

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT

To: COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE LOCAL ACTION FUND	
From: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES			
Date: 22 JULY 2004	Ref: BP/PW		

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Services Committee with details of the Local Action Fund.

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 In March 2004, as part of the allocation of youth justice/anti-social behaviour resources 2004-05 and 2005-06, the Scottish Executive decided to establish a Local Action Fund. This forms part of the Executive's commitment to direct £10M of additional support towards localised action and initiatives to divert young people away from crime.

2.2 The Scottish Executive stipulates that the Local Action Fund

- will support the provision of services, projects and activities available to all young people;
- should make a real impact on the ground; and
- make a real difference to communities in which they are based.

North Lanarkshire has been allocated £358K in 2004-05 and £348K for 2005-06.

3. **OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA**

3.1 The Scottish Executive has summarised the objectives as follows:-

- Increasing the number of services and facilities available which provide constructive and relevant activities for young people;
- An increased number of young people accessing these facilities;
- Young people to have sustained interest and involvement in the activities provided;
- A reduction in youth related calls to the police in areas where new facilities are located;
- A reduction in community perceptions/concerns about youth crime;
- An increase in the satisfaction of young people.

- 3.2 Specific criteria have also been set out emphasising that the distribution of funding should favour small, local community based projects, with scope for some innovative and experimental projects also being supported. Services, facilities and activities should be well planned taking account of the criteria, local needs and priorities and should be located within a coherent inter agency approach including sign off from the children services planning structure.

4. CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 Community Safety Partnerships are required to consult with all relevant local stakeholders. Within North Lanarkshire there a number of agencies and organisations involved in the provision of services and facilities, which provide constructive and relevant activities for young people.
- 4.2 The Scottish Executive guidance also identifies young people as key stakeholders. Within North Lanarkshire the youth council and locally based youth forums provide ideal mechanisms to achieve this.
- 4.3 Bodies such as community councils and crime prevention panels often raise community safety matters with concern about young people. Given their general interest in the social and environmental health of their communities, involving community councils /crime prevention panels in consultation arrangements provides a breadth of views which potentially informs the objective of reducing community perceptoins/concerns about youth crime.
- 4.4 In order to ensure that consultation on the local action fund not only meets the expectations of the Scottish Executive but also provides a meaningful opportunity for stakeholders to shape the use of the fund a stakeholders seminar has been arranged. This will provide stakeholders with an overview of the fund and an opportuntiy to consider priorities for North Lanarkshire.

5. FUNDING PROVISION

- 5.1 Scottish Executive has advised that £358k and £348k be allocated to North Lanarkshire for years 2004/05 and 2005/06 respectively. Having consulted with the Scottish Executive it has been established that 2 years allocation has been secured and subject to ongoing satisfactory monitoring, this allows spending plans to be considered for the 2 year period. This therefore provides an opportunity to maximise the impact of the fund by weighting the release of funds in the shorter term to small local community based organisation. In the longer term this will allow larger service providers to develop their plans to March 2006.
- 5.2 It is proposed that the fund should be structured in the following way:-

5.2.1 Small Grant Scheme

Targeting locally based activity groups offering funding not exceeding £4000 for any one organisation. Grant levels would be considered in the context of meeting the objectives of the Fund and overall demand. Value £150,000 in Year 1.

The application process would commence by 1 September 2004 with return by 29 October 2004. This would allow the community safety partnership to gauge the level of demand for funding of this nature and at the same time make any necessary adjustments to realign spending for 2005/06. The timescale for decision and payment would be no later than 31 January 2005.

5.2.2 Project Funding

Funding would be targeted at public and larger voluntary sector agencies involved in the provision of services to young people. Application process would commence on 1 September with submission by 30 September and decision no later than 29 October.

Any one project would not exceed £50K in Year 1. This limit would be subject to review after the Year 1 application process. In any one year applicants are able to bid for Year 1, Year 2 or both.

5.2.3 Capital Funding

This is permitted and it is suggested that opportunities for capital spend be better targeted for Year 2 thereby ensuring sufficient planning and lead in time.

6. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 The Scottish Executive has indicated that it believes that Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are better placed to run the fund given that the target is universal rather than specifically targeted. Guidance from the Scottish Executive advises that CSPs be charged with co-ordinating the administration of the fund with individual authorities deciding how resources are to be allocated within the overall criteria already detailed.
- 6.2 North Lanarkshire Community Safety Partnership is therefore charged with co-ordinating the administration of the fund, working with relevant interests within authorities as appropriate. With this in mind it is proposed that the CSP consider the details of applications and make funding recommendations which would then be submitted to NLC Community Services Community Development Sub Committee for approval.
- 6.3 Community Services Department, having corporate lead for community safety will be the managing department for the fund.
- 6.4 The Community Safety Partnership has already considered these arrangements and agreed the approach.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The Sub Committee is asked to approve:-
 - (i) the arrangements for the operation and implementation of the Local Action Fund as detailed in this report; and
 - (ii) to otherwise note the report.

