

DRAFT**FALKIRK COUNCIL****MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of FALKIRK COUNCIL held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2008 at 3.00 PM.**

PRESENT: Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Alexander, Blackwood, Buchanan, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Goldie, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, Lemetti, A MacDonald, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, C R Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Meiklejohn, Nicol, Oliver, Patrick, Spears, Thomson and Waddell.

CONVENER: Provost Reid

APOLOGIES: Councillors Fry, Gow, McNally and Nimmo.

ATTENDING: Chief Executive; Directors of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services and of Finance; Acting Director of Law and Administration; and Senior Committee Services Officer.

FC62. MOTIONS**(a) Gas/Electricity Disconnections**

Councillor Meiklejohn, seconded by Councillor Thomson moved that:-

Council notes with some disquiet the content of the recently published Ofgem report. This report indicated that:

- The number of gas and electricity disconnections rose to 8,324 in 2007 from 3,270 in 2006
- The total number of customers not reconnected the same quarter almost doubled to 4,028
- The number of pre-paid meters installed under warrant rose by almost 20,000.

With energy costs rising by double digit inflation this year the situation for those suffering financial hardship will only get worse.

Council believes that these trends are unacceptable and calls on the Westminster government to intervene to change the policy of disconnection through legislation, if required.

Council also calls on our local Westminster representatives to raise the issue with the relevant ministers with a view to the production of an action plan to assist those most vulnerable from power disconnections.

By way of an amendment Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor C MacDonald moved that:-

“ Council congratulates Ofgem on its prompt action in the face of rising energy prices to call a summit involving all those who have a part to play, to protect the most vulnerable in our society from the impact of these rising costs. By this prompt action we have seen a 16.4% reduction in disconnections in the first quarter of 2008.

Council welcomes the Fuel Poverty Action (plan) 4 point Programme agreed by the Fuel Poverty Summit in April 2008 and is encouraged by the £1b Home Energy Saving Programme announced by the UK Government in September 2008. These actions agreed by Ofgem and Government Ministers will improve the situation greatly for those who find themselves in fuel poverty.

But Council is concerned that major energy suppliers still have a process of disconnections and for this reason instructs the Chief Executive to write to those major energy suppliers urging them to follow the lead of British Gas which has a policy of no disconnections”.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4(ii) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 28 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted.

For the Motion (13) - Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

For the Amendment (15) – Provost Reid and Depute Provost Black; Councillor Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, C R Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Patrick and Waddell.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** in terms of the Amendment.

(b) Council Scrutiny

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor C Martin moved that:-

Council notes that the promised feedback reports from Council representatives to the Health Board, Cosla and the Cosla sub committees have never been delivered.

Council therefore agrees to request these reports to be prepared and submitted to the December meeting of full Council.

AGREED.

(c) Former Councillor David Bryson

Councillor Coleman, seconded by Councillor Kenna moved that:-

Council recognises the contribution of former Councillor David Bryson to the wider Stenhousemuir community over a period of 33 years service. In particular Council recognises the contribution of David Bryson to the regeneration programme of Stenhousemuir Town Centre through his leadership of the Economic Development Committee and chair of the Stenhousemuir Regeneration Working Group.

Council therefore resolves to formally recognise the contribution of former Councillor Bryson by asking group leaders to work together to explore options such as the naming of the new library after David Bryson as a fitting and lasting tribute to one of Stenhousemuir's most popular and longest serving public servants ever.

By way of an amendment Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor C MacDonald moved that:-

- (a) Council recognises the contributions of all former Councillors of this Council, including those who have since passed on;
- (b) Council affirms its current position of recognising those who contribute to our communities through Councillors being responsible for street naming, and
- (c) Council confirms that local public facilities should remain linked to areas rather than individuals, and

In terms of Standing Order 21.4(ii) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 28 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted.

For the Motion (13) - Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

For the Amendment (15) – Provost Reid and Depute Provost Black; Councillor Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, C R Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Patrick and Waddell.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** in terms of the Amendment.

MINUTE of MEETING of FALKIRK COUNCIL held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2008 at 10.30 AM.

PRESENT: Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Alexander, Blackwood, Buchanan, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Fry, Goldie, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, Lemetti, A MacDonald, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNally, McNeill, Meiklejohn, Nicol, Oliver, Patrick, Spears, Thomson and Waddell.

CONVENER: Provost Reid

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gow and Nimmo.

ATTENDING: Chief Executive; Directors of Community Services, of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services, of Development Services, of Education Services, of Finance Services and of Social Work Services; Acting Law and Administration Services; Heads of Educational Support and Policy and Performance Review; Legal Services Manager (C Moodie); Childcare Provision Co-ordinator and Senior Committee Services Officer (D Kelly).

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Councillor Buchanan declared a non-financial interest in respect of Agenda Item 12, Execution of Deeds, on the basis that he was related by marriage to two parties referred to in the appendix to the report and advised that he would take no part in the consideration of that item of business.

FC63. MINUTES

- (a) There was submitted (circulated) and **APPROVED** Minute of Meeting of Falkirk Council held on 25 June 2008;
- (b) There was submitted (circulated) and **APPROVED** Minute of Special Meeting of Falkirk Council held on 22 August 2008;
- (c) There was submitted (circulated) and **APPROVED** Minute of Special Meeting of Falkirk Council held on 1 September 2008;
- (d) There was submitted (circulated) and **APPROVED** Minute of Special Meeting of Falkirk Council held on 22 September 2008;
- (d) There was submitted (circulated) and **NOTED** Volume of Minutes – Volume 3 2008/2009; and
- (e) There was submitted (circulated) and **NOTED** Information Bulletin – Volume 3 2008/2009.

Councillor Fry left the meeting after consideration of this item.

FC64. ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 15.2(i), Provost Reid varied the order of business from that detailed on the agenda for the meeting. The following items have been recorded in the order that they were taken at the meeting.

**FC65. REFERRAL FROM EDUCATION AND LEISURE COMMITTEE –
26 AUGUST 2008 - EARLY YEARS DEVELOPMENT**

There was submitted (circulated) (a) Report from Director of Education Services; (b) Extract of Minute of Meeting of the Education and Leisure Committee held on 26 August 2008; and (c) Report by the Director of Education Services submitted to the said meeting.

Councillor Waddell, seconded by Councillor Blackwood moved:-

- (1) the proposals as set out in section 6 of the report submitted to the Education and Leisure Committee on 26 August 2008; and,
- (2) to note the developing national context.

as approved by the Education and Leisure Committee at the meeting held on 26 August 2008.

By way of an amendment Councillor Coleman, seconded by Councillor Thomson moved the following:-

That Woodburn Day Nursery and Queen Street Nursery be retained at their current sites.

That Glenfair Nursery School and Camelon Children's Centre be retained at their current sites.

That Grangemouth Day Nursery and Inchyra Nursery School be retained at their current sites and that there be no amalgamation of the nurseries until a new nursery at Beancross Primary School is opened.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 29 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (15) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Patrick and Waddell.

For the Amendment (14) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

Accordingly, **AGREED:-**

- (3) the proposals as set out in section 6 of the report submitted to the Education and Leisure Committee on 26 August 2008; and,
- (4) to note the developing national context.

FC66. CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF DRY RECYCLATE SEGREGATION AND RESALE SERVICE

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 1 October 2008 by the Director of Development Services (a) advising that Falkirk Council as lead authority for the purchasing consortium of Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils had invited eight tenders for the provision of dry recyclate segregation service for the two Council areas; and (b) providing details on the tenders received, the evaluation exercise and officers' recommendations in respect of the award of the contract.

Councillor Mahoney, seconded by Councillor C R Martin, moved the recommendations in the report.

Following discussion and in terms of Standing Order 25.2(ii), Depute Provost Black, seconded by Councillor C Martin, moved that "the question now be put".

On a division 15 Members voted for the Motion and 14 against. The original motion was thereafter put to the vote with 15 members voting for it and 14 against.

Accordingly, **AGREED** to, in respect of Falkirk Council only and in accordance with Standing Order 6.2(iv), approve acceptance of the tender submitted by Re-Gen Waste Limited for the payment of £962,500 for the five years of the contract 10 November 2008 to 9 November 2013 with an option to further extend this contract by a further two one year extensions.

NOTED the positive impact that increasing the material accepted within the blue bin would have in achieving future waste diversion targets.

FC67. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLORS FROM COMMITTEES

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 30 September 2008 by the Acting Director of Law and Administration (a) advising of the undernoted resignations of Members from Committees of the Council, and (b) seeking appointments to the vacant positions.

Resignations

Councillor Nimmo from the Policy and Resources Committee, of which he was Depute Convener.

Councillor Fry from both the Regulatory Committee, of which he was Depute Convener, and from the Economic Development Committee.

Councillor C Martin as Depute Convener of both the Education and Leisure Committee and the Investment Committee, although continuing to remain a member of both.

AGREED to appoint:-

Councillor Fry as Depute Convener of the Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Nicol as Depute Convener of the Regulatory Committee.

Councillor Blackwood as Depute Convener of the Education and Leisure Committee.

Depute Provost Black as Depute Convener of the Investment Committee.

Councillor Nimmo as a member of the Economic Development Committee.

Councillor McLuckie as a member of the Regulatory Committee.

FC68. EXECUTION OF DEEDS

With reference to his earlier Declaration of Interest, Councillor Buchanan left the meeting at this point.

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 22 September 2008 by the Acting Director of Law and Administration advising of the deeds which had been signed and sealed on behalf of the Council since its last meeting.

NOTED the signing and sealing by the Acting Director of Law and Administration Services of the Deeds as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

Councillor Buchanan left the meeting for the duration of the foregoing item of business.

FC69. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Coleman, moved that the following item – Lease of Premises: Office 1, Wholeflats, Grangemouth be taken in public.

By way of an amendment Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor C MacDonald, moved that the item be taken in private.

On a division, 14 Members voted for the motion and 15 for the amendment.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** in terms of Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the meeting the press and public for the following item of business on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the said Act.

In terms of Standing Order 31.1 it was agreed to continue the meeting beyond the 3 hour limit, following a short adjournment for lunch. The meeting adjourned at 1.30 pm and re-convened at 2.10 pm with all Members present per the sederunt with the exception of Councillor Fry, who left the meeting after consideration of Agenda Item 1.

FC70. LEASE OF PREMISES: OFFICE 1, WHOLEFLATS, GRANGEMOUTH

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 1 October 2008 by the Director of Community Services seeking approval to lease Office 1 at Wholeflats, Grangemouth to Oran Ltd.

Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor Lemetti moved the recommendations in the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor A MacDonald, moved, in addition to the recommendation in the Report, that,
 “ Council believes that the farce of the relocation of Oran has damaged the image of Falkirk Council and compromised the “My Future’s in Falkirk” economic development strategy.

The indecision and incompetence of the current Labour/Tory Administration is highlighted by the following timetable,

12 August at the Policy and Resources Committee where the leader of Falkirk Council, Councillor Gow, welcomes the report bringing Oran to the Falkirk Community Stadium then refuses to vote for that report.

22 August at the special full council where the terms of the Policy and Resources report were moved yet speeches made by at least one Labour member indicated opposition to the report although that member then voted for the report.

8 October, the previous decision is overturned.

Council requires both decisive leadership and consistency if it is to continue the progress made under the previous SNP/Independent Administration.

This has not been demonstrated by the current leader of the Council nor the Convener of Economic Development in this matter.

Council therefore believes that the current Labour/Tory Administration have demonstrated that they are incapable of strategic decision making and therefore has no confidence in their ability to perform their economic development remit.”

On a division, 15 Members voted for the Motion and 14 for the Amendment.

Accordingly, **AGREED**

- (1) to authorise conclusion of the lease of Office 1 at Wholeflats, Grangemouth between Oran Limited and the Council in satisfactory terms;

- (2) to the application of £185,000 from the General Services Capital Programme (Business Property Reinvestment Fund) for additional works which would be repaid by Oran Limited over the terms of the lease; and
- (3) to authorise the Director of Development Services to instruct the fit-out phase of the works with an additional cost to the contract of £250,000.

FC71. SUBSTANCE MISUSE

In terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this item had been called into Council by Councillors J Constable, Hughes and Meiklejohn.

There was submitted (circulated) (a) Extract of Minute of Meeting of the Community Health and Safety Committee held on 19 August 2008; and (b) Report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services submitted to the said meeting.

Councillor C MacDonald, seconded by Councillor McLuckie, moved the recommendations as approved by the Community Health and Safety Committee meeting at its meeting on 19 August 2008.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Meiklejohn seconded by Councillor Thomson moved:-

“Committee notes the significant benefits in areas such as West Lothian and Stenhousemuir in reducing alcohol fuelled anti social behaviour by restricting off sales for those under 21 and 25 respectively.

Committee also notes the outcome of the results of the consultation exercise undertaken by Michael Matheson MSP where 82% of those consulted from across the district want to see the age at which you can purchase alcohol from off sales raised from 18 to 21.

Officers are therefore instructed to open up a dialog with the licensing authority on how a scheme to limit off sales in Falkirk District could be implemented and report back to the next Community Health and Safety Committee meeting”.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 29 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (15) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Patrick and Waddell.

For the Amendment (14) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

Accordingly, **AGREED** that in addition to noting the contents of the Report submitted to the Community Health and Safety Committee at its meeting on 19 August 2008, a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Community Health and Safety Committee outlining achievements and progress made in dealing with opportunities and

challenges which resulted from the developing local and national strategies for tackling alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

FC72. POST OFFICE LTD – NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME

In terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this item had been called into Council by Councillor Gow and Depute Provost Black.

There was submitted (circulated) (a) Extract of Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 September 2008; and (b) Report by the Chief Executive submitted to the said meeting.

Councillor J Constable, seconded by Councillor Alexander, moved that:-

- (1) Officers put together a case for the retention of the Grangepans Post Office and submit it to Post Office Ltd; and
- (2) Officers relay to the UK Labour Government the Council's opinion that we have no confidence in their ability or desire to maintain the Post Office Network as a service throughout the country; and
- (3) A new line Council relays to the MP for Linlithgow & East Falkirk, Michael Connarty, our anger at his voting record on Post Office closures and calls on Mr Connarty to apologise to the people of Bo'ness for his failure to oppose London Government policy on Post Office closures of which the important Grangepans Post Office is one of those under threat.

By way of an amendment, Councillor C Martin, seconded by Depute Provost Black moved acceptance of the recommendations as contained in the report to the Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 September 2008, namely that officers put together a case for the retention of the Grangepans Post Office and submit it to Post Office Ltd.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 29 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (14) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

For the Amendment (15) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Patrick and Waddell.

Accordingly, **AGREED** that officers put together a case for the retention of the Grangepans Post Office and submit it to Post Office Ltd.

FC73. RESIDENTIAL ON-STREET PARKING PLACES FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

In terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this item had been called into Council by Councillor Gow and Depute Provost Black.

There was submitted (circulated) (a) Extract of Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 September 2008; (b) Report by the Director of Development Services submitted to the said meeting; and (c) Report by the Director of Development Services submitted to the meeting of Community Health and Safety Committee held on 19 August 2008.

Councillor J Constable, seconded by Councillor Meiklejohn moved that:-

- (1) Council notes the views of officers that the SNP amendment moved at Committee recognised an anomaly within the existing procedures and therefore accepts that in order to meet the terms of the Council's Equal Equality Policy this anomaly should be resolved forthwith;
- (2) applicants not in receipt of the Mobility Component of DLA at the higher level, will be assessed by a physiotherapist. The assessment determines whether the applicant has a disability which is comparable with that required to qualify for the Mobility Component of DLA at the higher level;
- (3) applications relating to disabled children under the age of 3 will require assessment by a paediatric therapist. The assessment determines whether the applicant has a disability which is comparable with that required to qualify for the Mobility Component of DLA at the higher level; and
- (4) all applicants with garages not located at their houses will be assessed by a physiotherapist.

By way of an amendment Councillor C MacDonald, seconded by Councillor McLuckie moved the recommendations contained in the Report approved by the Community Health and Safety Committee at its meeting on 19 August 2008.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 29 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (14) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

For the Amendment (15) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Patrick and Waddell.

Accordingly, **AGREED:-**

- (1) to the continued provision of enforceable residential parking bays;
- (2) to the continued use of the criteria set out in paragraph 2.7 of the Report submitted to the Community Health and Safety Committee on 19 August 2008, as amended by paragraphs (3) and (4) listed below and that they be used in the assessment of this provision;
- (3) that only those applicants over the age of 65, not in receipt of the Mobility Component of DLA at the higher level, will be assessed by a physiotherapist. The assessment determines whether the applicant has a disability which is comparable with that required to qualify for the Mobility Component of DLA at the higher level; and
- (4) that applications relating to disabled children under the age of 3 will require assessment by a paediatric therapist. The assessment determines whether the applicant has a disability which is comparable with that required to qualify for the Mobility Component of DLA at the higher level.

NOTED that a future report will come to members following the passage of The Disabled Persons' Parking (Scotland) Bill through the Scottish Parliament.

