



Falkirk Council

Children's Services

FALKIRK COUNCIL CHILDREN'S SERVICES FINANCE & RESOURCES PARENT COUNCIL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Who do we contact for finance queries?

A.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES TEAM

Address	Children's Services Finance & Resources Falkirk Council Sealock House 2 Inchyra Road Grangemouth FK3 9XB
Telephone	01324 506600
Email	ema@falkirk.gov.uk

Q. When can we expect payment of the annual administration fee and how much will it be?

A. A letter is sent to the Chairperson, usually in August each year, confirming the amount of administration payment due in the Autumn term. Audited accounts to the year ended 31st July should be submitted to the Finance & Resources Team by 30th September annually. Finance & Resources will undertake to review the accounts within one week of receipt (volume of work permitting). If all are in order, receipt of the administration payment would normally be expected within 14 days of approval date. However, please do not presume receipt of funds - check with your bank before arranging any expenditure.

Q. What happens if the audited accounts need further information?

A. If the original accounts need amendment, they will be returned to the Treasurer by post with a letter explaining what is needed. If a supporting document is missing but the accounts are otherwise in order, Finance & Resources Team may contact the Treasurer by email if available, or by post and the accounts will be retained. Finance & Resources will not normally contact a Treasurer by phone in this respect.

Q. Can a Clerk be an authorised signatory?

A. Financial guidelines state that the authorised signatory should be a member of the Parent Council, normally the Treasurer and two other Office Bearers. If member numbers necessitate, the Clerk may be an authorised signatory, however for financial purposes they are then considered a member and cannot receive payment for their Clerking duties. This would normally include Parent Councils with co-opted members acting as Treasurer and/or Clerk - the duties may be shared but payment cannot be made. Further information on this matter is available from Finance & Resources Team.

Q. Will you send reminders for un-submitted accounts?

A. The 30th September deadline is detailed in the Financial Guidelines and a reminder will be included in the regular e-newsletter sent to all Parent Councils by Children's Services Communications Unit. Individual reminders will not normally be sent. Administration payments will not be made to any Parent Council for whom audited accounts are not submitted and approved.

Q. We're not sure how to do the accounts, can we send the paperwork to Finance & Resources Team to do them for us?

A. Due to the high volume of work, it's not possible for accounts to be prepared by Finance & Resources Team on behalf of a Parent Council. The layout and examples of relevant supporting documents are included in the Parent Council Financial Guidelines and you should also find that good basic book-keeping and the retention of previous accounts simplifies the process. The new audited accounts checklist also acts as a useful reminder of what supporting documents are needed. A copy of the current Financial Guidelines and relevant blank forms can be downloaded from the Parent Council page of the Falkirk Council website.

Q. Why introduce the audited accounts checklist when signatures are already on the statement of accounts?

A. Finance & Resources reviewed accounts submitted to date and identified the most common reasons for many not being approved on the first submission. These included missing treasurer and bank details, confirmation that the accounts were approved at the AGM and surplus balance information. We also asked for feedback from all Parent Councils. As requested, the new checklist acts a reminder, clearly showing when supporting documents are required and also allows the Chairperson to confirm approval. It removes the need to continually re-advise treasurer or bank details even when unchanged. When received at Finance & Resources, all relevant documents will have been acknowledged, speeding up the approval process with administration payments released earlier as a result. For audit purposes, the statement of accounts now needs just to be initialled by the auditor with the checklist signed in full.