areas of improvement regarding lines of communication from the Council to the CABx. An example of this is changes in procedure for Discretionary Housing Payment which was not communicated effectively. There have however been areas of improvement, particularly where the CABx have contacted Council services or agencies to establish links and exchange information, for example with the SDS team. The One Stop Shop roadshows have also been an effective means of sharing information about CABx services to frontline Council staff.

## **7. PREMISES**

- 7.1 Members noted the different arrangements in place regarding CABx premises. Members noted particular concerns regarding Falkirk Bureau's premises in terms of its fit for purpose, capacity and ability to cope with current demand and the development of future services.

- 7.2 Recommendations and progress to date:

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

**Progress to date:**

- 7.3 Falkirk CAB has identified possible new premises within a Council owned building. The Board and Manager have been working with Development Services to agree a lease and consider renovation of the premises. The cost associated with the refurbishment of the new CAB premises. Although a Council owned building has been identified, and the lease agreement is being developed, the refurbishment costs currently lie with Falkirk CAB.
- 7.4 It will be challenging for the bureau to access external funds due to the tension that the investment would be to improve a Council asset. It should be noted that the bureau's average waiting time is 40 minutes but often clients can wait up to two hours to be seen by and adviser due to both the increasing complexity of individual cases coupled with a bottleneck in interview room availability. As a result the bureau is currently unable to see on average 30 people per week who are in need of services. Further information is provided in appendix 3 of this report.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The CABx willingly engaged in the Scrutiny process and have taken prompt action to address the recommendations. The JAG group continues to oversee the area wide direction of the CABx and the CABx monitoring officer is a member of the group. The CABx have provided feedback stating that the process of Scrutiny was helpful in helping them focus on further joint working and approaches to service delivery.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Members are asked to:**

- 9.1 **Acknowledge the good progress made by the Citizens Advice Bureaux in working towards recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Process;**
- 9.2 **Agree that subsequent progress reports be brought in line with the annual reporting schedule relating to Following the Public Pound.**

.....  
**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Date: 4 April 2014

Ref: ABC0514LM

Contact Name: Lesley MacArthur

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Falkirk 01324 5062060 and ask for Lesley MacArthur.

## FALKIRK CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-17

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This strategy sets out the collective aims and priorities of the three Citizens Advice Bureaux in the Falkirk Council area to work collaboratively and in so doing make best use of resources and optimise the services available to clients. First written in 2012, this refreshed and updated strategic plan outlines the collective work of the three bureaux over the next three years.

The core aim of our strategy is that

***“Every person in the Falkirk Council area has equal access to the Citizens Advice Service, when required”***

### 2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

As three independent organisations we have developed this strategy from our individual forward plans. These reflect the challenging environment in which we work and the many and complex needs of our clients. This joint plan also recognises the strategic context in which we operate, notably the Scottish Government’s Single Outcome Agreement, the UK Government’s Welfare Reform policy, forthcoming changes in debt legislation and Falkirk Council’s Anti-Poverty Strategy. The aims of the Council’s Anti Poverty Strategy noted below are particularly relevant:

- Maximise the number of people in better paid, secure employment
- Reduce levels of debt across the population and maximise the income of households who rely on benefits
- Increase the financial choices available to our population and increase people’s understanding of the consequences of financial choices

A Citizens Advice Bureau has, in one form or another, been serving the residents in the Falkirk Council area for some 40 years. There are currently 3 Bureaux serving the area; a full time office in Falkirk town centre and two part-time offices based in Denny and Grangemouth (Details of main offices and outreach services are provided in appendix 2).

Each CAB is an independent and autonomous legal entity, historically, each with individual Joint Working Agreements with Falkirk Council pertaining to the core CAB service. There are many examples of collaboration between the 3 Bureaux over the years, but always informal.

This Joint Plan has been produced to detail how the three CABs will work more closely together to meet the challenges identified in Falkirk Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and to achieve the wider aims of the CAB service in the Falkirk area.

In this context of closer working relationships it has still to be recognised that each Bureau has specific needs to address within the area it represents and a proportion of its activity will therefore be focussed on that geographical area.

### **3. Shared values**

Each bureau subscribes to the principles of membership of Citizens Advice Scotland and sets out how it does this within its own business plan. These principles are therefore shared by all three bureaux and we are committed to adhere to them as we collaborate through this strategy:

**To ensure that individuals do not suffer through lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities or of the service available to them, or through an inability to express their needs effectively.**

**To provide a core service as well as various additional services such as Project Work, Community Clinics, and Specialist Services, to meet the needs and priorities of clients and to make best use of the resources available.**

Our values are represented in the 12 CAB principles and these in turn underpin this joint strategy:



- Free service
- Confidentiality
- Impartiality
- Independence
- Accessibility
- Effectiveness
- Community accountability
- Client's right to decide
- A voluntary service
- Empowerment
- Information retrieval
- A generalist service

#### 4. Key strategic themes

In order for us to achieve the core aim of the strategy –“*that every person in the Falkirk Council area has equal access to the Citizens Advice Service, when required*”, we have identified the following range of key strategic themes or areas of operation:

- Joint project development; delivery and funding bids

We recognise that there may be instances when a joint approach to service development and delivery is beneficial from a client and/or organisational perspective. There are already examples of this collaborative approach in project delivery, for example the Patients Advice and Support Service (PASS), the Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP), Energy Best Deal and more recently in 2013, the Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits Advice Support Unit (FAWBSU) in partnership with Falkirk Council’s welfare benefits services, and a targeted mental health project working in partnership with the Falkirk District Association for Mental Health (FDAMH), both funded by the Big Lottery Fund’s Support and Connect programme.

As separate legal entities, collaborative work will often require one bureau to take the lead and where staff are involved, become the “employing bureau” and the roles of all prospective partners must also be agreed and delivered. We have developed a partnership agreement which aims to ease the project development process and can be adapted to suit each joint initiative. This agreement has already been employed in relation to the FAWBSU highlighted above for example. A formal agreement may not always be deemed necessary however, but we will ensure that appropriate decision making processes are established and these will be developed by the three bureaux and their partners where relevant.

It will not always be appropriate to proceed with a joint bid as in some cases an individual application can be more beneficial, for example where the funding is in relation to a bureau specific issue or the amount available does not justify a joint approach. Each bureau will reserve the right to make decisions on this basis but the existence of a common strategy, effective communication channels and procedures, and assessment criteria or project appraisal system will assist the decision making and development process. Criteria may include, for example, whether a joint approach will maximize opportunities to meet the needs of clients, utilise resources more effectively or provide greater value for money.

- Geographical coverage (whole area and target communities)

The three bureaux are committed to the provision of services across the Falkirk Council area and no individual will be turned away on the basis of “catchment area”. The bureaux recognise the need to ensure that our services are available to those most in need and each therefore operates a combination of outreach clinics and home visits to ensure effective coverage of priority areas, engaging with relevant partners where appropriate. Those geographical areas identified as priorities or at risk within Falkirk Council’s Anti Poverty Strategy inform the delivery of our outreach activities as well as the nature and levels of demand identified through our own management information systems.

The three bureaux continue to work in partnership with local organisations to assess needs for community clinics throughout the Falkirk area and will develop where resources permit. Recent developments have led to the set up of advice clinics in Community Learning and Development sites in Slamannan, Bainsford/Langlees, Camelon, Banknock, Bonnybridge, Westquarter and also in Dean Road Health Centre in Bo’ness for example.

The Citizens Advice Direct (CAD) telephone advice helpline is advertised via bureaux and is available to the public out with the normal CABx opening hours.

- Specialist services

At its heart the CAB service is a generalist one however client demand dictates that a degree of specialism is required and between the three bureaux we are able to offer the following:

- Benefits Advice
- Money Advice (debt)

- Income maximisation
- Employment law
- The Patients Advice and Support Service (PASS)
- Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP)
- Legal clinics
- Financial capability
- Fuel Poverty

The whole CAB service will be under increasing pressure from the roll-out of Welfare Reform and the changing debt landscape which is likely to result in increased demand and changes to the way in which advice services are delivered. Securing additional funding, particularly in relation to benefits and money advice will therefore be a collective priority. We are committed to working with Falkirk Council and other key strategic partners to respond to the challenges of Welfare Reform and to prepare for the changes ahead.

- Target groups

Our bureaux routinely work with the most disadvantaged and at risk individuals and we have already identified specific groups and targeted services accordingly. For example in Denny, outreach clinics are provided for Homestart, Grangemouth CAB provide specialist welfare benefits advice to those suffering mental health issues via clinics at FDAMH and Caledonia Clubhouse, and in Falkirk, all three CAB are working with the Council's Community Learning and Development team in various outreach sites. We are also working with Falkirk Women's Aid and Falkirk Carers in developing targeted services for their respective client groups and piloting services with the Addiction Support and Counselling Service. Further exploratory work is ongoing working with gypsy travellers and prisoner's families and we continue to be mindful of those target groups identified in the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy.

Collectively we will endeavour to ensure that the needs of specific client groups are met through outreach, partnership and enhanced communication and information sharing which will include client profiling.

- Training

We recognise that training for our staff and volunteers underpins the quality and scope of the service CABs provide. There are benefits in co-ordinating training across all three bureaux and development of a joint training plan is ongoing.

- Volunteer recruitment

As volunteer based organisations being able to maintain a healthy level of volunteers is fundamental to the successful delivery of the service. Joint recruitment campaigns for both generalist and specialist volunteers will be undertaken when resources allow but the interviewing and selection process will be conducted on an individual bureau basis.

- Social Policy development

As a joint aim of the Citizens Advice service, the area of social policy represents an ideal opportunity for the three bureaux to work together to make a significant impact on the issues affecting our clients. The bureaux are supported by Citizens Advice Scotland's Community Action Team to raise awareness and to campaign about local issues. But as part of the wider CAB network across Scotland, we will continue to make a fundamental contribution to the national picture through client profiling and social policy reporting.

We propose to build on this work and will examine ways in which a more co-ordinated, collective and effective approach to social policy can be developed to maximise the impact of CABx across the Falkirk Council area in evidencing need, identifying and publicising the issues which affect our clients and working to find solutions.

- Promotion and awareness raising

Each bureau currently undertakes a range of promotional activities such as participation in local events and delivering presentations to interested groups or agencies.

We will develop a marketing plan to ensure that there is cross-Falkirk coverage and develop joint materials which outline the services available and where, when and how they can be accessed. We have currently produced leaflets to advertise our cross-Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits project, and work is ongoing on our websites which will be accessed via a single door access system when live and online.

Our joint working with the Council's Community Learning and Development team also enables bureaux to advertise services via its quarterly magazine.

- Operation & Reporting arrangements

Arrangements to support and facilitate joint working have been in place for some time, notably monthly managers meetings and the Joint Action Group. More recently established is the cross-sectoral steering group for the BLF funded welfare rights project which meets monthly to monitor the progress and report on this new project. We envisage these two groups continuing and being crucial to the implementation and monitoring of this strategy and associated action plan. The monthly managers meetings will continue to provide an opportunity for planning, resolution of any issues and the development of specific initiatives and activities identified in the action plan.

In the case of JAG we would see this as the principle vehicle for monitoring progress and undertaking an annual review of the strategy.

The three bureaux already use standardised reporting methods e.g. CASTLE and PG Debt and this will continue.

- Key Performance Indicators

We recognise the need for measures to be developed to determine the impact of this strategy and the associated action plan. KPIs have now been agreed which are reflected in our joint working agreements (Schedule C) with Falkirk Council. These include:

- No. of clients
- Client financial gains
- Specific welfare benefits enquiries

- Referrals
- No. of outreach sessions
- No. of volunteers

- Partnerships

We are committed to working in partnership with each other and with key agencies including Falkirk Council, DWP, Forth Valley NHS, CAD, Addiction Support and Counselling Service, FDAMH, Alzheimer's Scotland, Falkirk Carers Centre, and CVS Falkirk & District.

Other partnerships being developed include work with the Falkirk Foodbank and project development with the other Forth Valley CABx and the Central Scotland Regional Equality Council exploring joint volunteering, training and interpretation services.

- Referral processes

We subscribe to the Citizens Advice Scotland Referral Procedure which relates to arrangements for referrals between bureaux and to external agencies. This works well but we will monitor practice and any changes through the monthly management meetings, and take account of local arrangements.

## **Conclusion**

We are confident that by delivering the key themes identified in this joint strategy we will achieve the aims of the bureaux and make a significant contribution to the Council's Anti-poverty strategy. We are now in the third year of this strategy and Appendix 1 provides the detail of our ongoing Action Plan.