In terms of Standing Order 31.2 and with the meeting having continued beyond 5pm, the Provost advised that the remaining reports on the agenda would be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 31.2.2 and that there would be no discussion on the individual items.

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Coleman moved that the meeting be extended for full consideration on the remainder of the business.

By way of an amendment, Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor C MacDonald moved application of Standing Order 31.2.2.

On a division, 14 Members voted for the Motion and 15 for the Amendment.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** that the remaining reports on the agenda would be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 31.2.2 and that there would be no discussion on the individual items.

Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson left the meeting at this point.

FC74. RESPONSE TO SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT - 'SAFEGUARDING OUR RURAL SCHOOLS AND IMPROVING SCHOOL CONSULTATION PROCEDURES – PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO LEGISLATION'

In terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this item had been called into Council by Councillor Gow and Depute Provost Black.

There was submitted (circulated) (a) Extract of Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 September 2008; (b) Report by the Director of Education Services submitted to the said meeting; and (c) Report by the Director of Education Services submitted to the meeting of the Education and Leisure Committee held on 26 August 2008.

AGREED that the response outlined in paragraph 2.1 and appendix 2 of the Report submitted to the Education and Leisure Committee held on 26 August 2008 and that it be submitted to the Scottish Government.

FC75. MEMBERSHIP OF THE IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 25 August 2008 by the Acting Director of Law and Administration advising of an invitation by the Improvement Service to all Scottish Councils to become members of the organisation.

AGREED that Falkirk Council become a Member of the Improvement Service.

FC76. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS - 2009

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 22 September by the Acting Director of Law and Administration Services detailing a proposed programme of meetings for the period January to December 2009.

AGREED to approve the programme of meetings as detailed within the appendix to the Report and to note that special meetings may be called if necessary.

FC77. AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 25 September 2008 by the Acting Director of Law and Administration Services advising Members of a revised Scheme of Delegation in line with the decisions agreed by Council in June 2008 and the Housing and Social Services Committee in September 2008.

AGREED the revisions to the Scheme of Delegation as detailed in the Report.

FC78. APPOINTMENT TO EXTERNAL BODIES: COSLA COMMUNITY SAFETY EXECUTIVE GROUP AND BID MANAGEMENT GROUP

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 30 September 2008 by the Acting Director of Law and Administration Services advising of (a) the establishment of the CoSLA Community Safety Executive Group and inviting Council to nominate a Member to the Group; and (b) a request to nominate a representative to join the BID (Business Improvement District) Management Group.

AGREED:-

- (1) to nominate Councillor C MacDonald to sit on the CoSLA Community Safety Executive Group with Councillor McLuckie as the substitute Member; and
- (2) to nominate the convener of the Economic Development Committee, ex officio to sit on the BID Management Group, with the Depute Convener of the said Committee as the substitute Member, those positions currently being occupied by councillors C Martin and Lemetti respectively.

DEED of DISCHARGE AND GRANT OF SERVITUDE by FALKIRK COUNCIL in f

J Shaw and R Shaw

DEED of RESTRICTION between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

Stewart Homes (Scotland) Limited

DEED of SERVITUDE by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of

Penders Lane Residents Garage Association

DISCHARGE by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of

The Late Charles James Peace

H Stewart

M C Rennie

I Ferrie and M Ferrie

L McIlear and J McIlear

DISCHARGE of OBLIGATION UNDER S50 AGREEMENT by FALKIRK COUNCIL

F E Crozier and J Crozier

DISPOSITION by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of:-

T N Balmain

R Galloway

H Rutherford

A Dickson

R Farzana and F Farzana

C Aitken

KI McFadyen and G McFadyen

LI Robertson and SJ Robertson

S A Ferguson

W Carson

T C Laffey and C Laffey

I A Swales

D Paterson and J C Paterson

R Easton and A Easton

E Anderson

S Bell and L McKie

P Forsyth and H Forsyth

J M Welsh

K McRae and H McRae

L M A Shanks

Fiona Jane Liddell

A M Brown

A S Daly

M Ruiz-Beltran

F McMenaman

F Kennedy and A C Kennedy

A A S Robertson

M M O'H Brown
W W Milner and S W Milne
J Robertson
L Kerr
K McIntyre
G K Miller & P K Miller
E Millar and A Millar
F A Miller
A Sutherland and G A Sutherland
I McCreath
J M Rutherford and M R W Rutherford
M Whielaw and R Meldrum
T H D McArthur
C Cook
C J Clarkin and C Clarkin
M I W Cooper
A S Polson
A Henderson & M Henderson
G Clark and H Clark
R Brown
The Scottish Ministers
J Anderson
J L Blackhall and C A Blackhall
A L Bertolini
J G Sharp and A B Sharp
G Napier
R Storrar
K McCormick and H McCormick
D A Charleston
W Griffin
Alexander Maxwell
H W Robertson
A Queen
J Hunter
C S Penn and L H Penn
I RM Welsh and J Welsh
B Desmond and D Desmond
J Brown

EXCAMBION between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

SP Distribution Limited

FORFEITURE PROTECTION AGREEMENT BETWEEN FALKIRK COUNCIL AND

South Stand Development Company Limited

South Stand Development Company Limited

LEASE between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

Scottish Historic Buildings Trust

Central Scotland Joint Police Board

Quik Response Fire and Safety Co Ltd

The Scottish Ministers

Robert Fraser

Invercoast Limited

The Trustees for Shieldhill Flute Band

MINUTE of AGREEMENT between FALKIRK COUNCIL and:-

L Rowland & Co (Retail) Ltd

Superdrug Stores plc

Man Leung Lee

SCA Packaging Ltd

SCA Packaging Ltd

Indesit Company UK Limited

Mr D Duncan, Mr W Easton, Mr R Stoddart and Mr Alan Kemp

P F Wong

Rydens LLP

Rydens LLP

MINUTE of LEASE between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

SP Distribution Ltd

SP Distribution Ltd

SP Distribution Ltd

SP Distribution Ltd

MINUTE of TERMINATION of LEASE between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

Barnardos

Quik Response (Fire and Safety) Company Limited

Martin Retail Group Limited

MINUTE of VARIATION between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

Carr/Gomm Scotland Ltd

Margo Archibald and Justine Lee Archibald

I Thomson and S S Thomson

Falkirk Community Stadium Limited

NOVATION AGREEMENT OF ENERGY COSTS

Class 98 Ltd

RENT REVIEW MEMORANDUM between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

The Council of the Borough of South Tyneside

ROAD ORDERS

The Falkirk Council (On Street Parking for Disabled Persons)(No:474) Order 2008

The Falkirk Council (On Street Parking for Disabled Persons)(No:478) Order 2008

The Falkirk Council (On Street Parking for Disabled Persons)(No:479) Order 2008

The Falkirk Council (On Street Parking for Disabled Persons)(No:480) Order 2008

The Falkirk Council (On Street Parking for Disabled Persons)(Revocation No:44) C

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC ORDERS

The Falkirk Council, Glasgow Rd, Camelon (Temporary Prohibition of Parking)

The Falkirk Council, Bo'ness Childrens Fair Festival (Temporary Prohibition of Traf

The Falkirk Council, Bo'ness Fair 2008, (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Antonshill Roundabout (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Lomond Dr, Langlees (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Haugh St, Bainsford (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Halls of Airth Rd, Airth (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Merchiston Ave, Falkirk (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Webster Ave, Carronshore (Temporary Prohibition of Traffic)

The Falkirk Council, Land at Wood Street, Grangemouth (Stopping of Footpaths)

favour of

34 & 36 Millar Place, High Bonnybridge

Milnquarter Farm, Roman Road, Bonnybridge

Area of Land at Penders Lane

8D Market Street, Bo'ness, West Lothian

6 Jackson Avenue, Grangemouth

6 Balfour Crescent, Larbert

7 Linmill Road, Avonbridge, Falkirk

12 Park Lane, Bo'ness

L in favour of

Woodneuk, Castlecary

4 Grahamsdyke Crescent, Bonnybridge

22 Gauze Place, Bo'ness

39 Elizabeth Crescent, Falkirk

29 Newtown Street, Bo'ness

82 Wholequarter Avenue, Redding

27 Calder Place, Falkirk

16 Bruart Avenue, Stenhousemuir

30 Glenbervie Drive, Larbert

4 Carrick Place, Falkirk

7 Park Avenue, Dennyloanhead

3 Moy Court, Grangemouth

131 Main Street, Shieldhill

95 Mavisbank Avenue, Shieldhill

5 Glasgow Road, Dennyloanhead

118 Haugh Street, Falkirk

3 Forgie Crescent, Maddiston

13 Broomage Crescent, Larbert

19 Hayfield Terrace, Dennyloanhead

166 Bowhouse Road, Grangemouth

19 Forth Avenue, Larbert

31 Union Road, Grangemouth

43 Marchlands Avenue, Bo'ness

35 Thornbridge Road, Falkirk

36 Castlevue Terrace, Haggs

318 Stirling Street, Dunipace

26 Norwood Avenue, Bonnybridge

83 Langton Road, Westquarter

11 Watling Street, Falkirk
6 Affric Drive, Falkirk
39 Suilven Heights, Laurieston
59 Portal Road, Grangemouth
45 Castlehill, Bo'ness
15 Wilson Avenue, Polmont
6 Hawthorn Drive, Dunipace
10 Fountainpark Crescent, Bo'ness
20 Elmbank Street, Grangemouth
27 Castlevue Terrace, Haggs
1 Lumley Court, Grangemouth
13 Redbrae Avenue, Bo'ness
46 Westquarter Avenue, Westquarter
20 Roman Road, Bonnybridge
16 Glenfuir Street, Falkirk
142 Corentin Court, Falkirk
18 Kinnaird Drive, Stenhousemuir
12 Rashiehill Road, Slamannan
19 Hillhead Avenue, Banknock
187 Carmuir Avenue, Falkirk
Land at Seaforth Road, Langlees
56 Stark Avenue, Falkirk
12 Kilbrennan Drive, Falkirk
153 Randyford Street, Falkirk
46 Elphinstone Crescent, Airth
7 Kelly Drive, Denny
53 Mavisbank Avenue, Shieldhill, Falkirk
49 Sunnyside Street, Falkirk
152 Muirhall Road, Larbert
7 Thornton Avenue, Bonnybridge
41 Orchard Street, Grangemouth
8 Dower Crescent, Bo'ness
35 Murray Crescent, Maddiston
17 Cairneymount Avenue, Maddiston
11 Gowanlea Drive, Slamannan
1 Bank Street, Grangemouth
56 Forgie Crescent, Maddiston, Falkirk
33 Pine Grove, Westquarter

Land at Woodburn Avenue, Redding

D

South Stand, Falkirk Stadium
South Stand, Falkirk Stadium

The Hippodrome, Hope Street, Bo'ness
32 Brodie Street, Bainsford, Falkirk
29 Castle Road, Falkirk
Joint Accomodation Centre, Gauze Road, Bo'ness
121 Stirling Street, Denny
Unit 2, Hallglen Shopping Centre, Falkirk
0.59 acres at Westend Park, Shieldhill

16 Charlotte Dundas Court, Grangemouth
6 York Arcade, Grangemouth
4 Weir Street, Falkirk

Blocks 7B, C & D West Mains Industrial Estate, Grangemouth
7A West Mains Industrial Estate, Grangemouth
Unit 1d, West Mains Industrial Estate, Grangemouth
Middlemass Court in Grahams Road, Falkirk
1 Glebe Street, Falkirk

Planning Appeal - 7 Arnothill, Falkirk
Planning Inquiry - 44 Northfield Road, Dunipace

Substation at New Grangemouth High School, Grangemouth

Substation at New Denny High School, Herbertshire Street, Denny
Substation at New St Mungo's High School, Falkirk
Substation at Falkirk High School, Blinkbonny Road, Falkirk

Rossvail School, Glasgow Road, Camelon, Falkirk
3 Castle Drive, Bankside Industrial Estate, Falkirk
4 Fleming Court, Denny

3.22 The Forum, Callendar Busines Park, Callendar Road, Falkirk
65 & 67 La Porte Precinct, Grangemouth
Yonderhaugh Farm, Bothkennar
Subjects at Westfield, Falkirk

Basement, Ground, 1st & 2nd Floors, 23-25 High Street, Falkirk

Order 2008

fic)

FALKIRK COUNCIL

EXTRACT OF MINUTE of MEETING of the POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2008 at 10.30 a.m.

PR69. REFERRALS FROM ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE – 16 SEPTEMBER 2008

With reference to Minute of Meeting of the Environment and Heritage Committee held on 16 September 2008 (Paragraphs EH26, EH27 and EH28 refer), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 13 October 2008 by the Director of Development Services listing those Reports considered by that Committee and referred to this Committee.

(b) Parks Development Plan

With reference to Minute of Meeting of the Environment and Heritage Committee held on 16 September 2008 (Paragraph EH30 refers), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 6 October 2008 by the Director of Community Services enclosing the Report considered by that Committee on the Parks Development Plan.

Councillor Gow, seconded by Depute Provost Black, moved the recommendations in the Report.

By way of an Amendment, Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Kenna moved that the matter be referred to Council.

On a division, 4 Members voted for the Motion and 3 Members for the Amendment.

Accordingly **RESOLVED** in terms of the Motion.

AGREED:-

- (1) to approve the Report and draft Parks Development Plan;
- (2) to approve the capital spend allocation outlined in Appendix 5 of the Parks Development Plan totalling £275,000, comprising £200,000 approved Parks capital and £75,000 approved Culture and Leisure Strategy capital;
- (1) to seek annual reports on progress and future expenditure proposals; and
- (2) that following consultation, the Parks Development Plan be submitted to the Environment and Heritage Committee for further consideration and thereafter to this Committee for ratification.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

EXTRACT OF MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2008 at 9.30 a.m.

CH24. COMMUNITY WARDENS REVIEW

With reference to Minute of Meeting of the Community Health and Safety Committee held on 20 January 2004 (Paragraph CH13 refers), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 3 September 2008 by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services (a) outlining the background to the Community Wardens Service, and (b) detailing the review of the Community Wardens Service with proposals for their remit and funding beyond March 2009.

Councillor MacDonald, seconded by Councillor McLuckie moved the recommendations as contained within the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Meiklejohn, seconded by Councillor Hughes moved an amendment to paragraph 2 of the recommendations, namely inserting the words "in principle" so as to allow the recommendation to read as follows:-

"to authorise officers to take forward, in principle, the proposals in consultation with employees, human resources and trade unions".

On a division, 7 Members voted for the Motion and 4 for the Amendment.

Accordingly, **NOTED** the contents of the Report.

AGREED:-

- (1) the proposals to combine the Environmental Enforcement Team and Community Warden Service;
- (2) to authorise officers to take forward the proposal in consultation with employees, Human Resources and Trade Unions; and
- (3) that Officers report back to the Community Health and Safety Committee as the proposals develop.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: COMMUNITY WARDENS REVIEW
Meeting: COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
Date: 28 OCTOBER 2008
Author: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report aims to update Members on the review of the Community Wardens Service with proposals for their remit and funding beyond March 2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Community Wardens Service was funded through the Scottish Executive/Scottish Government's Anti-Social Behaviour fund. In 2008, with the introduction of the Concordat between Local Government, the previous antisocial behaviour Scottish Government ring-fenced funding was incorporated into the Council's budget for 2008/2009. Members agreed to continue funding projects until March 2009, and asked for a specific report on how the Community Warden Service could continue and expand.
- 2.2 The Community Wardens Service funding for 2008/2009 is £494,930, which includes an allocation of £103,000 for a priority response service to the reporting of environmental issues by Community Wardens.
- 2.3 In January 2004, a report was approved by Community Health & Safety Committee detailing the remit of the Community Wardens Service highlighting duties, locations, staffing, costs and management arrangements. The Service was designed to offer a reporting and recording resource in relation to ASB for all housing tenures within Falkirk Council whilst forming links with communities to establish greater community cohesion. The main remit of the Community Wardens is split between crime prevention / community reassurance and environmental.
- 2.4 Initially the Community Warden Service consisted of 1 Community Warden Manager, 8 Community Wardens and 1 Clerical Officer covering Hallglen, Camelon, Grangemouth, and Stenhousemuir and their surrounding areas. As mentioned above the funding included an allocation for the provision of a priority service for environmental reports and clear ups.
- 2.5 Where Community Wardens were based was approved by Committee in 2004 using the following:
- Deprivation 'hotspots' – the Deprivation Index 2003, published by the Scottish Executive, was used in conjunction with Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) and regeneration information to determine the most deprived areas;

- Housing ‘hotspots’ – information was collated from our housing teams to identify problematic areas, including complaints regarding other residents and problems with anti-social/nuisance behaviour;
- Environmental ‘hotspots’ – information gathered by Estates Management on incidences of littering, graffiti, dumping etc contributed to the identification of areas; and
- Police ‘hotspots’ – police information was sought on areas with above average reporting of crime and reporting of anti-social or nuisance behaviour.

