

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: INTERNATIONAL TRADE Evaluation of West of Scotland Trade Partnership (WSTP) Programme : April 97 - Dec 98
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 20 April 2000	Ref: IL/REP/674	

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the findings of the evaluation carried out by Strategem on the West of Scotland Trade Partnership WSTP Programme for the period Apr 97 - Dec 98.

2 Sustainability

- 2.1 This programme meets the sustainable development policy adopted by the Council through Local Agenda 21 by addressing elements of Section 3 "Economy and work" and Section 11 "Partnership and Funding". In particular the scheme addresses the following areas:

- increasing employment opportunities for local people
- helping local and community businesses to set up and grow
- working in partnership with other departments and agencies.

3 Background

- 3.1 Committee is aware that North Lanarkshire Council is an active participant of the WSTP, along with 11 other West of Scotland local authorities. A programme of International Trade events organised and managed by the WSTP is currently the subject of an ERDF application, running from April 1997 to March 2000, with an extension to end March 2001.
- 3.2 The project establishes a focused International Trade Group exhibition and mission support programme, aimed at increasing the effectiveness of Western Scotland SMEs in international markets, across the whole of the West of Scotland. North Lanarkshire Council has a key role in the partnership, organising and managing a number of events on behalf of the partnership.

4 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 4.1. As Committee is aware, external consultants were commissioned to carry out a detailed monitoring and evaluation survey on the impact of the WSTP international trade programme on all companies in the West of Scotland, who participated in the programme between April 1997 and December 1998. The final report identifies the economic impact that participation in the international trade programme has had on the performance of companies, in areas such as: turnover, export turnover, employment figures, company profile in the market.
- 4.2. The evaluation survey is now complete and a copy of the report is attached at Appendix 1. Although the survey was carried out on participating companies from throughout the whole of the West of Scotland, an analysis of key features for each local council area has been included (see Section 9 of the document).
- 4.3. The survey reports a high level of satisfaction with the programme and its delivery by local councils, and it appears that the programme has encouraged the development of strategic awareness of exporting and therefore probably a change in thinking about exporting. High outputs and impacts are also reported, summarised as follows:

Impacts	West of Scotland Gross	West of Scotland Net	Effect on Scottish Economy
Jobs created	136	102	177
Additional annual export sales	£14m	£11m	£11m
Additional annual added value	£8.4m	£6.3m	£11m

This indicates that overall the WSTP programme created 177 jobs in Scotland and added £11m to its Gross National Product over the short term.

- 4.4. A key benchmark for measuring the success of the programme is value for money. Scottish Enterprise indicates in its 96/97 accounts that for every £1 spent on export assistance £14 of additional export sales were achieved. On the basis of available figures the WSTP programme meets this average figure (total costs of the programme are recorded at just over £1.0m). However, it must be borne in mind that these are short term outcomes and do not reflect the longer term benefits of entry to new export markets.
- 4.5. It should also be borne in mind, as the survey points out, that exporting, particularly where companies are starting from scratch, is a long term process and often substantial time elapses between initial visits and tangible success. The longer term impacts of the WSTP Programme are not well represented in a study such as this, where the focus has been on the shorter term more tangible aspects of the initiative.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1. The study and its conclusions make recommendations in the following areas (these are detailed in Section 11 of the report).
- selecting and categorising participating companies
 - revising the mechanics of delivery
 - adding new features
 - understanding the longer term effects

Suggestions for taking these forward are outlined in the above section of the report.

6. **Future Action**

6.1 The WSTP will take into account the findings of the evaluation report in future delivery of the programme.

7 **Recommendation**

- 7.1 It is recommended that Committee :
- a) note the contents of this report and
 - b) accept the findings of the evaluation.



David M Porch
Director of Planning and Environment

Date of Report:

31 March 2000

For further information contact Isobel Long, Economic Development Officer, telephone 01236 616287