## FALKIRK CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX JOINT ACTION PLAN YEAR 3

| Key themes of strategy                   | Task   | Responsibility                            | Action & Timescale   |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Joint projects &amp; funding bids</b> | Cross bureau service provision at Forth Valley Hospital  | Manager's group                           | Funding applications to date have been unsuccessful however, this will now be met via the FAWBSU project |
|  | Energy Best Deal   | Manager's group                           | Ongoing; new projects being delivered over 2014/15   |
|  | ASAP delivery  | Manager's group                           | Ongoing  |
|  | PASS delivery  | Manager's group                           | Ongoing  |
|  | Pursue other project welfare reform, financial Inclusion and debt advice funding in response to client need    | Manager's group                           | Evidence of need gathered; funding application/s pursued mid to late 2014 as necessary                   |
|  | Explore project development/participate in pilot work with the Addiction Support and Counselling Service       | Manager – Denny CAB                       | April 2014   |
|  | Develop joint volunteering/translation service project in collaboration with other Forth Valley CABx and CSREC | Manager's group/CAS                       | 2014   |
| <b>Geographical coverage</b>             | Review outreach services and develop on basis of need and resources available                                  | Manager's group and Partner organisations | Ongoing  |

|  |  |                                      |   |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Target groups</b>                     | Undertake client profiling exercise  | Managers group                       | Ongoing   |
|  | Explore project development/participate in pilot work with:<br><br>- gypsy travellers<br>- prisoner's families                                     | Falkirk CAB<br>“                     | Initial discussions March/April 2014  |
|  | Identify opportunities for targeted outreach work with relevant local partner organisations  | Manager's group                      | Ongoing; Further develop via FAWBSU where appropriate   |
| <b>Promotion &amp; awareness raising</b> | Undertake joint marketing opportunities to raise awareness of the range of services available via bureaux; include opening hours and access routes | Managers group & Falkirk Council     | Launch websites<br><br>Fliers produced by Council to promote FAWBSU and other services available via CABx |
| <b>Training</b>                          | Implement joint training plan for volunteer and staff training   | Managers group/CAS                   | To be completed for 2014/15   |
| <b>Volunteer recruitment</b>             | Undertake joint volunteer recruitment campaign   | Managers group                       | Throughout year but targeted campaign in line with Volunteers Week June 2014                              |
|  | Develop Falkirk wide volunteer programme with Stirling University  | Managers group / Stirling University | Work experience placements provided for students; Annually  |
| <b>Social policy</b>                     | Further develop links with CAS Social Policy to identify and take forward local campaigning  | Managers group /CAS                  | Ongoing and as necessary  |
|  | Participate in Child Poverty Action Group  | Manager's group                      | 2014  |



|                                  |  |                                  |                             |
|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                  | Early Warning System research study  |                                  |                             |
| <b>Operation &amp; Reporting</b> | Maintain regular Manager's meetings  | Manager's group                  | Monthly                     |
|                                  | Maintain JAG meetings  | JAG Chair                        | Meet approx quarterly       |
|                                  | Report on agreed Key Performance Indicators  | Manager's group                  | Quarterly report to Council |
|                                  | Report to scrutiny panel   | JAG                              | June 2014                   |
|                                  | Explore in partnership with other local agencies a client signposting and referral tracking system | Falkirk Council/ Manager's group | 2014                        |
|                                  | Maintain membership and attendance on FAWBSU steering group  | Manager's group                  | Ongoing                     |
| <b>Partnerships</b>              | Continue to identify relevant strategic and operational partnerships                               |                                  |                             |
|                                  | DWP Customer Representative Group  | Manager's group                  | Approximately quarterly     |
|                                  | Forth Valley CABx and CSREC  | Manager's group                  | As necessary                |
|                                  | Jobcentre+   | Manager's group                  | Being developed             |

**FALKIRK DISTRICT CAB SERVICES**

There are three Citizens Advice Bureaux serving residents of the Falkirk Council area:

Name: Denny & Dunipace Citizens Advice Bureau Ltd  
 Address: 24 Duke Street, Denny  
 Legal Status: Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered Charity  
 Company Number: SC126239  
 Charity Number: SC004864  
 Date Established: 1977  
 Date Incorporated: 1990

Name: Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureau Ltd  
 Address: 27-29 Vicar Street, Falkirk  
 Legal Status: Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered Charity  
 Company Number: SC148330  
 Charity Number: SC006183  
 Date Established: 1994  
 Date Incorporated: 1994

Name: Citizens Advice Bureau (Grangemouth & Bo'ness) Ltd  
 Address: 1 Kerse Road, Grangemouth  
 Legal Status: Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered Charity  
 Company Number: SC126238  
 Charity Number: SC013233  
 Date Established: 1974  
 Date Incorporated: 1995

## CAB OFFICES & OUTREACH

### Denny CAB

#### Main Office

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: open door 10am – 2pm

#### Telephone Helpline: 01324 823118

Monday to Friday 9am – 8pm  
Saturday 10am – 2pm

*The above telephone opening hours are operated by Citizens Advice Direct (CAD) and do not go direct to the bureau. Protocols are in place between CAD and the CAB for such requirements.*

### Outreach Clinics

|   |  |                                  |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Bridge Crescent (community flat):<br>Facility to complete online benefit applications       | Tuesday open door  | 9.30am – 12.00 noon<br>1pm – 3pm |
| Denny Parish Church Hall:   | Wednesday open door                                      | 9.30 am – 11.30am                |
| Bonnybridge Community Centre  | Wednesday by appointment                                 | 11.00am – 2.00 pm                |
| Community Wing, Bankier Primary School:<br>Facility to complete online benefit applications | Thursday open door                                       | 10am – 12 noon                   |
| Addiction Support and Counselling Service<br>Falkirk  | Last Friday every month<br>Referral/Appointment          | 9.30am – 4.00 pm                 |
| Legal Clinic:   | Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday<br>(By appointment only) | 4.00 pm – 5.00 pm                |

## **Falkirk CAB**

### Main office

Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday, Friday      10am – 4pm open door

Wednesday      Appointments only

Saturday      9.30am – 12.30pm

Money Advice:  
(Wednesdays)      1pm – 7pm Appointments only

Legal Clinics:  
(Wednesdays)      5.30pm – 7pm Solicitor open door, Fortnightly

### Community Clinics

Forth Valley Hospital Outreach:      Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10am – 2pm open door

Slamannan  
Community Education Centre:      Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday 1pm – 3pm

Bainsford/Langlees:  
Dawson Community Education Centre:      Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 10am – 12 noon

Camelon:  
Community Education Centre      Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 1pm – 3pm

## **Grangemouth & Bo'ness CAB**

### Main Office (Grangemouth)

|           |                        |                         |
|-----------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Monday    | 10am – 12pm open door; | 12pm – 4pm appointments |
| Tuesday   | 10am – 12pm open door; | 2pm – 4pm open door     |
| Wednesday | Appointments           | Only                    |
| Thursday  | 10am – 12pm open door; | 2pm – 4pm open door     |
| Friday    | 10am – 12pm open door; | 12pm – 4pm appointments |

Home visiting service by appointment

Telephone Helpline 01324 483467

Monday to Friday 9am – 8pm

Saturday 10am – 2pm

*The above telephone opening hours are operated by Citizens Advice Direct (CAD) and do not go direct to the bureau. Protocols are in place between CAD and the CAB for such requirements.*

### **Legal Clinic**

By appointment only      6.30pm – 8.30pm      Last Thursday of each month

### **Bo'ness Outreach Clinic**

Dean Road Health      2pm – 5pm      Tuesday

Centre      9am – 12noon      Friday

Westquarter Community      10am – 12pm      Tuesday  
Hall

## **List of Abbreviations**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| CAB    | Citizens Advice Bureau                         |
| PASS   | Patient Advice & Support Service               |
| ASAP   | Armed Services Advice Project                  |
| FAWBSU | Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits Support Unit     |
| FDAMH  | Falkirk District Association for Mental Health |
| CAD    | Citizens Advice Direct                         |
| BLF    | Big Lottery Fund                               |
| JAG    | Joint Action Group                             |
| CASTLE | Cases And STatistics Linked Electronically     |
| CAS    | Citizens Advice Scotland                       |
| CSREC  | Central Scotland Regional Equality Council     |
| CVS    | Council for Voluntary Service                  |
| DWP    | Department for Work and Pensions               |

### Falkirk Citizens Advice Bureaux: Response to Recommendations made by Scrutiny Panel

| Scrutiny Panel Recommendation  | CABx Response at October 2013   | CABx Progress at April 2014  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Outreach</b>  |   |  |
| 1. Outreach should be revised and modernised to maximise access to vulnerable groups, particularly for those who would not otherwise access the service. | CABx will continue to review our outreach services and develop them on a basis of need and available resources, focusing on maximising access to vulnerable groups and those who would otherwise not use our services.  | CABx continue to test a range of outreach formats to assess what is the most accessible service for clients and the best use of resources. This includes open and appointment based outreach in various communities and facilities. Evaluation has highlighted that targeting specific client groups who are engaged with other agencies is generally most effective. It should however be noted that as highlighted within XX of the report, some traditional outreach services remain effective for example Bo'ness.   |
| 2. The CABx identify further opportunities for targeted outreach, to work alongside other service providers in the Falkirk Council area.                 | CABx, where available resources permit, will identify further opportunities for targeted outreach work. In doing so, we will build on, and learn from, existing outreach that is proving to be effective at Falkirk Women's Aid, Bo'ness Dean Road Health Centre and Denny Homestart. | There has been an increase in the number of organisations who are now using the CABx to provide outreach services to their own clients. This has been introduced by proactively promoting the CABx service to organisations. New contact has been established with, for example, Y-People, Remploy, Silver Bairsns and Signpost Forth valley. Service is provided when required.   |
| 3. CABx work with Council Officers to identify rooms within Council buildings across the area, which can regularly be used as interview rooms.           | CAB services are already provided in some Council premises via CLD, and this will be further developed via the joint Falkirk Council/CAB project, Falkirk Area Welfare Benefit Support Unit.  | Outreach services are currently delivered in Bankier, Bonnybridge and Kersibank Community Education Centres. the service is evaluated on a quarterly basis and amended to suit the needs of the client group.<br>CABx The Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits Advice Support Unit (FAWBASU), has now established points for outreach delivery within each Council ward providing an ability to provide specialist support to clients based on need and demand.<br>A series of roadshows have recently taken place in One Stop Shops which highlighted CAB services to staff and clients. The Roadshows were particularly well received by Council staff, who were interested in the breadth of support provided. |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 4. CABx continue to operate on the basis of client need rather than by designated geographical boundary.   | CABx provide a service to any individual from the Falkirk Council area.  | Area wide initiatives are currently being delivered by the CABx, which include FAWBASU, ASAP, Fuel Poverty and Welfare advice for those with mental health issues. The bureaux identify a lead bureau and work collaboratively to ensure that clients from across the area have access to the services.   |
| 5. CABx ensure that the availability of home visits is publicised.   | Information on our home visiting service is available online along with details of the criteria a home visit is subject to i.e. for those unable to attend a bureau due to sickness/disability. Any heightened publicity will also detail this criteria and will be targeted towards specific vulnerable groups. | Home visits have increased during the past year. The service is available to people who have a specific reason for not being able to access a service within bureau offices, for example, terminal illness and frailty due to old age. Home visits are resource intensive and pose a challenge to the CABx.   |
| <b>Working with other agencies</b>   |  |   |
| 6. In conjunction with other agencies, consider the development of a client signposting and referral tracking system.  | We will develop an in-house system to ascertain client take up of referrals. The system will be mindful of CAB principles, including confidentiality and the clients' right to decide. External agency participation is also required and this recommendation may be best Council led.                           | Referrals to other services are now tracked via quarterly monitoring returns. The majority of referrals made are to FAWBASU and the Foodbank. Referrals are tracked and uptake is monitored. It is more difficult to follow-up clients who have been signposted to other agencies. There has been limited progress in adopting a wider referral tracking system although it is anticipated that this will partly be supported in line with service development in connection with the impact of welfare reform. |
| 7. 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 | This recommendation would be best linked in with an existing forum, with the current DWP Customer Forum being the initial choice. This should be initiated by the Council.   | CABx are keen to participate in relevant forum which may be developed in relation to the impacts of welfare reform. The CABx and other local providers are currently considering the formation of a practitioners forum and managers currently attend the DWP form. The CABx have been represented via FAWBASU in recent information exchange established through the Drugs and Alcohol Partnership.  |
| <b>Pace of Change</b>  |  |   |
| 8. JAG continue the excellent work   | Noted.   | JAG continues to meet on a quarterly basis and have recently updated the Joint Strategic Plan which describes the CABx  |