2.6 The hotspot information was collated, analysed and mapped out to identify areas that would most benefit from the presence of Community Wardens. Other communities had problematic areas but the four communities above had the highest concentration of anti-social behaviour related problems

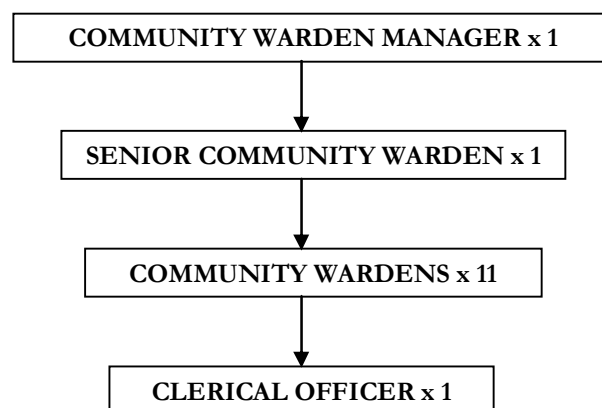
2.7 From the information gathered at that time, it was determined that the Community Wardens would operate in the following areas :

- Camelon and Tamfourhill;
- Hallglen and adjacent area;
- Stenhousemuir and Carronshore; and
- Grangemouth.

2.8 The Community Warden Manager is responsible for the overall co-ordination of the scheme as well as the day-to-day operational management. The scheme was incorporated into the existing management structure of Housing Services.

2.9 In 2006, following analysis of updated information regarding the Council’s hotspots, the Service was expanded to include Bo’ness and Denny, and a further 4 staff were appointed, including 1 Senior Community Warden.

2.10 The current Community Warden Service staffing structure is illustrated below:



2.11 The key functions of the Community Wardens Service are community reassurance and environmental duties which consist of :-

- High visibility within local communities providing re-assurance to residents;
- Engaging positively with local residents, including young people;
- Reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour or crime to the appropriate Council Service or to the Police;
- Acting as a professional witness;
- Directly reporting environmental problems to the Environmental Wardens;
- Reporting incidences of vandalism, graffiti, needles, etc to the relevant services; and
- Point of contact for local communities' concerns about environmental issues and antisocial behaviour.

3. REVIEW

3.1 The review looked at the following areas to ascertain the best value to be gained from the Community Wardens Service and the associated funding by:-

- Comparing current provision with original remit;
- Comparing original and current hotspot information to determine locations that they require to be operating in post March 2009;
- Reviewing their roles & responsibilities post March 2009; and
- Identifying funding post March 2009.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 As previously reported to the Community Health & Safety Committee in May 2008, the Community Wardens are providing a high level of reporting of incidents, problems and issues to various Council Services, Central Scotland Police and the Fire & Rescue Service. The Community Wardens Service is meeting its original remit and have enhanced the service provision through the development of successful partnership arrangements and increasing resources. In particular, there have been significant partnership developments with Central Scotland Police, The Council's Estates Management Service, Conflict Resolution Service, Detached Youth Work team, Fire Service, Community Traffic Wardens, Education's ILC's .

4.2 On reviewing the original list of hotspot locations identified in 2004 and subsequently in 2006, additional areas in Braes, Maddiston and Dawson areas, have been identified as hotspot locations.

4.3 As part of the review a consultation process was carried out with all stakeholders. This involved a staff workshop, a workshop with all relevant partners and focus groups with service users. There was consistent feedback from each of these consultation sessions which indicated that the Community Warden Service was a good service that had built up effective joint working and communication arrangements with other agencies. In addition the feedback suggested that the service be expanded to cover more areas and the Community Wardens role should be re-defined and to include additional enforcement responsibilities.

- 4.4 During the 6 - 20 October, a satisfaction survey was carried out and the findings of this survey will be benchmarked with a similar survey carried out in 2006 in order to identify further proposals for service improvements.

Enforcement Team: Litter and Dog Fouling

- 4.5 The Environmental Enforcement team consists of a Co-ordinator and 8 Enforcement Officers. The majority of funding for this service comes from the Council's mainstream budget, with the ASB budget funding two Environmental Enforcement Officers plus the Co-ordinator's post. Operationally between 4/5 of the 8 officers concentrate on enforcement duties and the remaining 3/4 deal with pest control issues. However, the job descriptions are generic in order to provide flexibility within the management of the various activities undertaken by the teams.
- 4.6 The Enforcement team are responsible for issuing for warning letters and fixed penalty notices for :-
- Dog Fouling;
 - Litter; and
 - Flytipping.
- 4.7 The teams cover similar geographical areas as the Community Wardens and there is the potential for duplication of routes and duties and a perceived lack of clarity from the public over the various team's roles.
- 4.8 When considering the review in May, Members expressed their support of the value of the Community Warden Service and asked if it would be possible to expand the service to cover more areas. By combining the complementary services of Community Warden and Environmental Enforcement, there is an opportunity within current budgets, to expand the geographical spread of the service and increase the role of wardens to cover enforcement duties.

Community Traffic Wardens

- 4.9 The Community Traffic Wardens are funded by Central Scotland Police. Their main focus is on traffic problems (e.g. abandoned cars, out of date tax discs, unlawful parking) but they are also involved in local Police Initiatives and Public Re-assurance. They cover the Falkirk policing sub-area on a programmed basis. Community traffic wardens currently cover central Falkirk and the retail park, as well as other areas of the Council. It is proposed that discussions take place with Central Scotland Police to ascertain if there is an alignment between the duties of the Community Traffic Wardens and Community Wardens. This would allow the Community Warden / Enforcement Services to be focused areas other than the Town Centre.

Way Forward

- 4.10 If approved by Members, the above proposals would be developed in consultation with employees, human resources and the trade unions. Further work is required to develop the remit, geographical locations, routes, roles & responsibilities, training requirements, post development, gradings and management structure.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members

- 5.1 Note the contents of this report**
- 5.2 Agree the proposal to combine the Environmental Enforcement Team and Community Warden Service;**
- 5.3 Authorise officers to take forward this proposal in consultation with employees, HR and trade unions; and**
- 5.4 Require Officers to report back to Committee as this proposal develops.**

.....
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Date: 3 September 2008
Ref: ABB0908AK
Contact Name: Alice Keenan Ext: 6398
Elizabeth Hood Ext 0820

FALKIRK COUNCIL

EXTRACT OF MINUTE of MEETING of the POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2008 at 10.30 a.m.

PR72. FINANCIAL POSITION 2008/09

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 30 October 2008 by the Director of Finance providing the latest update on the financial position for 2008/09 which reflected the information recorded for the six month period to 30 September 2008.

Councillor Gow, seconded by Councillor Fry moved the recommendations contained in the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Kenna, moved that "Committee notes with concern proposals to place well established services for some of our most vulnerable citizens out to tender for the first time.

Committee believes that the continuity of service delivery to vulnerable people within the community is more important than financial cuts and therefore agrees to the following:-

- (a) stop the tendering process for the provision of support to adults with learning difficulties;
- (b) report to Committee for approval or otherwise of any future changes to the manner in which these services are procured;
- (c) call on the Director of Social Work Services to bring forward a full and detailed Report on how she intends to deal with budgetary pressures."

The Committee adjourned for 15 minutes and reconvened with all Members present as per the sederunt.

On a division, 4 Members voted for the Motion and 4 for the Amendment.

There being an equality of votes and in terms of Standing Order 21.6 the Convener used her casting vote in favour of the Motion.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** in terms of the Motion.

NOTED the projected financial position as at 30 September 2008.

AGREED to instruct Directors to incur only expenditure which is essential in order to bring expenditure into line with the approved budget.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject : FINANCIAL POSITION 2008/09
Meeting : POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Date: 18 November 2008
Author : DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the latest update on the Council's financial position and reflects the information recorded for the 6 months to 30 September 2008.

2. GENERAL FUND

- 2.1 Appendix 1 sets out both General Fund net expenditure by Service and how it is financed. Movements between budget and projected outturn are expressed in monetary and percentage terms.

In October of this year, I advised Members that expenditure was forecast to exceed income by around £1.7m or 0.54% of approved net expenditure. I am now projecting that the overspend will reduce to c£1.3m, equivalent to 0.41% of the overall budget.

- 2.2 The most significant deviations from budget are described below:-

Education (+ £0.35m; 0.2%)

The cost of residential schools remains a significant cost pressure, being £0.6m above budget. Higher spending on staff costs is mitigated by additional income, with savings in rates (£0.2m) and additional income from childcare fees (£0.1m) reducing the overspend to £0.35m or 0.2% of budget.

Social Work Services (+ £3.606m; 5.5%)

The forecast overspend is virtually unchanged since last month. Whilst the demand pressures on the budgets for childrens residential care and 24 hour packages for community care have stabilised at this point, it has to be borne in mind that these are volatile budgets which can be subject to significant change.

General Fund Housing Services (+ £1.552m; 13.0%)

The change in the projected overspend is due to an increase in the cost of Housing Benefit net of subsidy, together with a reduction in the anticipated contribution Housing Benefit makes to the cost of the Council's Homeless service.

Miscellaneous Services (- £1.335m; 19.1%)

Interest earned in revenue account balances remains buoyant and is forecast to be around £1.1m above the budgeted level.

Capital Financing Costs (- £1.073m; 18.0%)

Loan Charges are now forecast to be a further £0.3m lower as a result of lower interest rates. The total underspend is therefore almost £1.1m when taken together with changes to the debt profile referred to in previous reports.

3. TRADING ACCOUNTS

Surpluses are currently forecast to be £0.148m above budget, arising mainly from increased income within the Building Maintenance Division. All other trading accounts are operating close to the planned levels.

The Building Maintenance and Roads Statutory Trading activities are therefore well placed to meet their financial objective.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Forecast spending within the HRA is now c£0.36m below budget. This arises from the combined impact of savings in loan charges and void properties which are partially offset by higher costs of providing services to the homeless. In addition, income remains higher than originally envisaged as a result of the significant slowdown in house sales.

5. CONCLUSION

At the mid-point of the financial year, net General Fund spending is forecast to be £1.289m above the approved level. There are significant overspends within the Social Work budget (+£3.6m) and General Fund Housing (+£1.6m) which are considerably higher than the additional resources of £1.6m approved by Council in February of this year.

Reserves are forecast to fall to £4.5m by the year-end, which is well below the minimum level of £5.5m contained within the Reserves Strategy approved in August 2006. In addition, the final impact of equal pay claims cannot yet be quantified with any degree of certainty. Directors are well aware of the need to bring spending more in line with the approved budget.

Spending within the HRA is forecast to be £0.36m below budget, with year-end reserves estimated to be £6.115m.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to note the projected financial position as at 30 September 2008 and instruct Directors to incur only expenditure which is essential in order to bring expenditure more into line with the approved budget.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Financial Monitoring Statements 2008/09

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers should telephone Falkirk (01324) and 506300 ask for Mr Jannetta.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

EXTRACT OF MINUTE of MEETING of the POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2008 at 10.30 a.m.

PR74. TREASURY MANAGEMENT – INTERIM REVIEW 2008/09

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 20 October 2008 by the Director of Finance Services detailing the Council's Treasury Management function.

The Report in particular outlined the Council's borrowing and investment strategies, highlighting the criteria used to determine the selection of building societies on the Council's approved counterparty list for investment.

Councillor Gow, seconded by Councillor Fry moved the recommendations contained in the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Kenna, moved the recommendations in the Report and that "Council notes the financial problems of the banks previously regarded as triple rated institutions by our advisers.

Committee is of the view that this highlights the fact that we now live in changing times and the size of financial institutions are no guarantee of performance.

Committee therefore believes that Scottish building societies such as the Dunfermline Building Society have demonstrated a high level of financial prudence and sound management in difficult times.

Committee therefore agrees to include Scottish based institutions that have enjoyed the status of "mutual" within its approved list of institutions available to receive short-term investments."

In terms of Standing Order 21.4(ii) a vote was taken by way of a roll call.

There being 8 Members present, with Members voting as undernoted:

For the Motion – Provost Reid, Depute Provost Black, Councillors Fry and Gow.

For the Amendment – Councillors Alexander, Kenna, Jackson and Spears.

There being an equality of votes and in terms of Standing Order 21.6 the Convener used her casting vote in favour of the Motion.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** in terms of the Motion.

NOTED the progress of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2008/09.

Councillor Spears left the meeting upon the conclusion of the foregoing item of business.

AGENDA ITEM

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject : TREASURY MANAGEMENT – INTERIM REVIEW 2008/09
Meeting : POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Date: 18 November 2008
Author : DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

The terms of the Council's Treasury Management Practices require that an interim report on the Treasury Management function be produced by 31 December each year.

2. ECONOMIC AND INTEREST RATE OUTLOOK

- 2.1 At the time the Annual Strategy Report was approved in April, it was reported that the global economy was set for a significant slowdown. The US sub-prime mortgage crisis and the resultant liquidity "crunch" in the global banking system had increased the likelihood of recession. In response, western central banks, led by the US Federal Reserve, injected significant levels of liquidity into markets and also in the US and UK interest rates were eased.
- 2.2 In the Strategy Report, it was noted that UK interest rates had reached a level of 5.25% and indeed in April 2008 were further reduced to 5%. At that time, it was recognised that while the outlook for the UK economy had deteriorated, the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee indicated that monetary policy would err on the side of caution until signs were evident that inflation had peaked. In the intervening period, the outlook for economies has deteriorated sharply to the extent that central governments across the globe have implemented a series of rescue packages to support their own key financial institutions. As part of these measures, in early October, central banks implemented a 0.5% cut in interest rates as a co-ordinated response to the crisis. Given the Bank of England's view that the balance of risk has tilted towards recession at the expense of inflation which is forecast to fall in the coming months, the bank recently announced a dramatic 1½ % reduction in the rate to 3%.

- 2.3 The Strategy Report indicated that longer term interest rates might rise towards 5% reflecting the need for higher gilt yields to attract the level of investment necessary to accommodate what would be a significant rise in gilts issuance required by the Government to fund its support packages to ailing financial institutions. However, over the remainder of the financial year, it is anticipated that longer term rates may well trade in a range of around 4% for periods of up to five years and nearer 4.5% for longer periods, as they benefit from the anticipated decline in short term rates and the expected healthy demand for government securities as a safe haven for investors during the current market volatility.

3. BORROWING STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council's longer term borrowing requirement has been revised to £11m, a marked increase of £7.4m in the level as advised in the Annual Strategy report to Committee in April. The revised forecast reflects a combination of a less than anticipated level of sales in housing stock and a reduction in General Fund capital receipts not being received in the current year. Both of these issues have been highlighted in the regular Capital Programme updates made to this Committee.
- 3.2 In the Strategy Report, it was noted that the Council's longer term borrowing requirement for the year would be relatively minor and as such it was planned to finance any funding linked to short term rates. The report also highlighted the potential for four Market Loans up to a value of £26m to be repaid during the year should any of the lenders invoke a rate change clause as per their contracts.
- 3.3 In the current year to date, fears of a global recession have increased and resulted in a complete re-assessment of the future direction of interest rates. In particular, short term rates are expected to decline sharply following the reduction in base rate to 3%. Despite the marked increase in longer term funding identified at para 3.1, it is proposed that such funding continues to be met on terms linked to short term rates. The potential for repayment of any of the Market Loans identified at para 3.2 remains low given the current structure of longer term rates.
- 3.4 Members will recall, in previous reports to this Committee, that a policy change by the Public Works Loans Board in November 2007 had effectively brought debt rescheduling activities to an abrupt halt and that it would require a significant upward shift in yields to re-activate this treasury tool. In fact, the extreme market volatility experienced this year created such a scenario to the extent that in mid-October, the undernoted debt rescheduling transaction was concluded.
- Repay 3 PWLB fixed rate loans totalling £24.3m with an average period to maturity of 43 years and an average rate of 4.52%.
 - Redeemed loans repaid without penalty.

- Replacement funding secured through a reduction in Council's temporary deposits by a similar amount.

The main driver for the transaction was the opportunity to significantly reduce the level of deposits currently on loan with financial institutions in a climate where concerns have been raised over the security of certain counterparties.

4. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 4.1 The Council manages its short term surplus funds by investing from time to time with other Local Authorities and financial institutions subject to strict credit rating criteria consistent with the Council's Treasury Management Practices.
- 4.2 Previous reports to this Committee have highlighted the increased counterparty risk which has evolved as the financial crisis worsens and the various interim measures introduced by the Council in light of prevailing market events. Over time, a number of financial institutions have had their credit ratings downgraded and as such have been removed from the Council's approved list. Also, current monetary limits of either £5m or £3m to specific counterparties have been applied, together with a maximum period for lending of one month. The decision to repay the PWLB loans identified at para 3.4 will also have the effect of reducing the level of counter-party risk.
- 4.3 Members may wish to note the criteria used to determine the selection of Building Societies on the Council's approved counterparty list. This is designed to ensure prudent protection for public funds. The main criteria is based on a minimum level Fitch (or equivalent rating agencies) short term credit rating of "F1" and a long term credit rating of "A". Additionally for Building Societies, they must have total assets of greater than £5 billion. Taking both criteria together and given a number of other mergers in the sector, only a few societies currently qualify as approved counterparties, namely Nationwide, Yorkshire, Coventry & Chelsea. Building Societies in Scotland do not qualify under either of the criteria set by the Council.
- 4.4 As previously reported, the Council continues to invest a large part of its Pension Fund cash surpluses with the Fund's custodian, Northern Trust, in its AAA rated Sterling Cash Fund. Only a working balance of pension fund cash is retained and pooled with Council monies for treasury management purposes.
- 4.5 Draft Investment Regulations and a supporting Code, issued for consultation in May 2008, propose a more structured approach to accounting for, and reporting on, local authority investments. While the consultation period has ended, it can be assumed that the financial crisis will at the very least cause the Scottish Government to consider if any further controls/restrictions require to be introduced. An implementation date of April 2009 is planned for the new Investment Regulations.

