

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: SHOPMOBILITY
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 31 JULY 1996	Ref: DE/MG/REPORT.052	

Purpose of Report

This report is seeking the support of North Lanarkshire Council for further investigation into the establishment of a Shopmobility scheme for some of the town centres within North Lanarkshire.

Aims

The aim of a shopmobility project is to make the town centres more accessible for people who are physically/sensorily disabled, elderly or anyone who is temporarily immobile. A project such as this promotes equal access for all of the community and can lead to a much improved quality of life for those who can benefit.

Management

The project could be managed by Town Centre Initiatives Ltd and members of the local disability groups. Town Centre Initiatives Ltd is a North Lanarkshire Council partnership project including British Steel (Industry) Ltd and local retailers.

Service Provision

The service would provide the free loan of both manual and powered chairs and scooters, and a volunteer/escort service is available if required. Within the reception accommodation there would be a toilet, waiting room area and public telephones all at the correct height for disabled users.

Cost

It is anticipated that the capital costs for 2 projects in North Lanarkshire would be approximately £30k with annual running costs £45k per annum. It is proposed that the town centre managers investigate possible funding sources for this project.

Research Requirements

Further information is required on the demand for a Shopmobility service. Currently Hamilton town centre deals with 450 enquiries per week, which is substantial. Discussion has been initiated by Town Centre Initiatives Ltd with the relative partners, agencies and users. Information and research is also required on possible sources of funding and on which town centre(s) might be appropriate for the project.

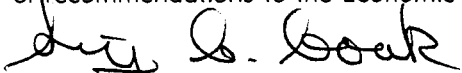
Conclusion

With the increase in pedestrianisation of town centres, out of town shopping and the dependency on cars, many people now experience difficulty in accessing shops and other leisure facilities.

Shopmobility can remove some of the barriers through offering individuals the use of the versatile range of equipment giving them a greater degree of independence within their community.

Recommendation/...Recommendation

That the Committee note the contents of this report and agrees that Town Centre Initiatives Ltd should continue with researching the feasibility of a Shopmobility project for North Lanarkshire Council and report back with any findings or recommendations to the Economic Development Committee.



S. Cook

Director of Planning and Development

For further information contact G Smith, Head of Economic Development and Property.