|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  |   | collective direction up to 2017.  |
| 9. 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. | The CABx will work towards this recommendation by continuing to work with Council Officers to ensure the monitoring process is robust and to ensure best value is evidenced.  | The CABx are now working together in a range of areas which contribute towards efficient use of resource for example, joint recruitment and training of volunteers, joint funding applications.   |
| 10. JAG provide Members with a follow-up report in 6 months regarding progress and any further proposed actions.                               | JAG will produce a follow-up report within 6 months of 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2014, which will be completed in conjunction with the monitoring framework.  | Report to Scrutiny Committee 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2014.  |
| <b>Communication between CABx and Community Advice Services</b>  |   |   |
| 11. Ensure that communication between agencies is adequate and consistent.   | The CABx will continue to develop effective communication between, and in conjunction with, agencies. Work being done and proposed for Recommendation 6.3, and the proposed work for the joint Falkirk Council/CAB Project, will also help in progressing this recommendation by developing procedures that will be embedded into mainstream practices. | The joint project between Falkirk Council's Community Advice Service and CABx, FAWBASU has enabled enhanced communication and co-ordination of service provision. The FAWBASU Steering Group, which meets on a monthly basis. The Community Advice Manager for Welfare Benefits participates within the group along with CABx Managers. Debt advice statistics are recorded across Council and CABx services on a quarterly basis. A future action is for further analysis of this information to analyse trends.   |
| 12. Ensure that procedures across agencies in terms of referrals are clear and consistent.   | Again, the CABx will develop existing practices through the joint Falkirk Council/CAB Project and embed them into our mainstream practices.   | Referral processes have now been developed for the FAWBASU project and being effectively used by CABx and Council.<br>There remain some areas of improvement regarding lines of communication from the Council to the CABx. An example of this is changes in procedure for Discretionary Housing Payment which was not communicated effectively.<br>There have however been areas of improvement, particularly where the CABx have contacted Council services or agencies to establish links and exchange information, for example with the SDS team.<br>The One Stop Shop roadshows have also been an effective means of sharing information about CABx services to frontline Council staff. |

| <b>Premises</b>   |        |  |
|---|--------|--|
| 13.Council Officers work with Falkirk CAB to consider alternative premises arrangements for the future. | Noted. | Falkirk CAB have identified a possible new premises within a Council owned building. The Board and Manager have been working with Development Services to agree a lease and consider renovation of the premises. There is a considerable cost associated with the renovation of the building. Further information is attached as appendix 3. |

### Falkirk CAB move of premises

CAB Falkirk is based in a property in Vicar Street. We provide an Open Door Service during our extensive opening hours and all of our staff, both paid & unpaid, are working to full capacity. Demand for our services in this ever changing economic climate is steadily increasing but we are severely restricted in our ability to turn round clients in a reasonable time due to there only being three Interview Rooms available to us.

Our average waiting time is 40 mins but often our clients can wait up to two hours to be seen by and adviser due to both the increasing complexity of individual cases coupled with a bottleneck in interview room availability.

As a result we are currently unable to see on average 30 people per week who are in need of our services. In the first quarter of this year alone we have referred 26 clients in need of welfare benefits advice to the “FAWBASU” project.

Moving into next year we know that the demand for our service will only increase as the full impact of the Welfare Reform and changing debt landscape is realised.

To enable us to respond to this there will be an ongoing training programme to build our volunteer base in terms of new recruits and enhanced training for our existing volunteers in order to deliver the more complex specialist services in areas such as money advice, employment law, and benefit representation. Over 90% of our client issues relate in some form to debt, bankruptcy, or welfare benefits. It is imperative that we can re-locate to a premises fit for purpose with sufficient capacity in terms of interview rooms and the facilities to support a rolling training programme for our advisers.

The condition of the current premises is such that a substantial amount of money will need to be spent just to bring them up to good basic standards of safe and healthy working conditions. That, however, will not provide any scope for the capacity of our client provision.

Financially, it will be more cost effective for the bureau to relocate than redesigning and refurbishing our existing premises which have no potential for expansion.

The relocation and refurbishment of premises enables to increase number of interview rooms from 3 to 5/6. It will provide a designated area for client phone and email support and we will have the capacity to increase the number of work stations, enabling us to recruit and support more volunteers. New IT equipment will improve our communication, data capture and reporting and the new phone system will facilitate increasing telephone support. This, combined with regular access to training rooms and IT facilities, will help to facilitate bureau development in line with our business plan.

We are now at full capacity in our current premises and will be working in increasingly cramped conditions with no capacity for growth. We need to take advantage of this opportunity to relocate now to build the capacity for the future and provide an ongoing and expanding professional service responding to the needs of Falkirk residents. We cannot work to increase our client numbers and the complexity of the cases we deal with if we don't have the facilities and physical space to recruit, train and develop our workers.



**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: REVIEW OF EXTERNAL FUNDING TO SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY ABUSE**  
**Meeting: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**Date: 13 MAY 2014**  
**Author: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES and DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 During the past 4 years, an annual Corporate Funding Review has been undertaken, making recommendations regarding support allocated to external organisations and identifying potential efficiency savings and areas for further review. These recommendations have formed part of Falkirk Council's budgeting process.
- 1.2 During the 2010-2011 review, Corporate Management Team agreed that where possible, organisations should be grouped by category and reviewed across all Services. The purpose of considering organisations by category is to ensure services are being delivered in line with Council priorities and where further efficiencies are identified, to assess the impact on outcomes. On this basis, one of the groupings identified was services for those who have been affected by abuse. This group comprises Women's Aid, Relationship Scotland – Couple Counselling Central Scotland, Central Scotland Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre, and Open Secret.
- 1.3 During the 2013/2014 process of presenting information to Scrutiny Committee under the mandatory requirements of Following the Public Pound, Members requested that an additional assessment of performance, areas of duplications and to what extent current service provision achieves good outcomes for service users and best value.
- 1.4 The four organisations funded by Falkirk Council within this field, were commissioned based on their specialist knowledge and expertise of a particular type of provision and to a specific client group. All of the organisations have been supported for a number of years with no significant amendment to the original service specification. In order to ensure that the services commissioned by Falkirk Council align with Council priorities, the Single Outcome Agreement and the evolving national policy context, we must ensure that service specifications are regularly reviewed and developed.

**2. ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW**

- 2.1 The four organisations provide a wide range of services for individuals who have been affected by abuse, which currently includes advice, practical support, counselling and advocacy. Information regarding the purpose of each organisation, services currently provided, funding package and performance is contained within Appendix 1. A summary is provided below:

| Organisation          | Falkirk Council Funding 2013/14 | Proportion of Falkirk Council in relation to total organisation income* | Purpose of organisation  |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Open Secret           | £149,442                        | 20%   | To work with survivors of childhood trauma, non-abusing parents and families.  |
| Rape Crisis           | £15,695                         | 9.14%   | To provide a service which works towards the elimination of the effects of rape, sexual assault and child sexual abuse.                              |
| Relationship Scotland | £9,353                          | 10.5%   | To provide one to one and couple counselling.  |
| Women's Aid           | £224,170                        | 69.6%   | To support women, young people and children suffering from Domestic Abuse to be and remain safe. Provide advice and information to support recovery. |

\* The % has been calculated on the organisations total income. The % highlighted in appendix 3 is of the general fund which are unrestricted.

### 3. OBJECTIVE AND PROCESS

- 3.1 The objective of the review was to ensure that the most appropriate range and quality of support is provided by the right providers, to those most in need within the Falkirk Council area. In addition, an efficiency saving in the region of £70,000 was identified as potentially being able to be achieved following the implementation of the review findings and commissioning of the approved service framework.
- 3.2 In the context of the review, the definition of services for those have been affected by abuse is any service which provides interventions for individuals who have been affected by any form of abuse including domestic abuse and childhood abuse, non-abusing parents of children who have been subject to abuse and also domestic conflict, particularly where there is an impact on children.
- 3.3 It should be noted that a number of other organisations also provide support for people who have encountered abuse, however they have been secondary within the process as this is not their primary client group or they do not currently receive financial support from Falkirk Council, for example, Falkirk and District Association for Mental Health and Victim Support.

- 3.4 During the process of review, all four organisations have been considered on their own merit in terms of how each can deliver priority outcomes. Any previous internal Council priority ranking has not been relevant to the process. A range of baseline information has been gathered from each organisation including services provided, client numbers referral information, waiting lists, organisational income (including external funding and funding from partner agencies and other Local Authorities). The information was used to determine performance for each organisation. Comparison has not been drawn between the organisations, due to the differing funding and delivery structures within the organisations. Areas of duplications were also identified.
- 3.5 A key output of the review of services for those affected by abuse, is a framework for services. The framework sets out the priority services to be commissioned within the Falkirk Council area and provides a focus for the use of Council resources. Importantly, the framework provides clarity and parameters for the organisations providing services. The framework also makes clear which services Falkirk Council does not consider to be a Local Authority funding priority.
- 3.6 It should be noted that the need of and impact on service users has been central to the process.
- 3.7 National and local strategies have been central to the development of the framework. These have included the Scottish Government's draft Domestic Abuse Strategy, Equally Safe (albeit that the draft is likely to be subject to amendment before final approval), Falkirk's Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2011-14 and the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, delivered via the Integrated Children's Services Plan. The wider policy context was also considered, including Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection, Mental and Sexual Health and Wellbeing – all of which have existing local processes that operate in an integrated, co-ordinated way.
- 3.8 The review process has been taken forward by a group of Council Officers, including representatives from Corporate & Neighbourhood, Social Work and Education Services and the Chair of Domestic Abuse Forum. The group agreed the process and participated in all components. The review process included:
- Gathering a range of baseline information from all 4 organisations;
  - Involving Finance Services to provide an analysis of Audited Accounts;
  - Consideration of Council priorities in order to establish a proposed specification for future services;
  - A briefing session for the 4 organisations to describe the process and proposed specification and invite comment and any points of clarification. The session was also attended by relevant Heads of Service;
  - Follow-up meetings with each of the organisations to allow one to one feedback and discussion regarding the proposed shift in funding model and service specification.

#### 4. REVIEW FINDINGS BY ORGANISATION

##### *Central Scotland Rape Crisis*

- 4.1 Rape crisis provide services for those affected by rape and any type of sexual violence, through one to one support and a telephone line which operates during office hours (a national helpline is available for out with office hours). The organisation operates across Forth Valley and is based in Stirling, with 4FTE staff and 2 volunteers. There are currently 19 active service users from Falkirk Council area and no waiting list for support. 75% of referrals are initiated by individuals themselves.
- 4.2 There has been a recent change in the management structure of the organisation and the new manager is actively working to develop partnerships with other organisations, recruit and train volunteers and develop a supervision and support framework for staff and volunteers. Rape Crisis also currently provides a service focussed on awareness raising and prevention, in schools on an adhoc basis. There is currently no formal referral process in place with other organisations in Falkirk, however Police Scotland have recently started to signpost survivors to Rape Crisis as a matter of course. Police Scotland provide no funding to Rape Crisis for this. Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils have yet to confirm funding for 2014/2015. Given the recent changes within the organisation, Rape Crisis is currently considered high risk and to mitigate this, significant ongoing support should be established.

##### *Relationship Scotland – Couple Counselling Central Scotland*

- 4.3 Relationship Scotland provide specialist counselling for couples and individuals. A wide range of issues are covered through counselling, including domestic conflict, domestic/sexual abuse, mental health, sexual health, financial problems, infidelity, stress and anxiety, ill health, life stages, grief and not coping generally. Working with couples who are at risk of tipping into an abusive situation allows preventative, educational and early intervention work. The organisation operates across Forth Valley and is based in Falkirk. There are currently 2 FTE staff and 12 volunteer counsellors, who are all fully qualified and a bank of 11 receptionists who work across Forth Valley. 33% of referrals come from statutory agencies, 59% through self referral and 4% from other agencies. There are currently 67 active clients within Falkirk and there is a substantial waiting list. Clients are assessed within 4 weeks, priority is then given to those in crisis, domestic conflict or abuse is an issue or where there is a child protection issue.
- 4.4 Relationship Scotland provide a specialist counselling service which is entirely delivered by fully qualified counsellors. As a result of this, the hourly cost of service delivery is high at approximately £60. Relationship Scotland invite clients to consider making a donation towards the cost of the service, which averages at £20 per session, however no client is refused support. It should also be noted that Falkirk Council's contribution equates to approximately £4.60 per hour. Relationship refer client to other organisations for specialist support, but receive few referrals from other third sector organisations.