5. PRUDENTIAL CODE

Consistent with the requirements of the Prudential Code, a series of Treasury Management indicators have been devised as part of the overall suite of Prudential Indicators which are used to demonstrate that Council capital spending plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. Monitoring and review of these indicators are incorporated in the periodic Capital Programme updates made to this Committee.

6. CONCLUSION

The prospects for a sharp fall in short term rates, following the dramatic cut in base rate, will have a beneficial effect on the overall borrowing costs of the Council for the current financial year. Given the unprecedented events unfolding in financial markets, the Treasury Section and our advisers will continue to remain vigilant to any new developments and having particular regard to the Council's exposure to counterparty risk.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the progress of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2008/09.

Director of Finance

Date : 20 October 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Treasury Management Strategy 2008/09 submitted to Policy & Resources Committee on 8 April 2008.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers should telephone Falkirk (01324) 506338 and ask for Alastair Redpath.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

EXTRACT OF MINUTE of MEETING of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2008 at 9.30 a.m.

ED19. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION UPDATE

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 26 November 2008 by the Director of Community Services (a) introducing a presentation by the Strategic Projects Manager; (b) outlining progress in respect of the regeneration of Bo'ness, Denny, Grangemouth and Stenhousemuir town centres; (c) highlighting the role of the Town Centre Development Groups in the regeneration projects, and (d) advising of the promotion activities undertaken by Falkirk and District Town Centre Management Ltd.

The Strategic Projects Manager's presentation summarised the progress to date of the regeneration opportunities within the four district centres.

Discussion took place on the following issues:-

- Operation of the traffic lights leading into Stenhousemuir old town centre
- Signage listing existing shops in Stenhousemuir old town centre
- Use of the bus lane by taxis and other vehicles in Park Drive, Stenhousemuir
- Formalisation of agreement with the developer of Denny town centre
- Future of the harbour development in Bo'ness town centre
- External grants towards project works to be undertaken in Bo'ness
- Involvement of community groups on Town Centre Development Groups

Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor Lemetti, moved the recommendation contained in the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Hughes, moved that an additional recommendation be included as follows:-

"Councillors should encourage no disparity of Town Centre Development Groups to ensure public participation. All community groups will have the opportunity to attend local Town Centre Development Groups if they express a desire to do so".

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 10 Members present with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (5) - Councillors Buchanan, Lemetti, McLuckie, C Martin and Patrick.

For the Amendment (5) - Councillors Carleschi, Coleman, Hughes, A MacDonald and Oliver.

There being an equality of votes and in terms of Standing Order 21.6, the Convener used his casting vote in favour of the Motion.

Accordingly **AGREED**, to note the progress of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION UPDATE
Meeting: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Date: 2ND DECEMBER 2008
Author: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is to advise Committee as to the progress of the Council's Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and in particular the regeneration of Bo'ness, Denny, Grangemouth and Stenhousemuir. A presentation on this progress will be made at Committee.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Policy & Resources Committee in 2001 approved the regeneration of the Council's district centres by market testing and identifying redevelopment opportunities using Council owned land and property assets to lever and secure private sector investment. This work and additional security and environmental improvements in the four district centres has been supported by the Town Centre Regeneration capital programme. This report summarises progress to date of regeneration opportunities within the district centres.

3.0 STENHOUSEMUIR REGENERATION

- 3.1 The Policy & Resources Committee approved Macdonald Estates plc as the Council's preferred developer. A town centre masterplan was subsequently finalised including a new 40,000ft² Asda food store, library, shops, health centre, car parking, community rooms and sports facilities at Crownest Park.

Development Progress

- 3.2 Construction of the new town centre has progressed well with completion and pre let of the new shops in January 2008, the new library opening April 2008 and the new Asda store trading from end September 2008.
- 3.3 To date up to 175 people have been employed on the initial construction phase of the town centre. Asda have indicated that they now employ 250 people at the Stenhousemuir store.
- 3.4 Despite agreeing acquisitions of all third party property interests by November 2007, one private owner withdrew from negotiations despite best endeavours by Macdonald Estates and Council officers to secure matters. The consequence of this has been a delay in completing the final component of the masterplan; a 12000ft² retail parade and car park at King Street. This necessitated acquisition of the interest by CPO powers. The

affected building, the former Clydesdale Bank, has not been demolished and the area remains undeveloped and an eyesore to the community.

- 3.5 The Council and Macdonald Estates were formally advised by Scottish Ministers in October 2008 that the CPO was being upheld in their favour. Subject to there being no Appeal, matters will now be progressed whereby the former Clydesdale Bank building will be demolished and development of the final retail block and car parking scheme delivered.
- 3.6 Detailed planning consent for the development of a new Health Centre and Tryst Community Centre was received in April 2005. However, delays in finalising the development agreement resulted in the original construction contract requiring to be retendered. Key to the development of the new health centre is relocation of the Tryst Community Centre. The existing Centre will be demolished, requiring existing services to be temporarily relocated whilst the new building is completed. Work on these new facilities is anticipated to commence in early 2009 with estimated completion by December.
- 3.7 A total of 330 parking spaces have been provided in the new town centre. The new retail block and health centre, with associated car parking will provide an additional 155 car parking facilities in the town centre. The previous town centre provided approximately 100 car parking spaces.
- 3.8 The total development value is anticipated to be £15m with all works completed by end 2009. The formal development agreement between Falkirk Council and Macdonald Estates plc allows for open book appraisal and validation of all costs associated with the development ensuring best market value in terms of transfer of Council assets.

Trader/Business Assistance

- 3.9 Falkirk Council and Macdonald Estates were able to secure existing business from the previous retail parade into the new retail facilities adjacent to the new Asda foodstore. Working closely with Town Centre Management Ltd there has been regular communication with all town centre retailers whilst regeneration works have progressed. This has included regular progress newsletters, trader meetings, promotional events and specific promotion of Non Domestic Rates Hardship Relief. Despite this, there has been some inevitable disruption experienced by traders as particular phases of the regeneration works are delivered.
- 3.10 Officers have liaised closely with the Director of Finance Services to assist traders with Non Domestic Rates Relief claims. Council officers have promoted this scheme to local traders and assisted with the formal applications to the Director of Finance Services. Only those businesses who demonstrate a clear downturn in trade as a consequence of the regeneration works are awarded relief. The scheme continues to be in place during the whole regeneration phase and officers continue to offer assistance to local businesses.

4.0 BO'NESS REGENERATION

- 4.1 Two regeneration initiatives are being progressed as key building blocks in the regeneration of Bo'ness:-

4.1.1 Bo'ness Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

- The THI Strategy for Bo'ness town centre concentrates on the restoration and conservation of the historic core of the town. It involves private and public sector match funding to the HLF award, delivering £5m regeneration to this historic town centre.
- Work on the first phase of the THI has been concluded with delivery of public realm improvements and restoration of the Grade A listed Hippodrome Cinema, due to be opened as a major attraction during 2009. Open days at the Hippodrome since completion of the restoration project have shown exceptional community interest and support.
- The next phase of the THI is now underway involving the restoration of key listed derelict buildings in the heart of the town centre. These buildings are derelict and unattractive to visitors and the Bo'ness community. The most significant is 15-17 South Street, a prominent building in the heart of the town. Restoration of this building is now underway and due to be completed by March 2009. This will bring additional retail space and apartments to the town centre.
- Restoration of other key derelict buildings and implementation of smaller building improvements and shopfront grants are presently being satisfactorily advanced through detailed grant award discussions. The success in delivery of the THI to date has been the key role of the THI Project Officer, employed by Town Centre Management Ltd for the duration of the THI initiative. This role has been to liaise with the Bo'ness community and property owners within the THI area to promote the THI objectives and advise and assist with grant applications.

4.1.2 Bo'ness Harbour/Foreshore Redevelopment

- Members will be aware that the original masterplan by the Council's joint venture development partner ING Real Estate required to be rephased. The scheme is to deliver a mixed residential, commercial and marina quayside development around the restoration of the disused harbour with development of the remainder of the site with residential units on the foreshore area.
- This rephasing was as a consequence of the global collapse of financial markets and gave an early indication of its direct and unprecedented effects on financial institutions and the property development sector.
- ING and the Council are working to deliver the regeneration masterplan which received outline planning consent July 2006. ING will commence with residential development at the eastern end of the masterplan site rather than the harbour area as originally proposed.
- The outcome of community consultation on these proposals and the revised phasing of the masterplan were approved at the Council meeting in June 2008. This secured ING's continued partnership and proposed investment in Bo'ness and the Council area. Since June 2008 Council officers and ING have been progressing the redrafting of the development agreement and this will be finalised early 2009.

- As a consequence of rephrasing the scheme and despite the further impacts of the economic downturn, ING continue to remain positive about Bo'ness and their delivery of the regeneration proposals for the harbour/foreshore area.
- It is anticipated that following receipt of planning consent for the revised phases, work could commence on site during 2010.

5.0 DENNY REGENERATION

- 5.1 Regeneration masterplan proposals for Denny town centre have been concluded, following extensive consultation with retailers, local businesses and the community. The Council's joint development partner Henry Boot plc has amended the original masterplan to reflect concerns raised during the consultation process.
- 5.2 As outlined previously to Members the finalised scheme identifies a two storey development with investment of over £11m including 18,000ft² foodstore, 36000ft² new retail units, restaurant/bar, a new library, increased car parking provision and substantial public realm improvements.
- 5.3 A detailed development agreement between Falkirk Council and Henry Boot plc has been finalised on the basis of terms approved by Policy & Resources Committee and ensuring best value in exchange and acquisition of the Council's town centre site land package. The agreement has been referred to the Board of Henry Boot plc and formal approval is awaited.
- 5.4 It is anticipated that formal planning applications in respect of the new town centre will be progressed in early 2009 once formal Board approval is received. Thereafter, upon receipt of planning consent, a site start is currently estimated during 2010.
- 5.5 Meantime Falkirk Council following a report to Policy & Resources Committee in June 2008 is progressing financial assistance to Falkirk Council commercial tenants, traders and businesses who continue to operate within the Church Walk housing blocks and are affected by ingress of water. These blocks will be demolished as part of the town centre regeneration programme likely to commence 2010 and on this basis compensation to businesses is offered until this takes place.

6.0 GRANGEMOUTH REGENERATION

- 6.1 Asda opened a new 65000ft² foodstore on land acquired from Forth Ports adjacent to Grangemouth town centre. The development is recognised as bringing additional investment and retail provision to Grangemouth.
- 6.2 In partnership with the Council's joint venture development partner (and joint owner of the centre) extensive community consultation was undertaken in respect of regeneration proposals for Grangemouth town centre which resulted in an agreed Masterplan:-
- 6.3 The regeneration masterplan was subsequently amended to reflect specific community concerns regarding the relocation of the library/museum facilities and lack of a stronger link between the new Asda and the existing town centre. This was reported to Policy & Resources Committee in May 2008, noting the ongoing support for the regeneration scheme.

- 6.4 Since May this year Council officers have been progressing a development agreement with the developer and jointly undertaking discussions with the Health & Safety Executive regarding the influence of Hazard Consultation Zones on the town centre regeneration proposals. Initial discussions with the HSE on the Masterplan have been constructive and have ensured an early full understanding by the HSE of community and Council aspirations for Grangemouth town centre.
- 6.5 Upon conclusion of a development agreement it is anticipated that the developer will progress this regeneration initiative with the submission of a planning application during 2009 and site start estimated during 2010/11.

7.0 TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

- 7.1 Committee in September 2007 approved the establishment of town centre development groups to be held locally in Bo'ness, Denny, Grangemouth and Stenhousemuir town centres.
- 7.2 These groups have met regularly, approximately every two months. They are attended by area local members, community councils and local community planning group representatives as well as retailer and business representatives, Town Centre Management Ltd, the developer and Council officers. In some instances, representations of other local interest groups have been involved and it is suggested that the groups keep their make-up under review to ensure appropriate local representation to reflect the regeneration of their town centres.
- 7.3 The groups provide a forum for bringing together local interested parties to communicate progress of regeneration activity in each of the town centres and address ongoing community concerns either with masterplan proposals, progress of works, or ongoing trading concerns.
- 7.4 The groups have adopted a positive approach and enable understanding of the development process which leads to physical works commencing within a town centre. The groups have received updates on progress of town centre regeneration masterplans and have influenced their design. The groups have consulted on options to deliver change and established sub groups as necessary to examine specific issues.
- 7.5 Members should be aware that the groups do not have formal decision making powers, relying on the Council's formal processes taken through Committee for any decisions to be made. When reporting on the outcome of consultation officers will advise members of the contribution made by a group and its participants.

8.0 TOWN CENTRE PROMOTION

- 8.1 Whilst conclusion of development agreements, planning applications or physical masterplan works are progressed, the continuing performance of the district centres remains a specific concern to local traders and the Council. This has become of greater concern as the impact of the economic decline takes effect.
- 8.2 In addition to non domestic rates relief support available at the outset of regeneration works (outlined in 3.0 above), Falkirk Council continues to provide revenue support to

Falkirk & District Town Centre Management Ltd to undertake key promotion activity within the district centres. Their activity includes:-

- Radio promotion
- Newspaper promotion
- Christmas events and publications
- Farmers Markets
- Craft fairs
- Shop Local initiatives
- Promotional prize schemes to encourage purchases within the town centres
- Welcome packs to new housing developments and estate agents
- Attending/setting up retailer meetings to discuss promotional activity
- Retailer/business newsletters
- Tourism related promotion

8.3 The Council's revenue contribution to the district centres and activity delivered is reported annually by Falkirk & District Town Centre Management Ltd. Following the acceptance of Falkirk as one of six Scottish pilots for Business Improvement District status, Town Centre Management Ltd announced in May that businesses within the Falkirk BID area had voted in favour of the formal establishment of BID status. Falkirk is the fourth of six Scottish BID areas to be successful.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The Town Centre Regeneration proposals are consistent with My Future's in Falkirk Initiative, the revised Community Plan, Corporate Plan and Structure & Local Plans.

Financial: The Director of Finance Services is kept fully apprised as to revenue implications for sale of existing Council retail units in Denny and Grangemouth. To date physical investment delivered in the district centres as a consequence of the town centres regeneration strategy is £14m. Currently Falkirk Council is progressing regeneration masterplans for all 4 district centres with a potential of £228m. As the current economic climate has significantly deteriorated since the establishment of masterplan proposals for each centre, members must be aware that each proposal is subject to the ability to deliver a positive outcome by the Council's development partner, with each scheme being subject to market conditions.

Legal: The Acting Director of Law & Administration Services is assisting in the preparation of development agreements with each of the developers to ensure delivery of key Council and community objectives within each of the regeneration initiatives. In addition, the mechanism of transfer of Council assets and of existing and new facilities are also progressed to ensure best value to the Council.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Despite the downturn in the national and global financial economy, Falkirk Council through the promotion and marketing of its land and assets in Stenhousemuir, Bo'ness, Denny and Grangemouth has been able to secure and maintain national and international developer interest to the area. Community consultation has been central to the consensus gained on the proposed masterplans and these now provide a positive way forward for each centre.
- 10.2 Council officers continue to work with the developers, community and traders to ensure progress in each town centre. The physical changes and economic benefits, in terms of new jobs, investment and trading are being witnessed in towns such as Bo'ness and Stenhousemuir. The support of members and the community is recognised with each project contributing to the creation of a safer, more attractive and thriving town centre which meet their aspirations.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the progress of the town centre regeneration strategy.

.....
Director of Community Services

26th November 2008

Contact Officer: Peter Reid. Ext: 0971.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1.
- 2.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01324 590971 and ask for Peter Reid.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject : REFERRALS FROM SPECIAL HOUSING AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – 9 DECEMBER 2008
Meeting : FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date : 10 DECEMBER 2008
Author : DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1

A Special meeting of the Housing and Social Services Committee took place on 9 December 2008 and after discussion agreed to refer the following reports to the Falkirk Council for approval. Motions and amendments are noted where appropriate.

