

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To:	Economic Development Committee	Subject:	ERDF Funding for International Trade Activity
From:	Director of Planning & Development		
Date:	23 August 1996	Ref:	GS/EM/REPORT.051

Background

An ERDF application is currently in place, covering the International Trade programme of the West of Scotland Trade Partnership (WSTP). The WSTP was formed by the twelve new Unitary Authorities in the West of Scotland, following the disaggregation of Strathclyde Regional Council, in order to maintain the level of international trade activity which had traditionally been undertaken by Strathclyde Business Development (SBD). The agreement reached was that the five authorities which would inherit an international trade specialist from SBD (ie North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Glasgow) would play an active role, contributing a budget and managing events on behalf of the partnership area, whilst the remaining seven authorities would play a more passive role, feeding into the programme managed by the other five. This activity would be funded using the disaggregated International Trade budget from Strathclyde Region and part-funded through ERDF

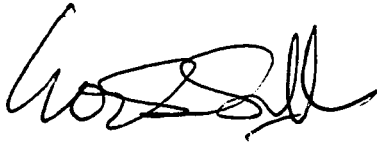
The current ERDF application covers activity until end March 1996, and the application and claims are co-ordinated centrally through Kenneth Clark of Renfrewshire Council, who acts as liaison with Strathclyde European Partnership (SEP) on behalf of the WSTP.


Discussions have taken place over recent weeks between representatives of WSTP, SEP and Scottish Trade International (STI), regarding the possibility of extending the existing ERDF application, and amending it to allow all of the Local Export Partnerships (LEP) from the West of Scotland to participate in the overall West of Scotland International Trade Programme. SEP has indicated that such a proposal would be looked upon favourably by them, since it would engender co-operation amongst a greater number of players, and would cover the whole of the West of Scotland. STI are also very keen to support such a move, since this would reflect the objectives of the Scottish Office as set out in their Export Strategy for Scotland.

If agreement can be reached, then the current ERDF application can be extended to cover activities up until end December 1998, with the option of extending it beyond that date.

Recommendation

Committee is asked to approve the continued participation of North Lanarkshire Council in an ERDF supported International Trade Programme, on the basis outlined above.



 **Stanley C Cook, Director of Planning & Development**

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

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