*Open Secret*

- 4.5 Open Secret provides counselling and support for survivors of childhood abuse and non-abusing parents of children who have been affected by abuse. External funding has also been secured to provide services to young people and children in schools and work within prisons. External funding means that most services are provided across Scotland. 27% of those supported are residents of the Falkirk Council area, including those within prison (308 service users of a total 1,148). Support from Falkirk Council is for organisational infrastructure including recruitment and training of volunteers. Falkirk Council contributes to approximately 20% of the organisations total income. It is also worth noting that although Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils have previously provided funding to Open Secret, it has been at a low level, totalling £27,927 per annum.
- 4.6 There remains some lack of clarity regarding what service delivery Falkirk Council is paying for over and above infrastructure costs, although Open Secret argue that the external funding secured across Scotland benefits survivors within the Falkirk Council area. Falkirk Council's contribution supports 5 members of staff. The roles of these staff largely relates to the management of the organisation including securing funding, recruiting and training volunteers. 35 volunteers are currently active within the Falkirk Council area, working across a range of projects. Due to the funding structure, adopting commissioning approach to services could be problematic for Open Secret.
- 4.7 Open Secret endeavour to provide a holistic service which the range of needs presented by service users and therefore referrals in and out of the service are minimal. An example of this Open Secret cited a number of services users as having substance misuse issues, however no referrals have been made to local treatment services within the last 6 months. In addition, Open Secret are currently opposed to adopting a triage model, whereby service users access services via a single point, are assessed and passed immediately to the relevant specialist service within the spectrum of support. A benefit to the Open Secret is the experience that has been developed over their 20 years and the unique ability to provide a 'safe area' for survivors in a dedicated building.
- 4.8 Open Secret appear to have shifted their roots in Community Development. When the organisation was established in 1994, strong reference was made to a Community Development approach, which focussed on linking survivors to community resources, breaking isolation and focusing on peer support, volunteer recruitment from local communities and from past service users, rather than providing 1:1 support to service users. The focus of Open Secret was action that helped people recognise and develop their ability and potential. Supporting the establishment of strong communities that control and use assets to promote social justice. That didn't seem to come across from Open Secret as it is now.
- 4.9 A key strength that Open Secrets have is in delivering training which includes survivors in training delivery - hearing the voices of survivors. This type of training is not accredited but very impactful. If this training was produced in partnership, it could be delivered across the areas and be particularly useful to council staff, foster carers etc.

#### *Falkirk & District Women's Aid*

- 4.10 The focus of Women's Aid's service is Domestic Abuse, providing a 3 staged delivery model from crisis management through recovery and then re-integration to community. The service is based and delivered within the Falkirk Council area and over the past 3 years has undergone considerable structure review and development to form a structure that better fits the needs of the client group. Women's Aid employ 8FTE staff and are looking recruit volunteers, but have none at this time. 77% of all referral to Women's Aid come from Statutory and Voluntary agencies, with the remaining 23% being self referral.
- 4.11 The organisation has adopted external quality standards and deliver a range of accredited training. Women's Aid currently refer client to specialist services within other organisations and offer some specialist services through outreach for example, Citizens Advice Bureau provide a service within Women Aid's premises. They have noted the introduction of triage as being a beneficial area of development. As identified within the financial analysis, the organisation holds a considerable level of reserves which are likely to have been gathered from funding allocated by Falkirk Council. This has been a historical decision taken by the Board, however is not sustainable in the current fiscal climate.

### **5. KEY REVIEW FINDINGS**

- 5.1 Overarching key findings have been drawn from baseline information collected, including existing service and partnership work, individual performance and financial structure. Key finding are as follows.
- 5.2 Partnership working is inconsistent, with little formal referral processes in place. There is currently a tendency within some organisations, to endeavour to provide a a range of services to the point that referrals do not appear to be made to other specialist services. This also results in duplication in some service provision.
- 5.3 The nature of the client group means that a relationship of trust must be developed and therefore it could be argued that referral to other organisations may be problematic. It appears that organisations therefore try to develop an expertise across a range of specialisms, out with their own.
- 5.4 Due to the nature of the support provided, the client journey is individual and varies in length and the type of intervention offered. This is a difficult balance and can result in a dependency on the providing organisation.
- 5.5 A lack of partnership working has resulted in a tension between cause and effect. Service users can present at services with mental health, relationship problems, substance misuse issues, criminal behaviour and disclose history of sexual abuse. Where abuse is disclosed as a cause of these issues, the service user has to be ready and capable to work on the cause rather than the effect.

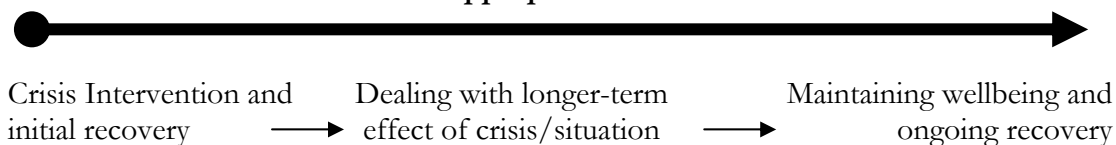
- 5.6 Services must recognise that everyone is different. A triage service could work well to address this issue. Some service users need to work on sexual abuse issues to break the pattern of offending, drinking to excess, toxic relationships with family and/or partners etc, whilst others need to address the pressing problem first e.g. offending, substance misuse, to stabilise before tackling the past, but recognising that the past is impacting on present and future. Some service users would benefit greatly from better integrated services whilst working on issues whilst others need to compartmentalize issues at least to begin with. Some service users are too ashamed to have people know about past abuse details. Part of the journey is to offload the shame and by opening up working in partnership across agencies would help with this and be healthy.
- 5.7 With regard to cause and effect, services report that the symptoms being treated include suicidal intention and coping mechanisms such as substance misuse and self-harm. There are a range of agencies which may be able to provide this support with additional capacity and specialism regarding the cause. The lines are currently blurred between treatment and support services.
- 5.8 There is a lack of consistency regarding quality assurance and accreditation across some of the organisations. This relates to service delivery, staff and volunteer training and training/awareness raising delivered to external organisations.
- 5.9 The funding structures within each organisation vary considerably and in some instances rely on external sources of funding to augment service delivery. The impact of this is that redesign will be challenging for some organisations.
- 5.10 The length of service and experience of organisations is important, but service user outcome is critical. To an extent, there is a focus on organisational sustainability rather than service user outcome i.e. providing service users with the best possible service in a challenging financial climate is key, not the sustainability of any specific organisation.
- 5.11 A critical element to the implementation of a new service model will be to consider the need, views and impact on service users. To date, this has not been undertaken and will be an important next step.

## **6. UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES OF SERVICE FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1 There are a number of underpinning principles that will guide the delivery of the framework for those who have been affected by abuse. In order to deliver services in the future, we intend to adopt a model of commissioning. This means that going forward, Joint Working Agreements will clearly set out the specific services that we wish organisations to deliver with resources allocated. Performance indicators will be established to ensure that performance is measured in relation to the commissioned services. Future funding will be dependent on delivering agreed services to appropriate standards.

- 6.2 Where all or part of the organisational infrastructure (core) has previously been funded, we expect that Falkirk Council's allocation would be directed to service delivery rather than infrastructure or management costs. In addition, allocations of support made by Falkirk Council must specifically relate to services being delivered within the Falkirk Council area. This must be evidenced within monitoring returns.
- 6.3 With regards to the services we want delivered, we have developed a service framework which sets out what services we would want delivered and those that while we accept are of value, we would not anticipate Council funding supporting. We would anticipate organisations using other funding or support to deliver these services or more importantly utilising other specialist providers.
- 6.4 In order to deliver the model effectively for service users, it is critical that the organisations establish referral protocols to allow specialist, tailored intervention to be provided as required. This will require organisations to understand their own thresholds of entry and limitations of delivery, recognising that each organisation has a specialism and that put together with other providers creates a full and seamless services delivery model.
- 6.5 Referral process should be established between the four organisations in the first instance, but may also include wider partnerships for example Citizens Advice Bureaux may provide specialist welfare/debt, advice, Falkirk Council Housing Service re tenancy, Signpost Forth Valley re substance misuse etc. In instances where a relationship of trust has been developed between a vulnerable client and one organisation, it may be appropriate to pull on specialist input from another organisation on an outreach basis. An example of this the CAB outreach service being delivered within Women's Aid.
- 6.6 Underpinning the delivery of commissioned services will be the Domestic Abuse Forum (which has been remained as Falkirk Gender Based Violence Partnership) and the GIRFEC approach delivered via the Integrated Assessment Framework. The Domestic Abuse Forum is currently re-developing it's own role within the local area. It is expected that the forum will lead and co-ordinate initiatives relating to awareness raising and training as well as contributing to community planning and regional and national engagement. All four organisations will be expected to participate in the Domestic Abuse Forum, as a condition of funding. Contribution and participation in activities led by the forum are not considered to be commissioned services.
- 6.7 Where services are provided for children, organisations will be required to participate in the Voluntary Sector Children Services Forum. The Integrated Assessment Framework is a process designed to wrap services around the needs of the child, as an integrated co-ordinated way, in line with the GIRFEC approach. Participation within this forum will ensure that services can be delivered based on identified need as opposed to an ad-hoc way or in silos. The desired model is illustrated below:

**Continuous spectrum of support relying on partnership working to ensure referral to appropriate service**



**Underpinning work:**

**Domestic Abuse Forum: Awareness raising & training**  
**Voluntary Sector Children's Services Forum: Link to Integrated Assessment**  
**Framework providing co-ordinated response to identified need.**

- 6.8 It is anticipated that organisations will continue to augment service delivery via sourcing external funding. As independent bodies, it is for the organisation to determine appropriate sources of funding however, management costs from core should not be cited within bids unless the project is to support services identified within the framework and can clearly be separated in terms of monitoring and reporting. If funding is secured to provide services out with scope of specified delivery, project costs must be generated on full cost recovery basis, as these services are not considered to be a funding priority for Falkirk Council. In addition, it would be expected that organisations develop applications in consultation with the Domestic Abuse Forum and/or Children's Commission, to avoid duplication and draw on intelligence and expertise available at a local level.
- 6.9 Organisations must continue to be very clear about the specialism provided by the service and also the difference between treatment and recovery services. For example, drug and alcohol issues; a service may provide support to a person to address the underlying issue (cause), but not support interventions to alleviate addiction (effect). Appropriate referral mechanism should be in place with partner agencies.
- 6.10 All four organisations should be registered with appropriate regulatory bodies. This should be determined on an individual basis and may be dependent on the services users own desired outcome, for example where counselling is provided or where there is a specific outcome of secure tenancy, there is a requirements that groups are registered with the Care Inspectorate, therefore service users should be signposted or referred to housing support providers.
- 6.11 In addition, it is preferable that internal training provided is accredited or in line with national standards or a parent organisation. This will ensure consistency of quality. However, as noted in 4.11, there is also benefit in developing training to include the voice of service users. This type of training is not accredited but very impactful. If this training was produced in partnership, it would be beneficial to Council and partners agency staff. This could apply to all of the agencies working with abuse. Training could be commissioned from external agencies if there was clarity regarding learning outcomes and target audience. This would allow Council to set the standard and then monitor and evaluate training to determine how good the training is rather than the provider.

- 6.12 All four organisations will provide services to any individual with an identified need, living within the Falkirk Council area. This may include those with migrant or refugee status, where there is no re-course of public funding. Interpretation services should also be available to clients, where appropriate and reasonable. Council Services can access interpretation and translation services through approved contractors and information is available on the Council intranet.

## **7. SERVICE FRAMEWORK**

- 7.1 The service framework, which is attached as Appendix 2, has been developed on a tiered approach basis. The framework sets out core services and also supplementary services which go beyond the scope of the domestic abuse strategy. This will ensure the services delivered with Council funds be seen in the wider context including a broader range of clients and needs i.e. beyond women and children.
- 7.2 In relation to services which have been deemed as outwith the scope of local authority funding, organisations consideration will have to be given regarding whether the service should be stopped or funded via an alternative source. The impact on service users will of course be important. An equality and poverty impact assessment has been undertaken in relation to the implementation of the new service framework.
- 7.3 To ensure that the right service is delivered to meet the needs of the client, it is proposed that a triage model is developed. This will mean service users access services via a single point, are assessed and passed immediately to the relevant specialist service within the spectrum of support. This approach could be piloted for survivors of domestic abuse, in the first instance, but subject to successful evaluation, could be rolled out to all abuse related services. 3 of the organisations have agreed that a triage model would better support service users, whilst 1 feels that it would not be a beneficial approach.
- 7.4 A period of transition will be required in order to move to model of commissioned services, as opposed to the current model of providing a grant towards overall service provision or to support the organisational framework. It is anticipated that the process will involve the organisations, to a varying extent, considering their own structure to assess ability to deliver the new model of service. It should be noted that the Council's responsibility lies with service users and the provision of quality services, as opposed to maintaining any single organisation. Council Officers will support this process, where possible.
- 7.5 From the outset of any support provided, organisations must make clear that a progressive pathway is established for clients. One of the critical challenges for the organisations within the review is to ensure that service users progress in their journey towards a point where minimal or no intervention is required. It is recognised that this process can take a significant amount of time and may not be linear; it is however, critical that individuals do not become dependent on any one service. One of the impacts of the change to service may be that organisations have less capacity to provide services on a long term basis. This will have to be sensitively managed.