• **HOUSING ALLOCATIONS REVIEW UPDATE**

Councillor Goldie, seconded by Councillor McNeill moved the recommendations as contained within the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor McNally, seconded by Councillor Meiklejohn moved that in place of recommendation 7.5 of the Report the following should be substituted:

“Refer the report to a special meeting of Falkirk Council in the near future for further consideration”.

On a division, 7 Members voted for the Motion and 4 for the Amendment.

Accordingly,

NOTED:-

- (1) the outcome of the consultation with stakeholders set out in Section 3 of the Report; and
- (2) the proposals to minimise any impact on the promotion of race, disability, age and gender equalities set out in Section 5 of the Report.

AGREED:-

- (1) the proposal to bring further reports to Members setting out a timetable for transition to the new policy subject to the implementation of an IHMS as discussed in Section 6.1 for the Report;
- (2) the allocations policy set out in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (3) to refer the report to Falkirk Council for approval.

- **HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2008-2013**

The Convener, seconded by the Depute Convener moved the recommendations contained within the Report with a further additional recommendation, namely:-

- 7.4 Requests that the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services withdraws 15 tenancies from each area office from the mainstream letting pool for use as temporary homeless accommodation and reviews the position in April 2009.

NOTED:-

- (1) that a Best Value Service Review of homelessness services will be carried out in 2009-2010; and
- (2) that the Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 will be formally launched in Spring 2009.

AGREED:-

- (1) to approve the revised Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 incorporating the changes to the Visions, Goals and Outcomes set out in Section 3 of the Report and in Appendices 2 and 3 and refer the Strategy to Council: and
- (2) to request that the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services withdraws 15 tenancies from each area office from the mainstream letting pool for use as temporary homeless accommodation and reviews the position in April 2009.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the recommendations already endorsed at the Special meeting of the Housing and Social Services Committee.**

.....
Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services

Date : 9 December 2008

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: AUDIT COMMITTEE – ROLE AND REMIT
Date: 10 DECEMBER 2008
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Author: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend a role and remit for an audit committee following the decision taken by Council on 25 June 2008 to introduce such a committee. This role has hitherto been performed by the Council's Best Value and Audit Forum.

2. AUDIT COMMITTEE PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 In 2004, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) issued guidance entitled "Audit Committee Principles in Local Authorities in Scotland". This guidance set out three fundamental audit committee principles, namely that there should be effective mechanisms in place to provide:

- independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment within the authority;
- independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment; and
- assurance that any issues arising from the process of drawing up, auditing and certifying the authority's annual accounts are properly dealt with.

- 2.2 It is suggested that the principles outlined above would form the core role of the audit committee.

- 2.3 The guidance also provides a template for local authorities to use when establishing an Audit Committee. A proposed remit, based on that guidance, would be as follows:

- to consider the Council's governance and business management arrangements;
- to consider the Council's risk management arrangements and action being taken to address risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors, including consideration of periodic reports from the Corporate Risk Management Group;
- to consider the adequacy of the Council's control environment;
- to approve (but not direct) Internal Audit's strategy;

- to consider and agree Internal Audit plans, ensuring that work is planned with due regard to risk, materiality and coverage;
- to review summary Internal Audit reports and seek assurances that action has been taken to address issues identified;
- to consider an Annual Assurance report from the Internal Audit Manager;
- consider the reports of External Audit and other inspection agencies and seek assurances that recommendations made are addressed;
- to ensure there are effective relationships between Internal and External audit;
- to review the Authority's assurance statements, including the Statement on the System of Internal Financial Control or equivalent, to ensure they properly reflect the risk environment.

3. THE COMMITTEE

3.1 CIPFA's guidance suggests that an audit committee may function more effectively with a small membership to enable efficient discharge of its role and responsibilities although the guidance also acknowledges that these are decisions for Councils themselves to take. It is suggested that Council may wish to consider a committee of 6 members, politically balanced, with a quorum of four and reporting directly to Council.

3.2 Having regard to the decision taken by Council at its statutory meeting on 18 May 2008, a committee of six would have the following membership:

3	Labour
2	SNP
1	Conservative or Independent or non aligned Independent

3.3 The guidance advises that "to be fully effective, members of the audit committee need to have certain characteristics above and beyond those which are desirable in all members. In particular, they need to:

- have a good understanding of how the whole Council works and a broad understanding of the controls which exist or should exist;
- be able to distinguish between serious control weaknesses and those which are relatively minor;
- be confident about discussing audit findings with the auditors and management;
- have the power to make appropriate decisions and to make recommendations to the Council, in accordance with the standing orders; and
- be respected and trusted by other members of the Council to make remitted decisions on their behalf".

3.4 Meetings of the Committee would be attended by the Director of Finance (or his representative), the Internal Audit Manager and such other officers as the committee deemed to be required. The External Auditor may also be invited. In addition, other members of Council would be permitted to attend as the committee considered appropriate, following the existing practice of the Best Value and Audit

Forum. Other members would not, however, have a formal decision making role on the committee.

- 3.5 It is not envisaged that there would be a requirement for the Audit Committee to meet as frequently as the Best Value and Audit Forum. It is proposed, therefore, that the Committee would meet a minimum of 3 times each year, with the proviso that additional meetings would be called if there was business to be considered which could not wait until the next scheduled meeting. The scheduling of meetings should tie in with the annual Internal and External Audit planning and reporting cycle, with meetings in March, May and November.
- 3.6 With the exception of matters now within the remit of the audit committee, the business dealt with formerly by the Best Value and Audit Forum would continue to be dealt with by the re-named Best Value Forum.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:-

- (a) the proposed role and remit of the Audit Committee as set out in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3 of the report;
- (b) that the membership of the Committee should be set at 6 with a quorum of 4;
- (c) that the Committee should report directly to Council, and
- (d) to amend the Standing Orders of the Council to reflect these decisions.

4.2 Should Council agree in accordance with the foregoing, members are invited to appoint a convener of the Committee, and members thereof, in accordance with the proportionality outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

.....
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date: 19 November 2008
Contact: Brian Pirie Ext.506110

Background Papers

Nil.

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 10 DECEMBER 2008
Author: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will recall that, in line with the Council's Strategic Planning and Management System (SPMS), the Council approved a Corporate Plan in March 2008. This Plan covers the period from 2008 until 2011. This report updates Members on progress made towards achieving the outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan and how these are being taken forward through the key policies and strategies of the Council.
- 1.2 Members will also recall that the Council, along with our Community Planning Partners agreed our first Single Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Government in the summer of this year. The Outcome Agreement sets out how our local priorities support national outcomes, along with the indicators we will use to measure progress. This reports progress against these indicators and also notes the requirements for refreshing the Single Outcome Agreement next year.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the goals and values of the Council, i.e. what we are trying to achieve and how we will go about our business. As part of the Corporate Plan, the SPMS was included to ensure that the Council's key priorities are progressed with regard to our strategic policies and strategies, as well as service delivery objectives.
- 2.2 The Corporate Plan refreshed the goals and values of the Council to ensure they meet our continued aspirations, i.e. underpin our vision for our area. Our priorities are aligned with the vision and themes contained within the Strategic Community Plan and thus underpin our contribution to achieving the outcomes within our Single Outcome Agreement. Our revised goals are:

Goals

- Further developing a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy;
- Continuing to improve the health, safety and well being of our citizens and communities;
- Increasing our effort to tackle disadvantage and discrimination; and
- Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to live work and visit.

Values

- 2.3 The values of the Council set out the way we will undertake our business. These are:

We are committed to PUBLIC SERVICE, which means:

- fairness;
- listening and responding;
- being accessible and accountable; and
- promoting our services using plain English as far as possible.

We are committed to PERFORMANCE, which means:

- providing quality;
- achieving value for money;
- promoting innovation; and
- seeking continuous improvement.

We are committed to PARTNERSHIP, which means:

- effective communication;
- sharing decision making; and
- encouraging participation.

- 2.4 The purpose of this report is to consider the progress against our three-year Corporate Plan outcomes.

3. PROGRESS AGAINST THE OUTCOMES IN THE PLAN

- 3.1 Underpinning each of the goals in the plan, we have four outcomes. These outcomes are incorporated within our Single Outcome Agreement under an appropriate national outcome, along with the relevant indicators that will measure progress.
- 3.2 Appendix one provides an update on the relevant indicators contained within the Single Outcome Agreement under each goal and relevant local outcomes.
- 3.3 Members will note that in the majority of objectives, we are making good progress. An overall assessment of improvement can be made by using a ratio which compares the number of indicators where performance has increased, with those where performance has decreased in a reporting year. For 2007/08 the ratio is approximately 5:1 in favour of improving or sustaining existing performance levels. It is anticipated that we will continue to develop the monitoring statement to ensure it covers all priorities adequately.
- 3.4 The following section provides commentary on some of the Council's achievements in 2007/08 and for the first six months of this 2008/09, against the outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan.

Further Developing a Thriving Sustainable and Vibrant Economy

Our area will be recognised as having a culture and ethos of aspiration and ambition

- (i) The Business Panel continues to be optimistic about the future of the Council area. From the latest survey 92% of businesses think the Falkirk Council area is a good place to be located and that they will continue to consolidate and expand over the coming year.
- (ii) The Council has opened two new schools in Kinnaird and Maddiston thus ensuring our youngest pupils have the highest quality of learning environment;
- (iii) The Council and our partners became an early implementer of the new 16+ learning choices model launched by the Government in February 2008. This will ensure all young people leaving school will be offered arrangements appropriate to their needs e.g. training, employment, further education or indeed continuing at school by December 2010. This is one of the most ambitious schemes of this nature in Scotland. In addition the Council has developed new progression pathways for those young people who need pre apprentice provision. To date this new opportunity has supported 406 young people of which 93% moved into a positive outcome.
- (iv) In 2007/08 schools reported that young people were engaged in 287 entrepreneurial activities, 17 of which were Fair Trade activities. This represents an increase of 16% on the previous year's figures. Schools continue to link with local businesses to promote Enterprise in Education with a total of 427 partnerships established. Carrongrange School was only one of 10 in Scotland to be recognised as Socially Enterprising School at an awards ceremony earlier in summer 2008. It was also short listed as one of the top 3 in the 'most Enterprising Special School' category at the 2008 Scottish Education Awards.
- (v) A new business unit opened in Bo'ness to offer modern accommodation for small businesses and a new unit is under construction at Wholeflats, Grangemouth.

The Wealth and Prosperity of our Area will increase

- (i) Over the last year, the number of modern apprentices taken on by private businesses has increased. We have secured benefit in the community clauses in a number of contracts that have allowed new opportunities for training and apprenticeships to take place. In addition to the new schools contract, a national housing association has adopted our clauses and has appointed 20 modern apprentices who are working within our area.
- (ii) The Council worked to ensure the transfer of responsibilities from Scottish Enterprise took place timeously. Falkirk Council also has taken the lead for the Forth Valley area in the business gateway. The number of Volume Start ups within the Forth Valley area in the first three months of operation performed ahead of target and above the Scottish average.
- (iii) The Council has also sought to stimulate local employment. In 2007/08 the Council supported 278 new business start ups through the Business Gateway. The Council also increased the uptake of work based training to 560 in

2007/08, compared to 432 the previous year. The Council also increased the number of modern apprentices and skill seekers it managed by 13% in the same period. With Council support a total of 729 jobs have been created or secured in 2007/08.

Our workforce will be highly skilled

- (i) The Council opened a new library in Stenhousmuir and recently opened a further library in Polmont. These new facilities give people within our communities the opportunity to access not only books, but on line facilities. The number of times the public accessed computer terminals in libraries was up slightly last year.
- (ii) We also employ 255 modern apprentices within the Council at any one time. This means we are well on course to meet our commitment of 5% i.e. 300 of our workforce being modern apprentices by autumn 2009.
- (iii) In 2007/08 our adult literacy and numeracy team worked with 262 learners to improve their reading, writing, number and English language skills. A number of learners gained accreditation in Communication and Numeracy, and several achieved ESOL SQA units necessary to qualify for British Citizenship.
- (iv) Overall, our schools have performed steadily during 2007/08. Against most of the categories assessed and reported on by HMIE, our schools have been assessed at 90% or above as being good or very good. The S4 cohort has performed consistently in terms of attainment between 2006/07 and 2007/08. As a result of the percentage of young people leaving school without progressing into employment, further or higher education or training has fallen from 16% in 2006/07 to 10% in 2007/08.

The quality of our infrastructure will help promote the growth of the local economy.

- (i) Falkirk Town centre was awarded Business Improvement District status in May 2008. This will ensure the town can continue to develop and grow.
- (ii) The plans for regenerating our other town centres continue to develop. The new shopping centre in Stenhousmuir nears completion with the opening of the ASDA store.
- (iii) While the economic situation has impacted our ambitious plans for development, where the Council has an influence, we have continued to progress plans for regeneration. This includes the opening of the Hippodrome in Bo'ness.
- (iv) The Council took the decision to reduce car parking charges in Falkirk Town centre. This has ensured our town centre will be a more attractive destination for shoppers and commuters alike.
- (v) During 2007/08 the number of business advice requests for consumer protection completed within 14 days reached 88.7% compared to 65.9% the previous year.

Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities

Our citizens will be supported to make positive health choices and lifestyles in order that they can live longer.

- (i) The Council approved a new Health Improvement Plan in August 2008. This plan sets out clear targets and actions for improving the health of individuals and our communities over the life of the plan.
- (ii) All our primary, secondary and special needs schools and nursery centres have now become health promoting, with 64 establishments achieving level 2 accreditation and 7 level one. 98% of our educational establishments are now health promoting. This helps encourage young people to pursue a healthier lifestyle. During 2007/08, the number of young people participating in Council health promoting activities more than doubled to 5,072 compared to 2,315 in 2006/07. The number of young people attending our leisure centres also increased by over 8,000 during the same period.
- (iii) The Council approved a Core Paths Plan in spring 2008. This plan develops the work contained within the Outdoor Access Strategy, that aims to promote the countryside to both residents and visitors. This last year has seen the implementation of the Braes and Bo'ness / Blackness paths network.
- (iv) The Council launched an Active Campaign in the summer of 2008. This promoted a range of activities from tea dances to organised sporting activities. This included opening the school swimming pools in Larbert and Braes High School to the public.
- (v) 24 active peer educators were recruited and trained in Grangemouth, Denny, Falkirk and Maddiston. These peer educators then delivered 47 training sessions since last year and have made contact with 823 young people.
- (vi) Over 200 young people were involved in the Commonhealth Games, incorporating physical activities and alcohol awareness, with a number of events from cycle trips to football matches. These activities were linked to the Straighttalk Peer Education Project.

People will have equitable access to local health, support and care.

- (i) Earlier this year, the Council and our partners established two locality based children's teams that ensure we have a more holistic approach to meeting the needs of children and young people.
- (ii) Services and advice for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder were launched. These provided practical support and advice for young people and their families including ensuring staff have the essential skills required.
- (iii) During 2007/08 the number of carer assessments undertaken experienced a 3-fold increase by 970 assessments compared to 2006/07. We also increased the percentage of home care clients aged over 65 who received personal care by 5.5% in the same period.

Our citizens and communities will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and well being

- (i) Further support has been given to develop youth initiatives such as football and rugby. This has meant there has been an increase in the number of young people participating in physical activity over the last year.
- (ii) The Council was the first to introduce 'cool to the touch' containers as part of the meals on wheels service. These containers are 98% biodegradable and ensure that the 42,000 meals delivered every year to the 328 users stay warm when delivered, while being cool when removed from ovens.

- (iii) The Council delivered a 10 week 'Virtual Baby' programme to 40 young people as well as taster sessions to 300 pupils in schools and community based settings. This comprehensive programme gave young people an insight into the knowledge and skills required to make informed decisions about parenting.
- (iv) 'Community Concerns Us' campaign was launched in spring this year. This campaign highlighted how people could report on anti-social behaviour within their communities.

Our citizens will be protected.

- (i) In summer this year the Council started a £5.2m programme of flood prevention, including approximately £4 m programme for Bo'ness.
- (ii) The Council established a project to develop closer relationships between parents and schools. This complements a project launched in schools 'Restorative Approaches' piloted in the Braes and Larbert High Schools which recognises the school as a community and that individuals within the school have a responsibility to each other.
- (iii) Further investment in Camelon Children's Centre worth £1.3m was approved. This will ensure the centre can cater for the youngest and most vulnerable children in our communities.
- (iv) A highly popular taxi marshalling service that was introduced over the Christmas and New Year periods was continued following a successful evaluation.
- (v) Citizens' confidence in their personal safety in their communities has increased. In 2007/08 90% of citizens were confident of their personal safety during the day and 51% during the night. This compares with 84% and 47% respectively in 2006/07.
- (vi) We are seeing the benefits of our investment in tackling anti-social behaviour in recent years. The number of domestic noise complaints fell from 157 in 2006/07 to 19 in 2007/08. The reported levels of anti-social behaviour also fell in the same period from 3474 to 3320.

Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination

Our citizens continue to access critical services that meet their needs

- (i) The Council approved a number of projects through the Fairer Scotland Fund to be targeted at our individuals and communities of greatest need. These projects included measures to ensure access to debt and money advice services, further support to move people into employment and training and also measures to improve the environment of our areas of greatest need.
- (ii) Our Social Work Services were subject to a number of major inspections this year. This included an inspection of all social work services. To ensure it is understanding and meeting the needs of its customers more fully, the Service has introduced a range of customer feedback mechanisms. These include more consistent arrangements for dealing with complaints, further training and supervision of reception staff and also a revised set of service information leaflets.
- (iii) The MEC service was further developed and modernised. This now provides up to date hardware and software for people living at home, including people with complex needs and head injuries.
- (iv) The Stenhousmuir Children and families Social Work team received a top Social Work Care award which recognised their best practice in tackling alcohol and

vandalism related crime, as well as offering reactive services to our most vulnerable families.

- (v) During the course of 2007/08, the Council has improved the number of buildings which are suitable and accessible to disabled people from 56% in 2006/07 to 63.4% in 2007/08.

Our housing continues to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area

- (i) Our housing repairs service continued to improve with an increase in repairs completed on targets in both emergency repairs and other repairs. In addition, customer satisfaction levels were also high with 91% satisfaction over the last 18 months.
- (ii) 7 specifically designed homes for people with a disability were completed by the Council this year, with a further new 114 Council houses and 210 RSL homes planned over the coming years.
- (iii) We have developed a Home Energy Strategy that will help support our efforts to reduce fuel poverty and raise awareness of energy efficiency in our housing.
- (iv) The Council has implemented a strategy to assist homeless people. This is with a view to supporting and reducing the number of homeless people in our area. We have also introduced a new Housing Allocations Policy. This is set against an increase in demand for social housing. For instance, 1771 sought relocation from their current council house due to changed circumstances.

Vulnerable children will be protected

- (i) The Council continues to review and develop our child protection arrangements. We have, in addition to training our own staff in this critical area, expanded our training to other community and voluntary organisations. These arrangements and other measures to strengthen our child protection measures are being taken forward through the approved Child Protection Committee business plan.
- (ii) Following a successful funding bid, the Council has entered into an agreement with Arberlour Child Care Trust to develop a service for young female care leavers. This service will provide enhanced and intensive support for young women leaving care moving into independent living.
- (iii) We have also plans to expand our provision of residential care with the opening of two additional residential places in Tremanna child care unit. This will ensure our provision for our most vulnerable children is of the highest standards.
- (iv) We have developed over the last year, training and development opportunities for our valued foster carers. This has resulted in over 50% of our Foster Carers achieving SVQ awards.
- (v) The Council, in partnership with key agencies, has further progressed the integration of Children's Services. This has been assisted with the appointment of two locality managers for each of the respective pilots in Denny and St. Mungo's. A number of staff from different partner agencies are now co-located in Denny. Nineteen multi-agency training sessions have also been provided at which a total of 313 members of staff attended.

Disadvantaged communities will benefit from better services

- (i) In order to support some of our most vulnerable people within our communities, the Council developed two very innovative home support schemes earlier this year. The first, in conjunction with Grangemouth Enterprises and the Falkirk Homeless Project (Quickstart), the Council entered into a Public Social Partnership that provides furniture to homeless people and families that maximises the benefits to the wider community in terms of waste management and employment / training opportunities. Secondly, the Council recently appointed a Handyman to provide a small repairs service to all tenures. This service will benefit people aged 60 or over, or any person registered disabled who do not have an able bodied person living with them.
- (ii) The Council published an updated Equalities Scheme this year. This set out the priorities for the coming years and included focusing on looked after children, young males, physical assessments of buildings, as well as building relationships and community engagement. In conjunction with this, the Council, along with our community planning partners, published guides for migrant workers in our local area, highlighting issues such as housing, health, safety and employment. This complemented the Council's recently approved guidance on communicating with minority ethnic communities and people with a sensory impairment.
- (iii) In September this year the Council provided evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee on Poverty. We were one of only two Councils asked to give verbal evidence on our approach to tackling poverty, following our written submission.
- (iv) The Council working in partnership with the area's three Citizen's Advice Bureaux, have helped 1,266 people who have gone into debt in 2007/08 by assisting them in renegotiating £32.3m of debt. Although the number of benefit enquiries have dropped during the period, benefit gains have increased by £1.7m between 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to live work and visit

We will be greener

- (i) Earlier this year it was announced that Falkirk was one of only six Councils that had been successful in bidding for Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding. The Government's grant of £926,000 will be met with Council and partners funding of £453,000 to develop sustainable transport options for the Larbert / Stenhousemuir area.
- (ii) In line with our Biodiversity Strategy, progress has been made in a number of areas. These include the production of an Integrated Network Study Programme for the Falkirk Council area, the publication of Biodiversity and Development Supplementary Planning guidance, the development of a bird feeding project in the Council's care homes and the completion of a conservation project which saw the enhancement of three pond clusters.
- (iii) The Council launched a Carbon Busters campaign in autumn this year. This is aimed at reducing the Council's own carbon footprint by 20% in five years. This is in addition to nearly 97% of the Council's vehicles now running on low emissions fuel – an increase of 9% in the last year.

- (iv) The Council continues to roll out the 3-bin system across the area to assist in our efforts to increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. Thanks to our communities, steady improvement has been maintained on our recycling rates during the year. In 2007/08 the tonnage of waste collected per 1,000 population fell by 82.4 tonnes compared to the previous year. We also reduced the total tonnage of bio degradable waste being sent to landfill by over 6,500 tonnes in the same period.

We will improve the built environment

- (i) Earlier this year the Council allocated £600,000 that will ensure our major sporting and cultural centres are maintained the standards our communities require. This resulted in investment being made to Callander House, Grangemouth Sports Complex, upgrading our Leisure facilities, as well as improving local football facilities.
- (ii) The Council has improved performance on a number of key indicators to improve our built environment and open spaces. This includes increasing the percentage of planning applications processed within target time. The percentage of special uplifts completed within 5 days has also risen from 78% in 2006/07 to 92.8% in 2007/08. We have also improved on the removal of abandoned cars within 14 days from 85.2% in 2006/07 to 89.4% in 2007/08.

Our open spaces will be attractive, accessible and safe

- (i) The Council supported the development of a project called 'Communities along the Carron' which was successful in being awarded European Funding. This project seeks to connect local communities to the River Carron and develop a vision for using the river as a community resource. The aim is to reconnect communities along the river by gathering information on water quality, ecology and habitats, heritage, access and resources including shops, businesses and local attractions.
- (ii) In September this year the Council launched a new litter strategy. This strategy built on the successes of the last plan. Members will be aware that the cleanliness of the area has improved to its highest level in years. In addition earlier this year, we launched a community support pack for communities and groups who want to take action on local environmental projects such as neighbourhood clean up projects. This was complemented by a small grants scheme that would be made available to groups and organisations to plant trees, shrubs etc in their local communities.
- (iii) The Council approved a Parks Development Plan. This Plan set out ambitious targets for improving parks across the District. Alongside this, £200,000 has been allocated this year to improve our local parks and play areas.

Our profile will reflect our area as a destination of choice

- (i) The Council launched the delivery phase of the 'Forth Dimension' a major heritage tourism project in conjunction with Clackmannanshire Council and the Stirling Smith Museum and Art Gallery. This project seeks to enhance the Forth Valley Museums status in the tourism economy by exploiting the potential of the areas advantageous geographical position and the strength of its heritage and existing museum collections.

- (ii) The Antonine Wall was inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in July this year, following being chosen as the UK's nomination in February 2008. Following the announcement, the area received a great deal of press attention, given we have the largest and best preserved stretch of wall within our area. Work is now ongoing to ensure the area takes advantage of the World Heritage Site status. This is in addition to the Falkirk Wheel now being Scotland's 8th most popular visitor attraction.
- (iii) The Helix was awarded £25 million from the Big Lottery's Living Landmarks programme. In addition, the Council has also committed significant amount of funding to this project, which has recently seen the appointment of key members of staff who will be responsible for taking this exciting initiative forward.

Our Values

- 3.5 In addition to ensuring our services are focused on achieving local outcomes, we understand that we must seek to continually improve the way we do business. This commitment underpins the core values of the Council. To achieve this, the Council has recently reviewed our Best Value Improvement Plan. This follows the progress made in taking forward the areas for improvement outlined in the Audit Scotland Report on our Audit of Best Value and Community Planning.
- 3.6 An updated Best Value Improvement Plan was recently presented to Best Value and Audit Forum, following the report to Council in June this year that noted progress against our previous plan. Members will recall this noted progress on the following areas:
 - (i) Implementing new performance management software that will ensure consistent reporting of information to Members and the public;
 - (ii) Approving a Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2007-2010;
 - (iii) Developing further our approach to procurement including preparing an updated procurement plan;
 - (iv) Developing clear criteria for undertaking Strategic Best Value Reviews and completing the Diagnostic Project;
 - (v) Approving an HR and Workforce Planning Strategy;
 - (vi) Further taking forward our accreditation on IIP with Finance Service being awarded IIP status in summer this year;
 - (vii) Achieving the Healthy Working Lives Award earlier this year; and
 - (viii) Implementing customer service standards.
- 3.7 Future actions that underpin our values have been set out within the revised Improvement Plan.

4. FUTURE PLANS AND FURTHER SCRUTINY OF CORPORATE AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE PLANS

- 4.1 Each Service revises its service plan to ensure they are maximising their contribution to achieving the outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan. The Single Outcome Agreement as noted before sets out the performance management framework that underpins the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Plan. This does not however replace the existing service performance reports that are presented to Members.

- 4.2 In line with practice this year, it is anticipated that all Services will present their Service Plans to the Best Value and Audit Forum, along with its first performance report of the new financial year and prior to the summer recess. This will allow Members to ensure that tasks contained within each Service Plan are taking forward the outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan appropriately.
- 4.3 Appendix one, as noted above, sets out the performance information the Council has included within the Single Outcome Agreement. This notes the progress the Council and our services have made against 2006/07 baseline figures. A number of services have further improved performance since March 2008. Some of these examples have been highlighted for Members' further interest. The process of refreshing the Single Outcome Agreement is currently underway with partners. This follows recently received guidance. The refreshed Single Outcome Agreement will contain information from all partners and will include progress against all performance information contained therein.
- 4.4 The refreshed Single Outcome Agreement has to be ready in draft by the end of February for submission to the Scottish Government. The refreshed Agreement will be presented to Members for approval in the New Year.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Progress in the first year of the Corporate Plan has been good. It is also heartening to note that while we understand the global economic situation we are in presents us with challenges, recent surveys of young people and our business community continue to show optimism and aspiration for the future of our area. We do not underestimate the challenges we face; we have a firm foundation to build on to ensure the outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan are achieved.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 6.1 **Note the progress against outcomes contained within the Council's Corporate Plan;**
- 6.2 **Note the progress the Council and its services are making against the performance indicators contained within the Single Outcomes Agreement and set out in appendix one of this report; and**
- 6.3 **Agree that the refreshed and updated Single Outcome Agreement is presented to Members in the New Year.**

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date: 25 November 2008
Ref: ABK1108FC

Contact Name: Fiona Campbell

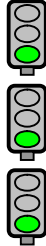





LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS





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








Further Developing a Thriving, Sustainable and Vibrant Economy						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our area will be recognised as having a culture of aspiration and ambition	1	The % of school leavers moving into Higher Education Further Education Training Employment	25% 16% 10% 33%	Awaiting data		Improve 28% 20% 7% 31%
	2	Diversity in sectoral employment: numbers & % Wholesale and retail; Manufacturing; Health & Social Work; Public Administration; Real Estate & Renting Business activities Other industries	11,000 – 18.9% 9,100 – 15.6% 9,000 – 15.4% 5,500 – 9.4% 5,200 – 8.9% 18,600 – 31.8%	Awaiting data		Monitor
	3	% of school leavers offered a guaranteed training place (new indicator)	-			2008 – 50% 2009 – 75% 2010 – 100%




Further Developing a Thriving, Sustainable and Vibrant Economy

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
The wealth and prosperity of our area will increase	4	No of claimants in receipt of out of work benefits per 1,000 populations.	No of claimants 15,150 101.2 per 1,000 population 161.9 per 1,000 working age population	No of claimants 14,890 98.8 per 1,000 population 154.9 per 1,000 Working age population		Reduce
	5	Employment Rate	78.6%	78.1% (update to Dec 07)		Maintain
	6	Number of community benefit in procurement programmes with number of jobs and beneficiaries	0	24		Increase
	7	The proportion of school leavers in a positive destination (FSF)	81%	84%		Increase
	8	% of 16-19 year olds not in education, employment or training (FSF)	19%	16%		Decrease
	9	Reducing the number of unemployed people relative to the Scottish average	Falkirk 2.3% Scotland 2.3% Jan 2008	Falkirk 2.6% Scotland 2.5%		Reduce






Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
The wealth and prosperity of our area will increase	10	Increasing satisfaction of business panel with events	93%	Awaiting data		Increase
	11	Increasing the number of business start ups supported through Business Gateway	300	278		Increase
	12	Increasing the uptake of work based training provision provided by the Council	432	560		Increase
	13	Increasing the number of modern apprentices and skill seekers managed by the Council	201	227		Increase
	14	Increasing the number of jobs created or secured by the Council through support to businesses	684	729		Increase









Further Developing a Thriving, Sustainable and Vibrant Economy









Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our workforce will be highly skilled	15	Proportion of schools in HMIE reports published during the previous 3 years achieving 'good' or 'very good' or above for: a) Structure of the Curriculum b) The teaching process c) Leadership d) Expectations & promoting achievement e) Equality & Fairness f) Partnership with parents & Community	a) 94% b) 89% c) 100% d) 89% e) 100% f) 94%	a) 94% b) 89% c) 94% d) 100% e) 100% f) 94%	 	Improve
	16	The % of pupils in P3, P4, P6 & P7 attaining or exceeding the appropriate levels for their stage in Reading Writing Mathematics	85% 81% 88%	85% 81% 87%		Improve all
	17	Cumulative Attainment of National Qualifications by all pupils in publicly funded schools for S4 – % of the S4 roll gaining level 3 or better in English and Mathematics; % of S4 roll gaining 5 or more awards as SCQF level 3 or better; % of S4 roll gaining 5 or more awards at SCQF level 4 or more % of S4 roll gaining 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better;	91% 89% 73% 30%	90% 89% 71% 32%	   	Improve




Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our workforce will be highly skilled	18	Cumulative attainment of National Qualifications by all pupils in publicly funded secondary schools for S5 – % of the original S4 roll gaining 1 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better % of the original S4 roll gaining 3 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better; % of the original S4 roll gaining 5 or more awards at SCQF level 6 or better	34% 17% 6%	36% 18% 7%		Improve
	19	The % of young people who leave school without employment, further or higher education or training	16%	10%		Decrease
	20	% of pupil attendance at school Primary Secondary	95.6% 89.9%	Awaiting data		Improve
	21	Provision of a suitable mix of affordable, accessible and high quality of early learning and child care (0-4) a) Pre-school education places; b) Toddlers Places c) Baby Places d) Wraparound Care	100% 92 24 164	100% 92 24 220		Maintain Increase Increase Increase
	22	Number of young people in secondary schools involved in Pupil Councils	251	Awaiting data		Maintain










Further Developing a Thriving, Sustainable and Vibrant Economy

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
The quality of our infrastructure will help promote the growth of the local economy.	23	A Net number and B rate of new businesses formed in Local Authority area on an annual basis	A: +60 B: 170 per 100,000 population	Data not yet published		Increase
	24	The number of occupied business properties as a % of the total	98.6%	97.3%		Maintain
	25	RSA Awards accepted/paid Average number and value	4 £1m	3 £620,000		Improve
	26	Business advice requests for consumer protection completed within 14 days	65.9%	88.7%		Improve
	27	Total area of Vacant land; Derelict land; Total	52ha 90ha 142ha	138.5ha		Reduce
	28	Carriageway condition - % of network that should be considered for maintenance treatment	54% (Figures not comparable due to change in method)	35%		Maintain









Continuing to Improve the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our Citizens and Communities						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our citizens will be supported to make positive health choices so they can live longer	29	Delayed discharge from hospital greater than 6 weeks per 1,000 population admitted to hospital	1.1	0.2		Reduce
	30	% of schools designated as 'Health Promoting Schools'	4%	98%		100%
	31	% and breakdown of the local population taking part in culture/leisure activities	28,105	Sports Dev – 10766 OutRec – 2,330 Culture - tbc		Increase
	32	Leisure Centre admissions for adults	483,125	458,428		Increase
	33	Leisure Centre admissions for young people	388,792	396,834		Increase
	34	Leisure Centre admissions for Leisure cards	54,108	59,061		Increase
	35	The number of people participating in healthy lifestyle physical activity programmes	13,537	19,669		Increase
	36	The number of participants in sports development classes	7,637	10,766		Increase
	37	The number of young people participating in health promoting initiatives Falkirk Council	2,315	5,072		Increase

Continuing to Improve the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our Citizens and Communities						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
People will have equitable access to local health, support and care	38	No and rate per 1,000 population of carer assessments carried out	266 2.3 per 1,000	1236 10.6 per 1000		Increase
	39	Staff qualification – % of care staff who are qualified – Working in care homes for older people (65+)	63.5%	72.2%		Increase
		Working in care homes for other adults (18-64)	90%	80.0%		
	40	% of older people aged 65+ with intensive care needs receiving services at home	33%	33.3%		Increase
	41	Home Care – total hours as a rate per 1,000 population receiving personal care	579.4	593.6		Increase
	42	Home Care - % home care clients aged 65+ receiving personal care	67.2%	71%		Increase
	43	Home Care - % home care clients aged 65+ receiving care in evenings/overnight	28.6%	26.6%		Increase
	44	Home Care - % home care clients aged 65+ receiving care at weekends	69%	59.9%		Increase









Continuing to Improve the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our Citizens and Communities						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our citizens and communities will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health & well being	45	The number and rate per 1,000 clients obtaining self directed support	43 0.4 per 1,000	43 0.4 per 1,000		Improve
	46	School meals taken as a % of school roll Primary Secondary	60% 50%	59% 50%		Maintain
	47	The % of schools with breakfast clubs	35%	35%		Maintain

Continuing to Improve the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our Citizens and Communities						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our citizens will be protected	48	Confidence in individual safety in local areas During the day At night	2006 84% 47%	2008 90% 51%		Improve
	49	The proportion of social enquiry reports submitted to court by due date	99.9%	99.9%		Maintain
	50	Probation – the proportion of probationers seen by a supervising officer within one week	87.5%	93.2%		Increase
	51	Community Service – the average hours per week taken to complete Community Service Orders	3.3	3.2		Increase
	52	Food Hygiene – the % of premises with a minimum inspection frequency of 12 months or less, that were inspected on time	99.3%	100%		Maintain
	53	The number of casualties fatally or seriously injured on our roads	421 – rolling 5 year total	Awaiting data		Reduce
	54	% communicable disease investigations started within time	98.4%	98%		Maintain
	55	Inspection of trading premises – the % in high and medium risk inspections that were inspected on time	High – 100% Medium – 97.8% Both – 97.9%	High – 100% Medium – 96.7% Both – 96.8%	  	Maintain






Continuing to Improve the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our Citizens and Communities








Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - baseline	Performance in 2007/2008	Nature of change	By 2011 we will:
Our citizens will be protected	56	Consumer complaints completed within 14 days of receipt	71.5%	51.8%		Increase
	57	Cost of repairs on schools due to vandalism	£216k	£183k		Reduce
	58	The proportion of reports submitted by the Social Work Services to the Courts by the due date	99.9%	99.9%		Maintain
	59	Number and rate per 1,000 of adults at risk of harm investigations	13 1 per 1,000	123 5.2 per 1000		Not applicable
	60	Domestic noise complaints – the average time (hours) between the time of the complaints and attendance on site – dealt with as Part V of the Anti Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004	157	19		Improve
	61	Reduce levels of reported anti-social behaviour	3474	3320		Reduce
	62	ASB - % acknowledgement of new instruction issued within 1 day	100%	100%		Maintain
	63	ASB - % lodged in Court within 4 days of final instruction/information	100%	100%		Maintain







Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our citizens continue to access critical services that meet their needs	64	Number of civil marriages	307	316		Increase
	65	Number of civil partnerships	6	9		Increase
	66	Number of baby naming ceremonies	6	11		Increase
	67	Number of renewal of wedding vow ceremonies	11	7		Increase
	68	Number of people attending citizenship ceremonies	56	54		Increase
	69	Public access % of Council building that are suitable and accessible to disabled people	56%	63.4%		Improve
	70	No of old people's welfare organisations operating across the Council area	40	40		Maintain
	71	Public access % of schools that are fully or mostly accessible to disabled people	86%	85.9%		Improve





Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our housing continues to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area	72	The % of residents stating their neighbourhood as a 'very good' or 'fairly good' place to live (FSF)	SHS 2005/06 91%	Next reported in 2008/09		Improve
	73	The number and variety of affordable homes A – Social rented homes; B – Low cost home ownership	A – 65 B – 8 Total 73	Awaiting data		Increase
	74	% of people presenting and assessed as homeless who were offered permanent housing	53%	41%		Increase
	75	Average time (weeks) between presentation and completion of duty by the Council for those cases assessed as homeless or potentially homeless	10.8 weeks	12.1 weeks		Reduce
	76	% of cases reassessed as homeless or potentially homeless within 12 months of previous cases being completed.	2.7%	2.5%		Reduce
	77	% of CHS offers issued within 2 months of application	90.3%	85.4%		Improve








Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our housing continues to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area	78	No of council dwellings being brought up to the SHQ standard by 2015 by criteria: a) Tolerable Standards b) Free from serious disrepair c) Energy efficient d) Modern facilities and services e) Healthy, safe & secure Total dwellings being brought up to SHQs	0 0 1,074 0 42 1,077	0 308 1976 1221 208 1324	  	Increase
	79	Number of people seeking re-location due to over-crowding	1688	1771		Reduce
	80	Tenancy changes – the % of rent loss due to voids	1.6%	1.5%		Improve
	81	% of Council House sales settled within 26 weeks	86.1%	90.1%		Improve
	82	Privacy - % of residential care places occupied by older people that are in single rooms	88%	92.3%		Improve

Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our housing continues to meet the needs of people who live and may wish to live in our area	83	The proportion of people in single rooms with ensuite provision in care homes Older people (65+) Other adults (18-64)	72% 33%	72% 37%		Improve
	84	Privacy - % of residential places occupied by other adults that are in single rooms	93.3%	94.3%		Improve
	85	The number and rate per 1,000 adult population of MECS community alarms provided	703 6 per 1,000	683 5.9 per 1,000		Improve
	86	1,000 population of new adaptations provided during the reporting year	499 4 per 1,000	536 4.6 per 1,000		Improve
	87	Increase the number of hours of homecare	13,554	14,018		Improve
	88	Householder applications dealt with within 2 months	85.1%	82.9%		Increase








Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Vulnerable children will be protected	89	Proportion of social background reports submitted to the Children's Panel within 20 days	42%	46.7%		Increase to 75%
	90	Rate per 1000 of child protection referrals / investigations carried out during the year	15.2	15.1	n/a	Not applicable
	91	Panel members appointed in a year	27	34		Maintain
	92	The number and proportion of looked after and accommodated children in community placements rather than residential care	84%	86%		Increase
	93	The proportion of young people who are looked after and accommodated who have a plan	100%	100%		Maintain




Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Disadvantaged communities will benefit from better services	94	No of claimants in receipt of out of work benefits per 1,000 populations.	No of claimants 15,150 101.2 per 1,000 population 161.9 per 1,000 working age population	No of claimants 14,890 98.8 per 1,000 population 154.9 per 1,000 Working age population		Reduce
	95	The number of new learners participating in adult literacy programmes; Falkirk Council	178	439		Increase
	96	Learning centres and learning access points A – number of users as a % of resident population B – the no of times the terminals are used per 1,000 population	8.9% 565.6	7.9% 640.7		Increase
	97	The % of IT Learners from priority areas	49.7%	23.7%		Increase
	98	Number of times the free public access terminals are used in libraries	84,360	95,899		Increase
	99	The number of individuals obtaining: Welfare benefits advice: Debt advice – new cases:	17,150 681	16,166 698		Maintain Maintain
	100	Number of benefit enquiries and benefit gains (FSF)	23,647 £7.7m	22,669 £9.4m		Increase

Increasing Our Efforts to Tackle Disadvantage and Discrimination



Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Disadvantaged communities will benefit from better services	101	Number of new debt cases and total debt negotiated (FSF)	1411 £26.7m	1266 £32.3m		Reduce Increase
	102	Average time (days) to process new housing benefit claims	29.8 days	26.8 days		Reduce
	103	The number of benefit claimants in priority areas participating in work based training	102 183 in Falkirk LEA	163		Increase
	104	The % of looked after children who on leaving care achieve no qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher	52%	29%		Decrease
	105	The % of looked after children who on leaving care achieve at least one subject qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher	48%	71%		Improve
	106	The % of looked after children who on leaving care achieve both English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or higher	26%	44%		Improve
	107	The % of eligible children who take up free school meals – registered and present at: Primary Secondary	93% 50%	99% 87%		Maintain

Enhancing and Sustaining an Environment in which People Want to Live, Work and Visit



Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	Progress Targets Towards 2010 - 2011
We will be greener	108	Tonnage of municipal waste collected per 1,000 population	760.9 tonnes	678.5 tonnes		Improve
	109	The maximum total tonnes of biodegradable municipal waste allowed to be sent to landfill	45,142	38,633		48,144 tonnes by 2010
	110	Proportion of municipal waste collected by the Authority; Recycled; Composted;	35.0% 24.8% 10.1%	36.0% 24.3% 11.7%		40% by 2010 50% by 2013 70% by 2025
	111	Modal share of adults travelling actively to work or education	2005/06 Walk – 11% Cycle – 2%	Figures not available for this year		Improve
	112	No's and percentage of children travelling actively to school	63.4% P 74.3% S	Figures not available for this year		Improve

Enhancing and Sustaining an Environment in which People Want to Live, Work and Visit







Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	Progress Targets Towards 2010 - 2011
We will improve the built environment	113	% of non householder planning applications dealt with within 2 months	40.7%	49.5%		Improve
	114	% of all planning applications dealt with within 2 months	64.5%	67.1%		Improve
	115	Traffic light failure repairs completed within 48 hours	90.6%	94.5%		Improve
	116	Street light failure repairs completed within 7 days	96.2%	97.1%		Maintain
	117	% programmed watercourse assessments carried out	95%	97%		Maintain
	118	Abandoned vehicles removed within 14 days of notification	85.2%	89.4%		Improve
	119	Special uplifts completed within 5 days	78	92.8%		Improve

Enhancing and Sustaining an Environment in which People Want to Live, Work and Visit						
Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	By 2011 we will:
Our open spaces will be attractive, accessible and safe	120	Exceedances of each Government air quality objective to remain within the limits of allowable no of exceedances	15 minutes SO ₂ was over limit of 35 at 2 sites	2 sites exceed the limit in 2007/08 of 35	n/a	Improve below target of 8 exceedances by 2010
	121	% of educational establishments achieving Eco Schools awards; Bronze awards; Silver awards; Green Flags	 73% 47% 12%	 75% 52% 21%		Improve
	122	Reported incidents of illegal tipping Refuse Accumulations	134 476	Awaiting data		Reduce incidence
	123	Assessment survey scores of cleanliness in public places	72	70		Maintain

Enhancing and Sustaining an Environment in which People Want to Live, Work and Visit

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	Progress Targets Towards 2010 - 2011
Our profile will reflect the area as a destination of choice	124	% of visitors to Big in Falkirk from out with the area	48%	49.8%		Increase
	125	Increasing the total visitor expenditure to the area (per calendar year)	£76m	Data not yet published		Increase
	126	Increasing the number of bed nights taken up by tourism related visitors (per calendar year)	£1.27m	Data not yet published		Increase
	127	Falkirk Town Centre national ranking per CACI	10 th in Scotland	15 th in Scotland		Increase

Our Values

Local Outcome		Indicator	Performance in 2006/07 - Baseline	Performance in 2007/08	Nature of Change	Progress Targets Towards 2010 - 2011
We are committed to Public Service Performance Partnership	128	Sickness absence - % of working days lost through sickness absence for chief officers and local government employees	5.4%	6.0%		Reduce
	129	% of people who contacted the Council that were satisfied with the service they received New Indicator		72.7%		Improve
	130	% of operational buildings of appropriate condition for current use	89.4%	89.9%		Improve
	131	% of people who feel informed about the Council New Indicator		75%		Increase
	132	% of SPT's in upper quartile	33%	Awaiting data		Maintain
	133	Response repairs The % of housing repairs completed within the target times	77%	83%		Improve
	134	% of Council Tax collected in the year	96.2%	96.4%		Increase

AGENDA ITEM

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: EXECUTION OF DEEDS
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 10 December 2008
Author: ACTING DIRECTOR OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Deeds shown in the Appendix to this Report have been signed and sealed on behalf of the Council by the Acting Director of Law and Administration Services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council notes the signing and sealing by the Acting Director of Law and Administration Services of the Deeds listed in the Appendix.

.....
Acting Director of Law and Administration Services

Date: 24 November 2008

Contact Officer: Brian Pirie (Tel: 01324 506110)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

ASSIGNATION OF BURDEN OF RESTORATION GUARANTEES BY

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc to AIB Group (UK)
plc with consent of Falkirk Council, Caledon Coal Co
Ltd and James McCaig

Section 50 Guarantees relating to various open cast mining
sites near Falkirk

The Falkirk Council (Ronades Road, Falkirk) Compulsory Purchase Order 2008

DEED OF POSTPONEMENT amongst FALKIRK COUNCIL and

GE Money Home Lending Limited

45 Sutherland Drive, Denny

DEED of VARIATION between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

A J Swain

DISCHARGE by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of

M E Dick

44 Beaulay Court, Grangemouth

Executor of the late W Mawhinnie

32 Bruce Drive, Stenhousemuir

DISCHARGE of CHARGING ORDER by FALKIRK COUNCIL

The Executor of the late William Mawhinnie

32 Bruce Drive, Stenhousemuir

DISCHARGE of INHIBITION by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of:-

J McNamee and M McNamee

6 Arnothill, Falkirk

S Gray

173 Merchiston Avenue, Falkirk

DISCHARGE of OBLIGATION UNDER S50 AGREEMENT by FALKIRK COUNCIL

Fiona Elizabeth Crozier and John Crozier

Woodneuk, Castlecary

DISPOSITION by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of:-

J Russell and I Russell

68 Thornbridge Road, Falkirk

R Hunter McKinlay

2 Webster Avenue, Carronshore

S Riaz and H Mahmood

24 Grove Street, Denny

M Teadley and J Teadley

48 Newlands Road, Grangemouth

S P Distribution Limited

Sub Station, King Street, Stenhousemuir

J P F M Yuile

34 The Rumlie, Slamannan

A E M Easton, executor dative to R H M Easton

5 Glasgow Road, Dennyloanhead

A Forrester

44 Westquarter Avenue, Westquarter, Falkirk

R Stirling and M Stirling

89 High Street, Bonnybridge

J Cunningham

195 Stirling Street, Dunipace

W Nicol

22 Calder Place, Hallglen, Falkirk

D Johnston

Land at Shore Road, Airth

E C R Bellingham

255 Grahamsdyke Street, Laurieston

J J Rae and C Mill	2 Moy Court, Grangemouth
C Buchanan	81 Roxburgh Street, Grangemouth
H Bell and A B Bell	6 Carmuir's Street, Falkirk
A G Chirray and C Chirray	67 Wholequarter Avenue, Redding
W J Morton and M MacNeil	8 Coll Place, Grangemouth
W McBride	5 Johnston Avenue, Stenhousemuir
R K Irvine and C J Irvine	Land at Redford Place, Bathgate Road, Maddiston
C B M Penman and D J Hamilton	34 Main Street, Shieldhill
I Stewart	58 Glenview Avenue, Banknock
P Frew	27 Kirkwood Avenue, Redding
D McPake	97 Dollar Avenue, Falkirk
R Lyall and A Lyall	One half pro indiviso share of footpath at 10 Rodney Street, Grangemouth
J Lynn	5a Milton Row, Dunipace
D McGuire and L McGuire	1 Hillary Road, Stenhousemuir

GENERAL VESTING DECLARATION

The Falkirk Council (A9 Laurieston Bypass - Icehouse Brae) CPO 2007

INDEMNITY AGREEMENT between FALKIRK COUNCIL:-

Barnardo's, Tanners Lane, Barkingside Essex

LEASE between FALKIRK COUNCIL and:-

Scottish Historic Buildings Trust	The Hippodrome, Hope Street, Bo'ness
Jacquelyn McLean	2 David's Loan, Bainsford, Falkirk
A Miller Electrical Limited	0.07 acres at 8 Dundas Street, Grangemouth

LICENCE FOR WORKS AGREEMENT between FALKIRK COUNCIL AND

Stirling Council and Clackmannanshire Council and Forth Valley GIS	North Wing, 2nd Floor, Drummond House, Wellgreen, Stirling
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MINUTE of AGREEMENT between FALKIRK COUNCIL and:-

Ryden LLP	Planning Appeal - Wind Turbine at ASDA Distribution Centre, Falkirk
Biggart Baillie LLP, Solicitors	Grangemouth Town Centre Regeneration Project
G Ali, A Ali and S Ali	2 Loanhead Avenue, Grangemouth
F Smart, t/a Oliver Cameron Bridal	81 Mary Street, Laurieston
S Gray	32 Parkhall Drive, Maddiston, Falkirk
Baker Street Properties (UK) Ltd	Land to south of 27 of Lothian Street, Cadzow Avenue, Bo'ness