- 7.6 It is anticipated that for some of the organisations, there will be staff impact as a result of the reduction in overall funding. Detailed discussion will need to take place with individual organisations regarding the commissioning of ongoing services therefore any potential impact on staff will emerge from this.
- 7.7 During the process of commissioning the services described within the framework, it will be important to consider that there are a range of local providers who could potentially provide some of the services. For example, Falkirk and District Association for Mental Health provide a range of services for individuals with mental health issues. It is worth noting that approximately 33% clients cite domestic abuse as an underlying factor in their mental health issue.

## **8. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND IMPACT**

- 8.1 There is a significant difference in the funding structure of each of the four organisations. Women's Aid and Open Secret receive funding to support the infrastructure of the organisation and service delivery, where as Rape Crisis and Relationship Scotland receive a smaller contribution towards service delivery, which includes an element of management costs.
- 8.2 Appendix 3 provides an analysis of each organisations audited accounts for the period 2012/2013. It should be noted that due to the varying nature of organisational funding package, the impact of changes to financial contribution would significantly vary. All organisations cite staff reduction and reduced services as an impact. The impact of any change to funding approved by Members, will be considered in detail with individual organisations.
- 8.3 Due to the small contribution of funding towards total organisational costs, it appears that with a reduction in funding, Relationship Scotland and Rape Crisis would be able to continue to provide a service, albeit on a reduced level.
- 8.4 69.7% of Women's Aids funding was allocated from Falkirk Council in 2012/13. This payment funds both infrastructure and service delivery. A reduction in funding would result in a reduced level of service. It is however worth noting that typically, organisations will have a policy of having reserves which equal 3-6 months running costs in order to help them cope with any sudden changes to their funding. In 2012/2013, Women's Aid had reserves of £201,466 in their unrestricted fund which represents 93.4%, or just over 11 months of current annual expenditure. Given that Falkirk Council provides the bulk of the unrestricted income, it would seem reasonable to assume that Falkirk Council has contributed to the bulk of this reserve. It is worth noting that for the last two years Women's Aid have been paid for expenditure incurred as opposed to on a block grant basis.
- 8.5 Open Secret cites closure as a possible impact of a reduction in funding. The current model of service delivery relies on the organisations infrastructure being funded by Falkirk Council, with the majority of service delivery being funded via external sources. Open Secret has secured funding to provide services both within Falkirk Council area but also across Scotland.

- 8.6 It should be noted that two significant sources of external funding are due to end by March 2015; £225k grant from Scottish Government and £135k from Inspiring Scotland. There is likely to be a local impact of a reduction in service provision when this funding ceases irrespective of Council decision.
- 8.7 The current funding structure results in a limited ability to change or influence provision due to external funding requirements and pre-determined project start and end dates. It is however acknowledged that the service has been very successful in securing funding to augment Council funding. Moving to a commissioning approach would pose most challenge to Open Secret.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 In concluding the review there are a number of conclusions and recommendations some of which relate to the way the Council works with these organisations and others which related directly to the organisations.
- 9.2 The overall conclusion is that on the whole the organisations provide invaluable services to some of our most vulnerable citizens. These services are on the whole valued by their clients, our partners and Council services. Most of the organisations have sought to use the review to take a critical / objective view of the services they deliver and how these can improve and thus have a greater impact on outcomes. However there is not be clear link in some instances between the money the Council provides and the services that are delivered.
- 9.3 In order to make sense of these all the recommendations they have been grouped by topic:

### **In relation to future service delivery:**

- 9.4 Falkirk Council needs to be in a position of specifying and commissioning specific services.
- 9.5 There needs to be clarity about what service delivery we are funding and the outcomes of that provision.
- 9.6 We need to ensure that there is little or no duplication between the specialist services that are commissioned. However linked to this, we need to ensure that specialist services are linked by effective referral protocols to provide a continuum of support for service users.
- 9.7 There is a need to ensure a focus on client need, rather than organisation infrastructure.
- 9.8 A consistent approach to service monitoring is critical. The proposed approach is that a monitoring group be formed with relevant Council Service representatives, including representation from the Domestic Abuse Forum and Children's Commission.



- 9.9 A partnership triage approach should be considered for piloting within the local area. The triage service would provide a point of contact and assessment for individuals, with referral onto appropriate specialist services. The triage model would ensure appropriate access to the correct type of support, without individuals assess the individual specialism of organisations, whilst in a vulnerable position. It is proposed the process be developed and established by one organisation, with the potential for the triage model to be rolled out to wider services i.e. that each organisation could carry out a consistent triage/initial assessment and make appropriate referrals, as required. It should be noted that the option would remain available to individuals make direct contact with organisations of their choice, rather than going through the triage assessment process.

**In relation to budget:**

- 9.10 Organisations should be encouraged to approach partner organisations in the context of Falkirk Community Planning Partnership for support towards services which have a positive impact on their outcomes.
- 9.11 External funding undoubtedly adds value to service provision, and when developed in conjunction with local partners to help to achieve local outcomes, will be endorsed by strategic groups such as the Domestic Abuse Forum and/or the Children's Commission.

**In relation to future budgetary provision across the 4 organisations, it is proposed that:**

*Women's Aid*

- 9.12 During the period 2014/2015, Council Officers enter into discussions with Women's Aid to establish a triage service, operating across all abuse related services and utilising that organisations reserves to provide develop and deliver this service. This would develop an infrastructure to support the roll out of the amended service specification and also help reduce Women's Aid's reserves to a level in line with OSCR recommendations. This approach recognises the alignment of services provided by Women's Aid with Council priorities and also the progress and improvements the organisation has made over the past years. Further consideration will be required regarding sustainability to of the triage service, beyond the 2014/2015.

*Open Secret*

- 9.13 Open Secret's funding be reduced on a gradual basis over the next two years. Open Secret's funding structure and geographic spread of service provision remains an issue in terms of Falkirk Council's outcomes and funding priorities. During the period 2014/2015, funding should be reduced by £34,000. Open Secret have indicated that they could withstand this level of reduction, however further discussion is required regarding where this saving would be made within the organisation. Officers should work with the Board to consider the focus of their provision and how best they could provide services commissioned by Falkirk Council. Continued support for service users should be central to this process.

- 9.14 This would be followed up by a further reduction in 2015/16 of a further £26,000, making the total reduction from 2015/2016 reoccurring, as £60,000. This would reduce the amount paid by the Council annually to £89,000. This graduated reduction would allow Open Secret time to re-organise, focus on the service framework and ensure that resources are aligned with direct service delivery. It again must be emphasised that Open Secret have advised officers that the funding provided by the Council pays largely for their management and administration etc.
- 9.15 If we are unable to develop a commissioning relationship with Open Secret, there are a number of local providers who could potentially provide a similar service, albeit without the considerable experience that Open Secret has gained. In addition Members should be aware that 2 significant stands of external funding used by Open Secret to deliver services will stop during 2014/2015, which will result in a reduction in service provision irrespective of the Council decisions on funding.

#### *Rape Crisis*

- 9.16 Rape Crisis is currently in a period of transition and development. There is a willingness within the organisation to develop the service provided in the Falkirk area, including improving relationships with other local service providers. It is anticipated that the organisation will require support to develop, which will have a resource implication on Officers. Funding could be maintained for the 2014/2015 period, with close monitoring. Given the recently established procedure of referral by Police Scotland, the organisation should enter into discussion with Police Scotland regarding the possibility of future funding.

#### *Relationship Scotland*

- 9.17 Relationship Scotland provides a specialist counselling service. The service is comparatively expensive; however Falkirk Council's contribution is small and the qualifications and on going personal supervision and development counsellors undertake, ensures quality. The impact of a reduction to funding would be reduced service within Falkirk Council area. The demand for the service is high and there is currently a considerable waiting list.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Members are invited to:**

- 10.1 **Note the outcome of the review;**
- 10.2 **Agree that the Council will commission services as described within the specification and enter into Joint Working Agreements with the four organisations based on this specification;**
- 10.3 **In order to achieve the savings agreed by Council, propose that during 2014/2015, Open Secret be provided notice of a reduction in funding of £34,000 during 2014/2015, with a further saving in 2015/2016 of £26,000, equating to a total reoccurring saving of £60,000.**

- 10.4 Approve that Council Officers enter discussion with Women's Aid to develop a triage service thereby establishing a framework for service provision under the new service specification and reducing the organisations reserves to an acceptable level.
- 10.5 These recommendations be remitted to the Executive for approval.

.....  
**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD**

.....  
**DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

Date: 10 April 2014  
Ref: ABC0514LM – Abuse related Services  
Contact Name: Lesley McArthur

#### LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. NIL

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Falkirk 01324 506260 and ask for Lesley McArthur.



### **Review of Domestic Abuse Services – Falkirk and District Women's Aid Overview**

#### **Purpose of the service**

The service objective is to support and advise women and their families who have or are currently affected by domestic abuse, assisting them to lead fulfilling lives in which they are placed in charge of their recovery.

In delivering services to women and their families affected by domestic abuse it is often recognised that they may have a wide range of complex issues including psychological damage, addictions, anger management and mental health. One agency cannot have all the multi disciplinary skills that are required to deliver such a service therefore a multi agency response provides the best model of delivery.

#### **Service Provided**

Falkirk and District Women's Aid introduced a three stage trauma recovery service delivery model during 2013. This service aims to ensure that the safety and recovery of women is fully addressed.

#### **Stage One – Recovery**

This is primarily focuses on safety ensuring that the clients are given practical support and advice. By using an individual Risk Assessment Coordinated action against Domestic Abuse (CAADA DASH) the safety of women will be the initial activity at this stage. Support will then progress to support women to resettle in either temporary or permanent accommodation through the provision of practical housing support.

#### **Stage Two – Recovery**

Stage two recovery address the trauma itself once stage one has been completed. Not all women will require stage two but those who do received either one to one or group support to begin to understand the trauma they have experienced to allow them to recover from the trauma.

#### **Stage Three – Recovery**

The stage three recovery service addresses the women's integration into her community, developing assertiveness and utilising healthy peer support mechanisms to assist with community development and community integration. It aims to move from existing to living. It recognises that women often become dependant on the support of the service and never fully move on from their experience to live and independent life. Stage 3 therefore aims to ensure that they are able to move on from the service, reengage in a community and become independent.

## **Structure**

The organisational structure incorporates a crisis support team for stage one recovery, a crisis Support Team Leader, a Children and Family Worker to work with Children and families, a Community Development Team Leader to lead Stage three recovery and takes forward integration work and volunteer development. Further sessional support workers are utilised to focus on awareness raising, early intervention and prevention work.

The delivery of services focuses on delivery of one to one crisis support and group work for stage 3 recovery clients.

## **Additional Funding / Services**

- Court Support - Advocacy Service (Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (IDAA))
- MARAC Support
- Violence against women and girls (Scottish Government) – Grant
- Children and Young People (Scottish Government) - Grant
- In house counselling service
- Additional Awareness Raising to schools and colleges

Outwith DAF approach by Larbert, Grangemouth and Denny, and a primary school pupils/staff awareness raising where to access services, what is domestic abuse

- Supporting Male Survivors
- Funding Bids

## **Court Support**

FDWA have also secured funding from the Community Safety partnership to deliver a court support service. This service supports victims involved in the criminal justice system providing access to dedicated, consistent and immediate support throughout their court process by:

- supporting vulnerable witnesses through the criminal justice system with a view to improving numbers attending at court
- empowering female victims of domestic abuse to give credible evidence at court thus improving conviction rates

The project was established from evidence illustrating that between November 2012 and April 2013 67 key witnesses did not attend at court, the majority of which were women.

The Court Support Pilot emulates recognised good practice currently taking place in Glasgow and Fife. Both areas have established support systems which have demonstrated an increase in the numbers of women appearing at court and giving credible evidence once there.

Early feedback from the Falkirk Cluster Court suggest - that more trials are running now that the court support pilot is up and running (ie more women are turning up and giving evidence) and they are hoping to get funding to replicate the service across Forth Valley.

## **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

The MARAC is a multi agency group of public and voluntary organisations working in partnership to address the needs of high risk, repeat victims of domestic abuse who have been assessed through the CADDA risk assessment tool. Victims are allocated an Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (IDAA) who will work with the client to support them with safety assessments, coordinating multi agency support plan and provide a court support role. This process works in union with current mechanisms such as child protection, the Caledonian project (support for court mandated perpetrators), Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination Group (MATAC).

## **Violence against women and girls (Scottish Government) - Grant of £29,234 up to 2015/16**

This service offers structured interventions of support to women through one to one support and also delivering a rolling programme of personal development workshops which support women, in identifying and addressing individual support needs in relation to the following; making sense of domestic abuse, Assertiveness, self-concept and self-esteem, communication, resilience, conflict, relationships, effective responses to stress and anxiety, supporting health and wellbeing and developing and committing to personal life plans. This fits with stage 3 of the recovery model.