Ganton House Investments Ltd	28 La Porte Precinct, Grangemouth
George Wimpey East Scotland Limited	2 Areas at Waggon Road, Brightons
The Secretary of State for the Communities and Local Government	13/15 Charlotte Dundas Court, Grangemouth
Wan Cheung Chu	42 Main Street, Larbert
G C & A G Hogg LLP	21 High Street, Falkirk
A Hussain and N Akhtar	40 Charlotte Dundas Court, Grangemouth
BSH Home Appliances Limited	15 Winchester Avenue, Denny

MINUTE of RENUNCIATION between FALKIRK COUNCIL and:-

T Wright	15 York Arcade, Grangemouth
Central Training Services Limited	Units 1A, 1B, 17A, 17B & 17C and Yards 3 & 4 Victoria Sawmills, Bo'ness
Susan Ord or Leung	Unit 14, Ladysmill Industrial Estate, Kerse Lane, Falkirk

MINUTE of TERMINATION of LEASE between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

The Central Scotland Joint Police Board	2 David's Loan, Bainsford, Falkirk
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MINUTE of VARIATION between FALKIRK COUNCIL and

Inspection Ecosse Limited	1d Laurieston Ind Estate, Old Redding Road, Laurieston
P F P Contracting Limited	26B Abbotsinch Road, Grangemouth
Colin Greig, t/a C & G Concrete	1 Abbotsinch Court, Grangemouth
Your Independence Limited	66/68 La Porte Precinct, Grangemouth
Solutions for Quality	Office 7, 16 Melville Street, Falkirk

MINUTE OF WAIVER by FALKIRK COUNCIL in favour of

Diane Holmes	6 Clydesdale Street, Bo'ness
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SUB -LEASE between:-

Falkirk Community Stadium Limited and Falkirk Council	
Stirling Council, Falkirk Council and Clackmannanshire Council and Forth Valley GIS Ltd	North Wing, Second Floor, Drummond House, Stirling



AGENDA ITEM

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: ECONOMIC DOWNTURN : ACTION PLAN

Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL

Date: 10TH DECEMBER 2008

Author: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The economy of the Falkirk area faces significant challenges as the “credit crunch” and resultant economic downturn take effect. An economic recession is anticipated during 2009 which could inhibit the regeneration of the Falkirk economy and blight prospects for business, investment and jobs. Action has been initiated at national level to assist business and the economy however concerted action is also needed at local level to mitigate the effects of recession.
- 1.2 Falkirk Council is keen to act on behalf of local businesses, people and communities, leading the response of partners locally to minimise the impact of the economic downturn and maintain the momentum of regeneration. This report sets out the anticipated impacts of the economic downturn, the area’s economic strengths, which will aid its response, the actions underway currently to bolster the area’s economy and the key actions planned by the Council to respond.

2. The Falkirk area and the economic downturn

- 2.1 It is anticipated that the UK economy will face a significant recession. The UK Government anticipates an economic decline of 1.25% during 2009. The Falkirk area is now experiencing the effects of the economic downturn:
 - Unemployment, which early in 2008 fell to below the Scottish average, its lowest level for 25 years, has increased in the past year and is now 2.7%, with 2,576 people unemployed.
 - Investment in regeneration projects has slowed. The timescales for delivery of key projects in Bo’ness and Falkirk Gateway have had to be extended due to reduced demand and capacity for investment.
 - Several local companies have announced redundancies or plan to reduce staff levels. Many local companies experience difficulties in accessing funds to maintain cash flow or progress new investment. Additional problems result from increased energy costs or supply chains fragmenting.
 - Other evidence of economic stress has been witnessed in reduced trading activity in town centres and increased claims for hardship relief. A substantial drop in house purchases has been witnessed and enquiries for business properties have reduced.

- It is anticipated that 2009 will show increases in unemployment, further decline in business confidence and activity and lower levels of investment.

2.2 Despite this, the Falkirk economy has substantial strengths. Partners locally demonstrate resilience and a resolve to face the economic challenge in the year ahead:

- The Falkirk economy is strong and diverse, with sectoral strengths in petrochemicals, engineering, food and drink and logistics.
- Falkirk's economy includes major companies such as Alexander Dennis Ltd, BP, Ineos, Forth Ports, Asda and Kemfine. Many companies compete successfully in markets where the recession's impact will be less significant and where opportunities for business growth can be exploited.
- Public sector investment programmes in new schools, housing, health, and roads are likely to 'cushion' some of the impacts of recession, particularly in construction.
- The area has capacity to respond to investment opportunities that arise and can exploit the prospects for economic growth to return. Falkirk is well-located; it has a growing population, a strong commercial and industrial base and presents many excellent development opportunities.
- Recent business surveys have demonstrated that, despite the economic challenge, local companies remain fairly positive about levels of sales, investment and jobs in the coming year.
- A solid partnership exists between the public and private sectors in Falkirk to carry forward the area's response.

3. The Response to the Economic Downturn

3.1 The economic downturn demands a response by many partners, in the public and private sectors. Falkirk Council recognises that its leadership role is vital in harnessing local capacity to address the economic challenge. There is a need to:

- Exploit opportunities for investment and, despite the financial pressures, maintain expenditure locally, particularly in the hard-pressed construction sector, to upgrade local infrastructure and maintain the momentum of regeneration projects.
- Manage the impact on local companies, assisting them to access business support in the form of business advice, grant and loan funding and networking opportunities.
- Ensure that local organisations target their efforts to reduce the impact of unemployment, guiding people to available jobs and other assistance, while minimising the impact for those hardest to reach.

3.2 Falkirk Council is a significant player in the provision of business property within the local economy. Its portfolio of industrial, office and retail space comprises over 800 properties and generates a rental income of around £4.5 million. During the period of the economic downturn, lease rents will require to be reviewed and leases will come to an end. Market conditions play a major part in rent review and lease

renewal negotiations. In some circumstances these may naturally lead to nil rental uplifts. Council officers have examined the option of ‘suspending’ rent reviews and consider this is not a constructive way forward. It would not be equitable or sufficiently well-targeted towards need. Specifically, it would only impact on a small number of companies who are currently Council tenants and have rent reviews arising over the suspension period. Additionally, such action could have the undesirable effect of distorting the property market at a time when the Council should be working to help stabilize rental and capital values. However the Council has a responsibility to examine how all businesses in its area, not just its commercial tenants, can be supported at this time and how this can be achieved.

- 3.3 Notwithstanding the position with regard to rent reviews and lease renewals, the Council may be able to assist tenants through re-scheduling rental payments, for example by allowing a business to pay less now, more later in the course of the lease term. In considering such courses of action, the Council will need to pay due regard to the financial history and viability of the business concerned. The implications for its own budget position, which is being stretched during the recession, will also be a factor.
- 3.4 However the Council considers that a more comprehensive and targeted approach to the impact of the downturn is needed. The economic recession will impact across many parts of the Council and demands a joint response by all services. This response must build upon the existing commitments which have been initiated to develop the Falkirk economy via “My Futures in Falkirk”. It must progress a set of key actions in the following areas to address the economic challenge. These actions are set out in the attached Table and summarised below:

Business Support:

Through the actions of the Business Gateway, Falkirk Council and Scottish Enterprise a range of support services are available for business start-up and growth. Strong links have been established between the business community in Falkirk and the support network via the Falkirk Business Panel. Action is currently underway to review our approach to business support services with the aim of establishing a new “one-stop” service for business in Falkirk. However there is plainly an urgent need to bolster support to businesses at this time. It is therefore proposed to extend local business support services including those delivered through the Business gateway and in the Joint Working Agreement currently operated with FEAT.

In addition to existing business support programmes, the Council will invest £100,000 to:

- a) Promote a package of local business support assistance delivered via the Business Gateway and the Joint Working Agreement with FEAT to aid companies adversely affected by the recessions and, by engaging with the Falkirk Business Panel, conduct networking opportunities to help address the issues involved;*
- b) Assist local retailers, by asserting the value of shopping locally, promoting town centres, and progressing town centre regeneration;*
- c) Review the Council’s responsiveness to business in its advice services, speed of decision-making, delegation and exercise of regulatory powers.*

- d) Initiating a programme to promote local tourism, including upgrades to tourist signage, local events etc.;***

Transport, Infrastructure & Investment

Falkirk is well-located in Central Scotland, however there are significant constraints to access for its key economic assets including the Grangemouth Freight Hub, the Petrochemical complex and business locations. The funding of infrastructure works has also proven to be a significant constraint to regeneration investment. Work is currently underway to promote improved transport links and maintain investment that reflects the significance of Falkirk to the national economy. Meanwhile it is important to maintain investment levels in the local economy. Investments by the public sector in new schools, affordable housing etc. will help to maintain the buoyancy of the local construction sector and downstream industries.

In addition the Council will:

- e) Pursue the case for accelerated capital investment under the recently announced Scottish Government capital programme fund to upgrade infrastructure links in the Falkirk area;***
- f) Promote investment in new affordable housing and stimulate new development through construction of housing for rent and, in partnership with local RSLs and other housing agencies, deliver new homes for rent or low cost ownership;***

Business Locations

The provision of sites and premises for business is a key priority for the Council and projects are underway to ensure competitive business locations are available for investment and business growth. Successful schemes have been completed at Alcan, Wholeflats and Bo'ness. However for some schemes, infrastructure, Section 75 requirements and other market constraints have delayed investment. As a result, a responsive and targeted approach is required to ensure that a range of business locations is available to respond when the economy regenerates.

Additionally the Council will:

- g) Seek to accelerate £600,000 of its planned investment in business property through the capital programme;***
- h) Adopt a flexible response to maintain investment in regeneration schemes, extending timescales for delivery and reviewing upfront infrastructure commitments;***
- i) Extend the flexibility of the Council's approach to planning -- reviewing its approach to Section 75 agreements attaching to planning consents. In addition, we will also be re-evaluating the impact of the impending recession as a material consideration in determining planning applications to attract investment and maintain jobs;***

Assisting the workforce

It is important to ensure that Falkirk maintains a skilled and flexible workforce and that the impact of the recession on local people in terms of unemployment, financial exclusion and

homelessness is minimised. Considerable effort has been directed in recent years to promote opportunities for young people to access the labour market. This effort will be maintained, however additional actions by the Council will be taken to:

- j) Review access to jobs locally and redundancy support services to ensure a continuing co-ordinated response to unemployment;*
- k) Assisting local companies to access training advice and support, particularly to engage young people in work based training and/or apprenticeship programmes;*
- l) Engage money advice and social services to assist in directing enquiries for increased support and assistance to meet local need.*

Taking the Plan Forward

- 3.5 Importantly, this Action Plan will not divert the Council from its long-term vision of a robust, diverse and thriving local economy. The current strategy is being reviewed and a revised version will be brought forward next year, outlining the longer term ambitions for the area.
- 3.6 The actions proposed for the economic downturn are targeted, short term and involve all Council services. It is anticipated that, in addition to current commitments, the additional actions proposed in this action plan will involve a commitment of £700,000 for the Council. These actions have the intended effect of managing the impact of the recession across the Council whilst enabling the area's economy to respond for the longer term, exploiting opportunity and building on the area's undoubted strengths.

4. Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- i) agrees the Action Plan for the Economic Downturn as set out in this report.
- ii) Agrees to allocate £100,000 of revenue funding, to be committed over the financial years 2008/9 and 2009/10, to permit the extension of business support services delivered through the Council's Joint Working Agreement with FEAT
- iii) Agrees to accelerate the allocation of £600,000 of capital funds from the 2009/10 budget, earmarked for economic development projects, for investment in business property

.....
Chief Executive

Date: 3rd December 2008

Contact Officer: Maureen Campbell (extn 0902)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Falkirk Council
Action Plan for the Economic Downturn

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Intended Outcome
<p>a) Promote a package of local business support assistance delivered via the Business Gateway and the Joint Working Agreement with FEAT, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a programme of business health checks/business development reviews and grant support to assist companies to identify areas to, for example, access financial support (e.g. Loan Funds, Hardship relief, overdraft or cash flow finance, external grant assistance), generate increased income (e.g. through marketing or promotion), and reduce operating costs. (Cost £60k) • Assist businesses to access support, financial and non-financial, from non-Business Gateway sources, where available. (Nil cost) • Implement, with FEAT, a local marketing campaign to promote Business Gateway services to start-up and existing businesses. (£10k) • Facilitate waste management and energy efficiency audits for Council commercial tenants to help reduce business costs. (Nil cost) • Convene a forum of Falkirk Council area property landlords to exchange views and agree actions during the economic downturn period. (Nil cost) • Continue to provide property-related support and assistance to Council commercial tenants. (Nil cost) • Conduct a series of networking opportunities for local companies via the Falkirk Business Panel 	<p>Community Services/FEAT/Business Panel</p>	<p>2009-10</p>	<p>50+ Businesses assisted</p> <p>Financial savings to business</p> <p>Jobs safeguarded</p>

b) Assist local retailers, by asserting the value of shopping locally, promoting town centres, and progressing town centre regeneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a programme to support independent retailers to improve their trading performance. (£30k) Support and advice in accessing rates relief and other business support (Nil cost) Networking events for local retailers (Nil cost) 	Community Services/Town Centre Management	2009-10	Businesses assisted Financial savings to business Jobs safeguarded Trading levels sustained
c) Review the Council's responsiveness to business in : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advice services, speed of decision-making and delegation exercise of regulatory powers. 	Chief Executive	March 2009	Improved access to business advice Improved speed of decision-making for business
d) Initiating a programme to promote local tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> upgrade local tourist signage, programme of local events 	Community Services/Development Services	2009-10	Improved access to tourist facilities Increased visitor numbers
e) Pursue the case for accelerated capital investment and progress the necessary planning and design work for investment under the recently announced Scottish Government capital programme fund to upgrade infrastructure links at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the A801 Avon Gorge the Grangemouth Port/Freight Hub and Petrochemical complex Motorway junctions (M9, M876) 	Development Services	2009	Improved access to Falkirk area Increased infrastructure investment

<p>f) Promote investment in new affordable housing and stimulate new housing development through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing 300 affordable houses in the next three years • developing partnerships with local RSLs and other housing agencies to deliver new homes for rent or low cost home ownership • conducting a Seminar with housing agencies, including Homes for Scotland to stimulate investment in house construction; • exploring opportunities for house construction on development sites • including community benefits clauses to new investment contracts 	Corporate & Neighbourhood Services / Development Services	2009-10	<p>New Affordable Housing construction</p> <p>Investment levels in housing</p> <p>Community benefits achieved</p>
g) Seek to accelerate £600,000 of its planned investment in business property through the capital programme	Community/Finance Services	2009-10	Investment in business property
h) Adopt a flexible response to maintain investment in regeneration schemes, extending timescales for delivery and reviewing upfront infrastructure commitments;	Community/Development /Law & Administration	2009-10	Investment levels maintained in regeneration
i) Extend the flexibility of the Council's approach to planning – reviewing the Council's approach to Section75 agreements and material considerations in planning applications to attract investment and maintain jobs;	Development Services	2009-10	Investment in construction activity
j) Review access to jobs locally and redundancy support services to ensure a continuing co-ordinated response to unemployment, including a PACE event in January for people recently affected by redundancy.	Community/Social Work /Corporate & Neighbourhood Services	March 2009	Improved access to advice services
k) Assisting local companies to access training advice and support, particularly to engage young people in pre-vocational and apprenticeship programmes;	Community/Education Services	2009-10	Training places secured

l) Engage money advice and social services to assist in directing enquiries for increased support and assistance to meet local needs.	Community/Social Work /Corporate & Neighbourhood Services /CABx	March 2009	Improved access to advice services
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FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject : CENTRAL SCOTLAND JOINT FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD –
APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS
Meeting : FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 10 DECEMBER 2008
Author : ACTING DIRECTOR OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2007, Council appointed its representatives to the Central Scotland Joint Fire and Rescue Board. Council also agreed to appoint named substitutes to the Board.
- 1.2 In August 2008, Councillor Alexander, who had been a substitute member, was appointed by Council as a full member of the Fire and Rescue Board following the resignation of Councillor Kenna. A named substitute has yet to be appointed in Councillor Alexander's place.
- 1.3 Councillor A MacDonald, a named substitute, has indicated his intention to resign from this post.

2. POLITICAL BALANCE

- 2.1 In appointing members to the Board, Council agreed that the allocation of the 6 places available would be as follows:-

3 Labour
2 SNP and
1 Conservative or 1 Independent or the non-aligned Independent

No such stipulation was made for the appointment of substitute members although the appointment to the substitute list reflects this allocation.

- 2.2 In terms of maintaining the political balance of Falkirk Council's representatives on Central Scotland Joint Fire and Rescue Board, the vacant substitute positions would be filled from the SNP Group which has indicated that Councillor McNally would replace Councillor Alexander and Councillor Meiklejohn would replace Councillor A MacDonald.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Council is invited to appoint two members as substitute members on Central Scotland Joint Fire and Rescue Board.**

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Acting Director of Law and Administration Services

Date: 3 December 2008

Contact Officer: Brian Pirie Ext. 6110

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- * 1. Letter of Resignation.