## **Children and Young People (Scottish Government) - Grant of £61,630 up to 2015/16**

The service offers one to one support and group work to children from aged 3 through to 18. The service has developed outcomes based on the wellbeing indicators identified within the GIRFEC practice model. The service will also work in partnership with appropriately trained colleagues to deliver parenting programmes.

## **Crisis Support service in the Emergency Department**

A pilot service was delivered in the Forth Valley Royal A&E department over the festive season which Forth Valley NHS funded. This service was established to initially build relations with A&E staff and consider ways in which this type of service delivery may be improved and enhances. Initial reports suggest that the pilot was successful and an outcome report is being developed to submit to Forth NHS.

A bid has been lodged with the Forth Valley NHS Endowment steering group to fund this service on a longer term basis.

## **In house counselling service**

Counselling is provided to existing clients through the Stage 2 service. A member of staff works 2 days a week taking referrals from the crisis support team to provide Cognitive Behaviour Counselling. This service has been developed as part of the service delivery for the stage 2 recovery and fits with recommendations by NICE and world health organisation to deliver CBT counselling for those affected by post traumatic stress.

## **Additional Awareness Raising to schools and colleges**

Outwith DAF approach by Larbert, Grangemouth and Denny, and a primary school pupils/staff awareness raising where to access services, what is domestic abuse

## **Supporting Male Survivors**

This is a new service that the organisation is working towards. Currently 6 men have been supported however there are difficulties in providing support and services to men in the current office. There is a recognised need that a separate office would be required for access however the demand for the service needs to be ascertained before this is moved forward. Further evidence will be gathered during 2013/14 to support a possible service roll out to male survivors of domestic abuse.

## **Leading Lights Accreditation**

FDWA are currently looking at working toward Leading Lights Accreditation which is a national quality accreditation tool run by CADDa specifically for domestic abuse services. It focuses on the quality of the service provision, governance, funding, multi agency working focused around nine service standards.

It is increasingly being noted as a quality mark for domestic abuse services and recognised by commissioners across the UK. There is currently one organisation in Scotland who has achieved this accreditation.

## **Care Inspectorate**

FDWA have for a number of years been registered through the Care Inspectorate for the delivery of housing support services. Their recent Care Inspectorate report (July 2013) noted scores of 4 for Quality of Care and Support and Quality of Staffing Quality of Management and Leadership.

## **LGBT Charter Mark**

FDWA have recently been awarded the LGBT Bronze Charter mark which encourages and challenges the organisation to demonstrate their commitment to LGBT people in their local area.

## **Funding Bids**

FDWA is currently awaiting approval of a stage 2 lottery funding bid to assist in the provision of a physiologist to work on a one to one basis to provide therapeutic interventions, support for a befriending service which will be delivered by volunteers and the administration to source independent accommodation for women who require resettlement in the Falkirk area through the rental of properties from Private landlords and housing associations.



## Performance

FDWA have noted a considerable amount of improved performance over the last two years whilst seeing a marked increase in the numbers of people approaching their service. They are currently building on their performance monitoring in 2014/15 and moving to OASIS performance management system where they will be able to fully extract information that will inform them about the impact of their service to the Falkirk community.

|   | <b>2012/13</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Referrals                                   | 310            |
| New support Plans (New Clients)             | 262            |
| No of children offered support and services | 611            |

|   | <b>2013/14 to Dec 14</b> |
|---|--------------------------|
| Referrals                                   | 305                      |
| New support Plans (New Clients)             | 272                      |
| No of children offered support and services | 493                      |

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Total numbers of clients over last 2 years supported by stage 1 | - 1217 |
| Total numbers of clients over last 2 years supported by stage 2 | - 27   |
| Total numbers of clients over last 2 years supported by stage 3 | - 851  |
| Number of MARACH referrals August 13 to March 14                | - 31   |

## Unit Cost

Permanent Full Time staff Estimated £14.83 an hour  
Sessional staff £14 an hour (Youth work, therapy sessions etc)

## Information on shared services / multi agency working

As mentioned above the organisation is fully integrated into the GIRFEC and MARAC groups.



**Template for baseline information collection: Organisations who provide a service to those who have been affected by abuse**

- Please provide a short answer to each question e.g. use bullet points rather than extended narrative.
- Text boxes will increase as text is entered, therefore forms should be completed electronically.

|  |  |   |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| Name of Organisation:  |  | Central Scotland Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre  |  |   |   |  |
| Total Cost of Core Service 12/13:  |  | Funding from Falkirk Council 2013/14:   |  | Funding from other Local Authorities 2013/14:     |   |  |
| £92,884  |  | £15,430.00 per annum  |  | Clackmannanshire: £14,320.48<br>Stirling: £14,625 |   |  |
| Key Objectives of Organisation:  |  | The primary purpose of Central Scotland Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre is to provide a free and confidential service throughout Falkirk, Clackmannanshire & Stirling areas, which works towards the elimination of the effects of rape, sexual assault and child sexual abuse. To provide a holistic service of emotional support and practical information.   |  |   |   |  |
| Core service currently provided:   |  | Recruitment of volunteers. Training of volunteers enabling them to provide a high standard of service to survivors. Provision of a telephone helpline as an initial contact point. Short or long-term face to face support for survivors, their families and friends. Advocacy service with regard to legal and medical issues for survivors. Training to Police Scotland; Raising awareness workshops and presentations to voluntary, statutory and community groups. Workshops for senior students within secondary schools. Training and information sharing for statutory and voluntary agencies. |  |   |   |  |
| Who are the beneficiaries of the core service?   |  | Survivors of sexual violation; their families and friends; Police Scotland; voluntary and statutory agencies; Senior students with secondary schools; Students in further education and the general public within the wider community.  |  |   |   |  |
| How many people accessed the core service 2012/13?   | Total Active Client numbers at 28/2/14 | Active clients re-referred at 28/2/14   | No. of people on waiting list for service at 28/2/14 | Average length of time before service commences   | Do you provide triage service identify emergencies? | Percentage of waiting list who receive a service |
| 194 (63 Falkirk)   | 19 (9 Falkirk)                         | 6   | No waiting list                                      | Within 7 days                                     | In talks to provide future service                  | N/A  |
| Please list sources of referral to the core service (including self-referral)  |  |   |  |   | By % of total clients                               |  |
| Self- 75%; Family/Friends- 4.14% ; Psychological Services- 4.14%%; Police- 6.51% ; VIA- 2.36% ; Victim Support - 2.36%; Social Services- 5.33%; Education-0.59%; |  |   |  |   |   |  |
| Additional services/projects currently provided:   |  | Central Scotland Youth Project<br>Male Survivor Support Project   |  |   |   |  |
| Who are the beneficiaries of the projects/additional services?   |  | Young people within Secondary Schools (11-15 years) on an annual ongoing basis. PSE teachers and people within the wider communities (inc parents, youth clubs special needs clubs, assessment units) through affecting attitudinal change of the young people regard to violence of all kinds.   |  |   |   |  |
|  |  | Male survivors of sexual abuse over the age of 13   |  |   |   |  |

|  |  |  |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| How many people access the project/additional service per annum?   |  | Approximately 6345   |  |   |   |  |
|  |  | TBA  |  |   |   |  |
| How many people accessed additional service 2012/13  | Total Active Client numbers at 28/2/14 | Active clients re-referred at 28/2/14  | No. of people on waiting list for service at 28/2/14 | Average length of time before service commences | Do you provide triage service identify emergencies? | Percentage of waiting list who receive a service |
| YP – 6345  | N/A                                    | N/A  | N/A  | N/A   | No  | N/A  |
| Please list sources of referral to additional services (including self-referral)                                     |  |  |  |   | By % of total clients                               |  |
| N/A  |  |  |  |   | N/A   |  |
| How are additional services resourced? i.e. via Lottery, Trust and if yes, what?                                     |  | Robertson Trust: £15,000 (YP)<br>Survivor Scotland: £20,000 (MP)   |  |   |   |  |
| Key achievements during 2013/14:   |  | Youth Project: 1. The implementation of peer educators and the development of the Focus Group.<br>2. Youth Worker achieving Ambassador status with CEOP Internet Safety and she is now training interested parties in this.<br>3. Core: Continuing the provision of service.<br>4. Adherence to National Service Standards for Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centres. (Copy available for funding bodies)<br>5. Security of tenure assured (if required) until 2022 |  |   |   |  |
| Key issues during 2013/14:   |  | Continually seeking and applying for funding for the continuance of an ‘established’ project.<br>Uncertainty of continuance of funding for the Youth Project.  |  |   |   |  |
| How do you handle any service request that you cannot provide?   |  | By working in partnership with other agencies and referring on to the relevant agency.   |  |   |   |  |
| Have you identified any areas of your service that you would like to improve or develop in 2014/15/16? If yes, what? |  | 1. Working towards adherence to UK National Service Standards for Rape and Sexual violation.<br>2. Work in partnership with Police and NHS to establish on-call service – seek funding   |  |   |   |  |
| How do you know that this improvement/s or development/s is needed?  |  | 1. Working towards Accreditation of the NSS and thus accreditation for our service.<br>2. This database will serve to collate statistics for Scotland and bring about more cohesion for Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centres in Scotland.  |  |   |   |  |
| What other organisations do you work with and/or refer on to?  |  | Psychological Services, NHS, Police Scotland, Women’s Aid. We are part of local Domestic Abuse Forums and liaise with the other agencies within these forums.  |  |   |   |  |
| Does your organisation provide any external training? If yes, what?  |  | We provide training to the Sexual Offences Liaison Officers within Police Scotland. We also provide training which is tailored to meet the needs of agencies and education personnel.  |  |   |   |  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Please delete any of the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan that you don't feel are relevant to your organisation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further developing a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy</li> <li>• Continuing to improve the health, safety and well being of our citizens and communities</li> <li>• Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Please return it to your Monitoring Officer.**



**Template for baseline information collection: Organisations who provide a service to those who have been affected by abuse**

- Please provide a short answer to each question e.g. use bullet points rather than extended narrative.
- Text boxes will increase as text is entered, therefore forms should be completed electronically.

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Name of Organisation:                          | Relationships Scotland – Couple Counselling Central Scotland  |  |  |
| Total Cost of Core Service:                    | Funding from Falkirk Council 2012/2013:   | Funding from other Local Authorities 2012/2013               |  |
| £86795   | £9353   | Support in kind (premises)<br>Stirling £5760<br>Clacks £3960 |  |
| Key Objectives of Organisation:                | To improve the lives of people in our community by providing high quality, professional one to one counselling or couple counselling no matter age, sexual orientation, social standing, married, separated, divorced, choice of religion, ethnic or cultural backgrounds as a right not a privilege.   |  |  |
| Core service currently provided:               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship Counselling for individuals or couples experiencing difficulties whether in a relationship or not.</li> <li>• Psychosexual Therapy for couples or individuals who have sexual problems and taking care of sexual health</li> <li>• Support for Vulnerable Women</li> <li>• Support for couples and individuals for those experiencing Domestic Abuse</li> <li>• Supporting couples with young families who are in crisis to assist in stabilising the home giving children the best start in life.</li> <li>• Support for perpetrators of domestic abuse who wish to change their behaviour</li> <li>• Generic individual counselling</li> <li>• Specialist counselling support for over 50's</li> <li>• Specialist risk assessed domestic and sexual abuse - we work in partnership with statutory agencies to give time to people who cannot cope with their day to day lives including those that are experiencing flashbacks of childhood abuse. Domestic abuse is a spectrum and we see people out with the criminal justice system for early identification, de-escalation and prevention work towards change and stabilisation. Verbal, psychological, emotional, mental, stalking, controlling and jealous behaviour, and financial abuse are also prevalent as well as violence.</li> <li>• Specialist risk assessment for mental health issues and suicide</li> <li>• Specialist service for over 50's.</li> <li>• We deal with many different areas including domestic/sexual abuse, mental health, sexual health, financial problems, infidelity, stress and anxiety, ill health, life stages, grief and not coping generally.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| Who are the beneficiaries of the core service? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couples, individuals, families, children and young people. The work we do and the difficulties/problems that are in our community are many.</li> <li>• Individuals not in a relationship with issues such as mental health, self esteem and confidence, financial worries, general ill health (sometimes when the aetiology is not known), feeling down and not coping</li> <li>• Families - we help to stabilise the home in which children are vulnerable. We support parents to be better parents. Young parents in crisis are given priority.</li> </ul>   |  |  |

|   |                                |   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
|   |                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Older people life stages - we support people who are going through life stages that are difficult for example ill health that affects the relationship to help partners to cope.</li><li>Vulnerable young adults sexual health support - we help to educate sexual health issues therapeutically including safe sexual practice</li><li>Adult sexual relationship therapy for those of all ages. This is a highly specialised therapeutic area of work that includes a medical model dealing with effects of illness, aging, medication and psychological factors impacting on intimacy Also encompassing sexual and internet addiction</li></ul> |  |   |  |  |
| How many people accessed the core service 2013<br>520<br>(233 Falkirk)                                    | Total Active Client numbers at | Active clients re-referred at   | No. of people on waiting list for service at 17/3/2014 | Average length of time before service commences                     | Do you provide triage service identify emergencies?                  | Percentage of waiting list who receive a service |
| involving 320 children (150 Falkirk) (some of whom were affected behaviourally, at school or emotionally) | 55                             | Clients referred to statutory services/other organisation 3 but still being seen within our service   | 113  | Intake 4 weeks<br>Priorities 3/4 weeks<br>Non-priorities 8/10 weeks | We identify domestic abuse, crisis intervention and child protection | 100% receive a service                           |
| Please list sources of referral to the core service (including self-referral)                             |                                |   |  |   | By % of total clients  |  |
| Statutory Services  |                                |   |  | 172   | 33%  |  |
| Self Referrals  |                                |   |  | 198   | 38%  |  |
| Other Agencies  |                                |   |  | 19  | 4%   |  |
| Publicity/Website   |                                |   |  | 103   | 19%  |  |
| Friend  |                                |   |  | 19  | 4%   |  |
| Other   |                                |   |  | 9   | 2%   |  |
| Additional services/projects currently provided:  |                                | Re-shaping care for older people (ends March 2013)<br>Crisis intervention for any clients who present with abuse issues we provide emergency risk assessment<br>Volunteer Co-ordinator (ends July 2014)   |  |   |  |  |
| Who are the beneficiaries of the projects/additional services?  |                                | Re-shaping care – anyone over 50 who is experiencing the challenges as they move through life stages including many grandparents. Ill health of self or partner, redundancy, family issues, bereavement etc.  |  |   |  |  |



|   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
|   |   | Domestic abuse - Crisis intervention - women who are experiencing all aspects of domestic abuse<br>Men who are non-violent who wish to change their behaviour<br>Couples many of whom have young children who are not coping and are moving toward being in a violent situation.<br><br>Vol Co-or to encourage volunteering, through recruitment organising and delivering training and going out into the community to deliver talks and presentations and supporting current and all new volunteers |   |   |   |  |
| How many people access the project/additional service per annum?  |   | *****<br>Re-shaping care – 60<br>DA Crisis intervention – 77<br>Volunteer Co-or – new volunteers 10 – talks etc 50 – in house intake training 4 – organising training 20  |   |   |   |  |
| How many people accessed additional service   | Total Active Client numbers at 17 <sup>th</sup> March, 2014 | Active clients re-referred at 17 <sup>th</sup> March, 2014  | No. of people on waiting list for service at 17 <sup>th</sup> March, 2014 | Average length of time before service commences | Do you provide triage service identify emergencies?   | Percentage of waiting list who receive a service |
| *****See above  | 12  | Clients referred to statutory/other organisations<br>6  | Re-shaping care 14<br><br>D/A crisis Intervention 10                      | 4 weeks (earlier for crisis intervention)       | Crisis intervention<br>risk assessment<br>Identify escalation of abuse and violence and also child protection issues<br>Aid recovery work | 100%   |
| Please list sources of referral to additional services (including self-referral)  |   |   |   |   | By % of total clients   |  |
| Re-shaping care<br>Self referrals 22<br>Other agencies 22<br>Statutory services 16<br><br>D/A crisis intervention<br>Self referrals 37<br>Statutory services 40 |   |   |   |   | 36%<br>36%<br>28%<br><br>48%<br>52%   |  |
| How are additional services resourced? i.e. via Lottery, Trust and if yes, what?  |   | Scottish government Re-shaping care £ 32064 (April 2013 – March 2014)<br>D/A crisis intervention £ 898.14 (Sept, 2013 fundraising event)<br>£ 1780 (Foundation Scotland)  |   |   |   |  |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
|                              | ( one funding application outstanding)<br>Volunteer co-ordinator                      £10000                      (awards for all)   |
| Key achievements during 2013 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of robust Risk Assessment system and training for all Intake Workers and Counsellors - ongoing</li> <li>• Scottish Government Strategic partner in recognition of our work in supporting families and young children</li> <li>• Completed all local and National policies and procedures (child protection etc) and distributed to all staff via CD - ongoing</li> <li>• Key contributor to developing a national evaluation tool for client outcomes – ongoing</li> <li>• Key contributor in shaping national policy of Scotland wide Relationships Scotland through political engagement</li> <li>• Key contributor of developing sexual and online addiction services</li> <li>• Working in partnership with Stirling University to undertake evaluation work, research and marketing</li> <li>• Continue to take counselling placements from Strathclyde and Edinburgh University with a mentoring programme</li> <li>• Key contributor in meeting with Ministers in Government to raise awareness of the importance of Relationship and Family support</li> <li>• Delivered 55 workshops/meetings/presentations in the community</li> <li>• Formed 26 new relationships</li> <li>• Supported 6 multi agency partnerships</li> <li>• Networked, accessed or attended 4 cross party groups at Parliament relevant to our work</li> <li>• Key driver in instigating a focus group for domestic abuse with Criminal Justice to form more partnership working in order to capture people under the Criminal Justice “Radar”.</li> <li>• All Volunteer counsellors awarded or working towards diploma status</li> <li>• All Volunteer Counsellors on the registers of Relationships Scotland, COSCA, BACP, COSRT and UKCP</li> <li>• Key contributor to take forward Governmental Registration of Counsellors</li> <li>• Manager continues to meet with many other organisations in order to be pro-active in encouraging partnership working</li> <li>• Secured the national contract with the Armed Services and Relate to deliver counselling to Armed Services personnel and also to Veterans</li> <li>• Secured funding from re-shaping care for older people to deliver a bespoke counselling service for over 50's</li> <li>• Secured funding to employ a volunteer co-ordinator to support existing volunteers and source new volunteers</li> </ul> |
| Key issues during 2013       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in obtaining funding to train new counsellors at a cost of 5500 pounds per student</li> <li>• Funding for counselling in general is difficult as there is low recognition for the preventative work that is done via our work</li> <li>• Clients contributions have reduced due to the economic climate and as we have little core funding this will have a major impact on our service. We still provide support to clients who have financial worries through redundancy, failed businesses and other job losses.</li> <li>• Volunteer support is limited due to financial constraints e.g. to meet professional standards and registration requirements counsellors have to personally meet the costs for annual CPD and top up training.</li> </ul>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision costs are required to be provided for all counsellors to comply with the Professional Code of Ethics for Counsellors and this costs us 35 pounds per hour for every 12 sessions given. This is a major drain on our resources.</li> <li>• Two staff (one f/t and one p/t) have to cope with running and managing the service for the whole of Forth Valley. It is increasingly difficult to cope with funding, development and attending meetings with so few staff. We could do so much more in the community to support families with more resources.</li> <li>• Key staff salaries unfunded with no increases awarded for the last three years</li> </ul>   |
| How do you handle any service request that you cannot provide?  | As we risk assess everyone immediately who approaches our service this ensures that anyone whose needs we cannot meet are signposted/given information about what is appropriate and available to them.   |
| Have you identified any areas of your service that you would like to improve or develop in 2013 If yes, what? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop training to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse who are not eligible to enter the Caledonian programme. National training identified and to be delivered this year</li> <li>• Develop a young peoples' service for those affected by family issues such as family breakup, abuse etc. National training identified and will be delivered this year</li> <li>• Develop a family counselling service for those families who are struggling with issues around damaging family dynamics and also historic factors in current behaviours. National training identified and will be delivered this year</li> <li>• Develop a sexual and online/porn addiction service (Non-offending behaviour). National training identified and will be delivered this year.</li> <li>• National prison project (Roots out of prison) to help reduce the instance of re-offending and to help prisoners cope and rebuild their relationship prior to release. Relationship breakdown is a major contributor to re-offending. A high proportion of offenders have experienced abuse of some kind in their childhood. Hoping to roll out in this area soon.</li> <li>• Support the development of support in schools to compliment the SHARE programme to promote positive relationships and educate young people in this aspect of their lives. Also to support those who have a negative view of relationships through their own personal experience of an abusive relationship or where they have experienced sexual/domestic abuse at home. This is an investment in our young peoples' future.</li> <li>• Develop a service for those who are struggling with a break-up or are bereaved if their partner dies.</li> <li>• Provide more support for sexual health.</li> <li>• Source more support for relationships support in the older community (re-shaping care year 2 been turned down)</li> <li>• Support the development for appropriate referrals from Criminal Justice and also to recognise that we can support more families struggling to cope with DA who are out with the CJ system</li> <li>• Develop a service for Armed forces personnel suffering from trauma/ relationships breakdown.</li> <li>• Develop a services for Veterans trying to adjust back into their communities particularly those within the criminal justice system.</li> </ul> |
| How do you know that this improvement/s or development/s is needed?   | <p>We know this as in the course of work we have identified where the gaps lie e.g working with male perpetrators of domestic abuse is a service we cannot provide at this time.</p> <p>We can work with men who are motivated to change their behaviour.</p> <p>Our client evaluations are clear about the health benefits that high quality, professional counselling can deliver.</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| What other organisations do you work with and/or refer on to?  | We refer/give information about all organisations/statutory services that provide services in the community that we do not. Even if signposting takes place we quite often retain the client as extra support in their relationship but only if they are fully able to engage in the process  |
| Does your organisation provide any external training? If yes, what?  | <p>We have no resources to do this locally but our national office have a programme of training for CPD, certificate and diploma Training available for external candidates and our own volunteers</p> <p>Diploma in Relationship Counselling is fully validated by COSCA and credit rated by Napier University Masters Level 9<br/>         Relate Diploma in Psychosexual Therapy is credit rated by Doncaster University Masters Level 9 and fully accredited by College of Sexual and Relationship Therapy<br/>         Certificate in Couple Counselling is a post graduate course for counsellors who already hold an accredited Diploma qualification and is fully validated by COSCA as a specialist course<br/>         Diploma in casework supervision fully validated by COSCA</p> |
| Please delete any of the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan that you don't feel are relevant to your organisation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to improve the health, safety and well being of our citizens and communities</li> <li>• Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination</li> </ul>   |

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Please return it to your Monitoring Officer.**

## Open Secret

### Background

Open Secret was established in 1994 to work with survivors of childhood sexual abuse or trauma. They work with survivors of all ages. The organisation provides a service across the Forth Valley area including the Local Authorities of Clackmannan, Falkirk and Stirling. It also provides a service to West Lothian.

Open Secret is an independent community based organisation. The core service funded by Falkirk Council provides:

- Free confidential services to survivors of childhood sexual abuse
- Support to partners and friends
- Support to other workers and organisations working with childhood sexual abuse issues
- Support for non-abusing parents of children who have experienced sexual abuse (Parent Support Worker)

They achieve this through a range of service interventions which include:

- Counselling
- Direct Support work
- Group Work
- Befriending
- Advocacy
- Training to other organisations
- Campaigning and awareness raising
- Resource library

Open Secret has also been successful in sourcing other grant funding. In this regard their service is not limited to the Forth Valley Area but has a wider Scotland position.

The following services are provided in addition to the core service:

- Services for children, young people and families
- Homelessness support
- Prison services (Scotland wide)
- EMDR/ EFT\* service in partnership with NHS Forth Valley (Scotland wide)
- Complementary Therapies Service (Scotland wide)
- In Care Survivors Service Scotland (ICSSS)
- Ethnic Minorities Service (in partnership with Central Scotland Racial Equality Council)

\*EMDR – Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing  
EFT – Emotional Freedom Technique

## **Service profile**

In total Open Secret worked with 1,148 (972 new and 176 existing) people during the financial year 2012/2013 of which 268 were Falkirk citizens. The number of Falkirk citizens increases to 308 when those within the Scottish prison service are included.

The largest number of Falkirk referrals was self-referrals (153) with statutory agencies being second with 67.

The average waiting time from referral to start of service is 4 weeks with the average intervention being just under 9 sessions. Although length of intervention is specific to the individual and as such can be longer or shorter.

Through a wide range of interventions Open Secret provide a holistic approach to working with survivors of abuse.

Direct 1 to 1 counselling was provided to 214 people from Falkirk. Art Therapy, Creative writing, gardening group, fund raising group, service user support group and parents group are other supports provided.

The Complex Trauma Service provides EMDR / EFT therapy through Open Secret with funding from Survivor Scotland. This service is provided in partnership with NHS Forth Valley and enables quicker access to these therapies for Forth Valley residents.

## **Funding**

| Source                                      | Amount   | Timescale         |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| Falkirk Council                             | £149,442 | Reviewed annually |
| Stirling Council                            | £12,120  | Reviewed annually |
| Clackmannan Council                         | £15,807  | Reviewed annually |
| West Lothian Council                        | £37,802  | Reviewed annually |
| Scottish Prison Service                     | £75,121  | Reviewed annually |
| Scottish Government ICSSS                   | £225,000 | March 2015        |
| Survivor Scotland                           | £50,000  | October 2014      |
| Inspiring Scotland                          | 134,967  | June 2014         |
| RS MacDonald Trust                          | £10,000  | March 2014        |
| Big Lottery                                 | £22,229  | March 2015        |
| FV Health Board ( Stirling and Clackmannan) | £17,306  | annual            |
| Community Jobs                              | £25,716  | varies            |

Open Secret has a history of successful fund raising as can be seen from the table above. They continue to pursue alternative and additional funding. They are cognisant that sources of funding are due to end and if no alternative or continuation can be found have advised that they will stop the associated activities and services.

They have advised that they consider the core service to the Forth Valley and Falkirk Council area as a priority. However they also advise that if additional sources of funding were not pursued and obtained the grant funding received from Falkirk Council would be insufficient to cover the whole cost of the core service. If the grant funding from Falkirk Council were reduced they would need to lose staff hours and depending on amount, staff posts. Further there is a threshold whereby the viability of the service continuing would be compromised.

Audited accounts are submitted to the Falkirk Council monitoring officer annually. These accounts are reviewed by officers from Falkirk Council finance services.

The 2012/ 2013 audited accounts were submitted by Open Secret and have been reviewed by Falkirk Council finance services.

The financial position has been assessed as follows:

Income was greater than expenditure in the general (unrestricted) fund and the restricted fund. The reserves policy sets a target equivalent to 6 months of expenditure on the unrestricted fund which would require £116,010. Actual reserves were £51,693. The accounts state that they plan to address this with fundraising and full cost recovery in funding applications. The Board of Directors are satisfied that the level of restricted reserves is sufficient due to the funding secured with a good spread of funding services.

Falkirk's contribution to the General Fund represents 63% of income, with the other main contributors being Clackmannanshire Council, Forth Valley Health Board, Stirling Council, other grants and generated income.

The organisation's running costs on the general fund were:-

|                                 |                |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Staff                           | 73%            |
| Volunteers                      | 1.5%           |
| Premises, training, admin, etc. | <u>25.5%</u>   |
|                                 | <u>100.00%</u> |

No concerns are indicated by the analysis of the accounts and the Creditsafe rating report.

A number of grants on the restricted fund are scheduled to finish by the end of 2015. In particular, a £225k grant from Scottish Government and £135k from Inspiring Scotland. If no other sources of funding or continuation of existing grant funding due to end is not obtained then Open Secret's total income will reduce by 46% by end March 2015.

### **Staffing – Falkirk Service**

There are 5 members of the core staff group – Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive, Parent Support Worker, Finance Admin and reception admin.

There are 39 volunteers recruited, trained and supported by Open Secret.

They have 20 registered /qualified counsellors.

Taking account of all service provision and funding sources Open Secret employ 31 members of staff.

### **Summary**

Open Secret is a well-established and valued service. 2014 will mark 20 years of operation. They have in recent years been successful and skilled in identifying and obtaining other sources of grant funding. As such they have grown substantially over the last 6 years and have established a national profile.

Open Secret recently received the King's Fund Impact Award being one of only ten organisations from 400 applicants to do so. Of the successful 10 organisations Open Secret is the only one from Scotland.

In 2013 they achieved the Investors in People Award. They have also been short listed in 2 categories of the Scottish Charity Awards.

Open Secret work with the police, victim support and NHS Forth Valley. They have developed partnerships with other organisations dealing with abuse across Scotland and have representation on the Cross Party Group for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse and the Survivors reference group.



## Services for those affected by abuse

In developing our priorities, we have taken into account the of the Scottish Government's draft Domestic Abuse Strategy, Equally Safe, Falkirk's Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2011-14 and the GIRFEC approach, delivered via the Integrated Children's Services Plan. The wider policy context was also considered, including Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection, Mental and Sexual Health – all of which have existing local processes that operate in an integrated, co-ordinated way.

For the purposes of this exercise:

'Early intervention' is defined as being something that can be applied at any stage e.g. to prevent an activity/impact, when a risk is identified to when a crisis has just happened. Early intervention is a cross cutting theme.

'Prevention' is defined as an intervention which will stop or reduce an activity/impact of an activity.

| <b>DRAFT Equally Safe: National Strategy Outcomes</b>  | <b>Domestic Abuse – Local Strategy 2011/14</b>  | <b>Wider Strategic Context</b>  | <b>Existing Delivery Process/Groups</b>  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Social tolerance of all forms of violence against women and girls is reduced.</p> <p>Situational and structural risk factors that can exacerbate the likelihood or severity of violence are reduced, and protective factors are strengthened</p> <p>The individual needs of women and girls affected by violence are fully met at the earliest point.</p> <p>Perpetrators are less likely to re-offend.</p> | <p>Work to <b>PREVENT</b> acts of violence occurring (including repeat incidents)</p> <p>Ensuring that relevant <b>PROTECTION</b> is available to women and children affected by gender based violence</p> <p><b>PROVIDING</b> appropriate services and information</p> <p>Maintaining and developing the <b>PARTICIPATION</b> of services, agencies and individuals in the Violence against Women agenda</p> <p>Supporting the delivery of <b>TRAINING</b> and information sharing</p> | <p>GIRFEC – Integrated Children's Services Plan</p> <p>Child Protection</p> <p>Adult Support &amp; Protection</p> <p>Mental Health Strategy</p> <p>Sexual Health Strategy</p> | <p>CAADADASH Assessment</p> <p>MARAC – Multi agency Case Conference - FV Integrated Assessment Framework</p> <p>MATAC – Perpetrators</p> <p>MAPPA</p> <p>GIRFEC – FV Integrated Assessment Framework</p> |

On the basis of these strategies, a tiered approach has been taken which identifies core services and supplementary services which go beyond the scope of the domestic abuse strategy. This will ensure that a wider range of services are incorporated to include a broader range of clients and needs i.e. beyond women and children. The table below sets out these core services as level 1, the supplementary services as level 2 and indicates the services which may not be a priority for local authority funding in the current climate.

| Level 1   | Level 2  | Outwith Priority Scope of Local Authority Funding   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Crisis Intervention – Making the situation safe: Sourcing emergency Accommodation/ Helping individual stay safe within existing environment &amp;/or new environment</p> <p>Provide first point of contact and support to access immediate specialist advice and support: Legal rights, Financial, Medical</p> <p>Supporting immediate recovery:<br/>Support for Children<br/>Re-settlement<br/>Advice and Support</p> <p>Counselling &amp; support for young people and children in line with GIRFEC approach i.e. integrated assessment framework</p> <p>Support for non-abusing parents (especially where Child Protection issue)</p> <p>Counselling, advice and support:<br/>One to one<br/>Relationships where impact on child<br/>Family Mediation &amp; child contact</p> <p>Recruitment &amp; Training of staff and volunteers</p> | <p>Progressive services (client should progress through)<br/>Provision of a range of supports to suit individual e.g:<br/>Group Work<br/>Specific Therapies (Art)<br/>Self – capacity (training/befriending)</p> <p>Post crisis recovery towards re-integration to the community</p> <p>Work in partnership to facilitate and/or signpost to provide continuum of support to specialist/mainstream services e.g. welfare advice, tenancy support, substance misuse.</p> <p>Publicity &amp; awareness raising activity relating to own service/specialism</p> | <p>Advocacy and financial and legal support beyond signposting</p> <p>Physical Health Service</p> <p>Support for family &amp; friends (out with non-abusing parents)</p> <p>Self-sustaining groups i.e. longer term support</p> <p>Work directly commissioned with schools - Awareness Raising and Peer mentoring delivered in isolation i.e. outwith integrated assessment framework approach</p> <p>Long term intervention resulting in dependency on service</p> <p>Out of hours telephone helpline (national available)</p> <p>Generic couple counselling (when no children involved)</p> <p>Psychosexual therapy</p> <p>Housing support</p> <p>Non-accredited training which is developed based on experience, which may or may not generate an income</p> |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| All agencies will be required to participate in the Domestic Abuse Forum and where services for children and young people are provided, the Voluntary Sector Children's Services Forum. The DA Forum will take a lead on training and awareness raising and therefore the activities listed below are not considered to be commissioned services. |   |  |
| Awareness Raising - Identification of those at risk: Provision of training across all agencies. Including use of CAADADASH.   | <p>Awareness Raising – Broader range of activity raising awareness within agencies and to individuals (as a co-ordinated response).</p> <p>Training, including:<br/> Child Protection<br/> Vulnerable Adults (ASP)<br/> POPP (Psychology of Parenting Programme)</p> <p>Consistent, Co-ordinated approach to awareness raising in schools, including:<br/> Child sexual exploitation<br/> Respect and healthy relationships</p> |  |



**NOTES REGARDING AUDITED ACCOUNTS:**  
**REVIEW OF SERVICES FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

**Falkirk & District Women's Aid**

1. The accounts cover the year ended 31 March 2013.
2. Falkirk Council's contribution of £218,735 is shown correctly. This represents 97.8% of all of the unrestricted funds received by the organisation.
3. There is no mention of a reserves policy. Typically, organisations will have a policy of having reserves which equal 3-6 months running costs in order to help them cope with any sudden changes to their funding. Falkirk and District Women's Aid had reserves of £201,466 in their unrestricted fund which represents 93.4%, or just over 11 months of current annual expenditure. Given that Falkirk Council provides the bulk of the unrestricted income, it would seem reasonable to assume that Falkirk Council has contributed to the bulk of this reserve.
4. The organisation's running costs on the unrestricted fund are:

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Employment Costs                | 41%           |
| Agency/Sessional                | 26.5%         |
| Premises, training, admin, etc. | <u>32.5%</u>  |
|                                 | <u>100.0%</u> |
5. No concerns are indicated by the analysis of the accounts and the Creditsafe rating apart from the fact that the accounts aren't signed. There appears to be no liquidity problems and there are more than sufficient funds held in reserve.

**Open Secret**

1. The accounts cover the period to 31 March 2013.
2. Income was greater than expenditure in the general (unrestricted) fund and the restricted fund. The reserves policy sets a target equivalent to 6 months of expenditure on the unrestricted fund which would require £116,010. Actual reserves were £51,693. The accounts state that they plan to address this with fundraising and full cost recovery in funding applications. The Board of Directors are satisfied that the level of restricted reserves is sufficient due to the funding secured with a good spread of funding services.
3. Falkirk's contribution to the General Fund represents 63% of income, with the other main contributors being Clackmannanshire Council, Forth Valley Health Board, Stirling Council, other grants and generated income.

4. The organisation's running costs on the general fund were:-

|                                 |                |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Staff                           | 73%            |
| Volunteers                      | 1.5%           |
| Premises, training, admin, etc. | <u>25.5%</u>   |
|                                 | <u>100.00%</u> |

5. No concerns are indicated by the analysis of the accounts and the Creditsafe rating report.
6. A number of grants on the restricted fund are scheduled to finish by the end of 2015. In particular, a £225k grant from Scottish Government and £135k from Inspiring Scotland.

### **Relationship Scotland**

1. The accounts cover the period to 31 March 2013.
2. Expenditure on the general (unrestricted) fund of £85,655 is almost exactly equal to income. The reserves policy is to have at least 9 months operating costs in reserve. This target has been achieved and in fact they have reserves equal to 15 months operating costs.
3. Falkirk's contribution to the general fund was 10.8% of total income. The other main income services were Scottish Government, several small trusts, rental income, voluntary donations and other income.
4. The organisation running costs on the general fund were:
- |                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Staff Costs           | 55%         |
| Fees and Expenses     | 15%         |
| Premises, admin, etc. | <u>30%</u>  |
|                       | <u>100%</u> |
5. No concerns are indicated by the analysis of the accounts.

### **Central Scotland Rape Crisis**

1. The accounts cover the year to 31 March 2013.
2. Expenditure by the organisation was almost entirely in respect of restricted funds. Expenditure of £166,796 was greater than income of £162,783. This shortfall was covered by drawing on reserves. The reserves policy states that unrestricted reserves should be developed and maintained at 3 months operating costs. The reserves in the unrestricted fund were £11,895 which represents less than one month's expenditure.
3. Falkirk's contribution was 9.14% of total income. The other main sources were Scottish Government, Stirling Council, Clackmannanshire Council and the Robertson Trust.

4. The organisation running costs were:

|                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Staff Costs           | 69%         |
| Fees and Expenses     | 5%          |
| Premises, admin, etc. | <u>26%</u>  |
|                       | <u>100%</u> |

5. There appears to be no liquidity problem, however, it should be noted that the reserves policy is not being achieved and reserves reduced by £6,985. The Director's notes to the accounts say that currently the charity is unable to generate reserves from its current funding streams in order to achieve this objective.