

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO.7.....

REPORT

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: CUMBERNAULD COLLEGE – LEARNING CENTRE FOR NORTHERN CORRIDOR
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 24 August 2000	Ref: MMcC/JG//REP730	

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the outcome of discussion to provide training and employment initiatives in the Northern Corridor area and to request approval of a grant of £10,000 to Cumbernauld College to support their intention to establish a Learning Centre in the Northern Corridor area.

2. Sustainability

2.1 The intended funding meets the sustainable development policy adopted by the Council through Local Agenda 21 by addressing elements of the following:

Section 1	-	Building Planning & Land Use
Section 3	-	Economy and Work
Section 5	-	Transport
Section 8	-	Social Needs
Section 11	-	Partnership and Funding

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Members will recall a report which was submitted to the Economic Development Committee on 26th August 1999 outlining the position with regards to the former Launchpad premises at Chryston Valley Business Centre. Cumbernauld Area Enterprise had been using these premises for a period of time to deliver employment and training initiatives to residents of the Northern Corridor area. Following internal changes within that organisation and their decision to move to Fleming House, Cumbernauld they were no longer in a position to continue to operate from the Chryston Valley Business Centre. The Business Centre has subsequently lain empty with no employment and training being provided from that base for a period of months.

3.2 Members will be aware that the Lanarkshire Alliance has commissioned a review of services to unemployed people across Lanarkshire with a view to identifying gaps in provision and duplication of services so that these can be rationalised as part of a strategy for future provision. This study identified that there was a gap in provision within the Northern Corridor area in terms of training and employment initiatives being delivered to unemployed residents in that area. In order to address this gap a number of meetings have taken place between partners in that area including Cumbernauld College. Cumbernauld College has now expressed firm interest in establishing a Learning Centre from the former Chryston Valley Business Centre which would provide a Learning Support and Advice Centre with open community access. I attach for Members information at Appendix 1 to this

report a letter received by the Economic Development Manager from Brian Lister, Principal of the College which outlines the College's proposal for the project.

4. Funding Support

- 4.1 The College have requested £10,000 of financial support from the Council to assist with adapting the premises for new technology and supporting infrastructure to enable it to operate effectively as a Learning Centre. The College themselves will also be making a contribution of £10,000 to the project. They have approached Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire for a similar contribution and they intend to submit a bid to the Scottish University for Industry for match funding to enable the appropriate infrastructure to be installed in the premises for effective future working.
- 4.2 All Council Departments which have participated in the Review of Lifelong Learning, ie Chief Executives, Planning & Environment and Community Services, support Cumbernauld College's intention to establish a Learning Centre at Chryston Valley. It will provide a base for community access for a range of learning activities which will link unemployed residents to the labour market with training which will be linked to employment opportunities within that area.
- 4.3 Discussions are ongoing between the College, Economic Development Unit and Community Education to establish joint working from this base.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the request for funding of £10,000 be approved. The funding can be found from within existing Economic Development budgets and would be granted to the College subject to a lease being signed and the College being operational from the premises. Any future funding relationship between the College and the Council would be on a project funding basis with a Service Level Agreement being in place in relation to the specific project delivery.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Economic Development Unit welcomes the commitment from Cumbernauld College to establish a Learning Centre at Chyrston Valley Business Centre and believes that it provides future opportunities for joint working which will open up training opportunities leading to employment for the residents of that area. Future activity is already being planned with the College which will involve joint bids for European funded programmes to be delivered jointly from the Learning Centre.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and approve the allocation of £10,000 to Cumbernauld College as outlined in the report.



David M Porch
Director of Planning and Environment

Date of Report: 16 August 2000

For further information contact Maureen McConachie, Economic Development Manager, telephone 01236 616266..

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2 August 2000

Ms Maureen McConnachie
Economic Development Manager
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North Lanarkshire Council
Fleming House
Tryst Road
CUMBERNAULD G67 1JW

Dear Maureen

Further to our recent discussions I would like to confirm Cumbernauld College's desire to proceed to an agreement with the Council over the College's provision of education and training within the Chryston Valley Business Centre.

With suitable adaptation of the premises there is the scope to meet the needs of a wide range of learners. Groups that we are particularly interested in would include:

- The Government New Deal Initiative particularly Gateway to Work and Enhanced Gateway.
- Those in employment under threat of redundancy due to low levels of core and key skills.
- Those seeking employment in growth and technological sectors where new and enhanced skills are required for entry.
- Adult Returners to education with a particular focus on women returners.

There would also be the opportunity to address issues such as the need to improve the gender balance in certain work areas and in the use of new technologies to allow more flexible working practices. We would hope to develop a learning centre model that supports learning in the workplace, at home or in the wider community with the Centre acting as a support base. We visualise the reception area as a 'one-stop shop' learning support and advice centre with open community access. Your support in this area, particularly from adult education would be beneficial.

In the first instance the College would seek £10,000 support from the Council to assist with adapting the premises for new technologies and supporting infrastructure. It would also be of significant benefit to the College if the rental charges for the premises as indicated in your internal memorandum of 12th July could be waived for the first three months to allow for a commissioning period and for critical dialogue among the key partners. This would ensure the provision of sustainable services of the highest quality over the long term although we would envisage learner access from early September.

2.

It is also envisaged that the College will work closely with the Council's Economic Development and Community Services Departments in its endeavour to meet the local needs of the Northern Corridor. In particular we would like to prepare joint applications for EU and other funding at the earliest opportunity.

We would obviously like to discuss many key issues with yourself relating particularly to the priority groups who you feel could be advantaged by this opportunity. I have contacted both BOC and Morgan Stanley as agreed at our meeting of 21 July and am awaiting suitable dates for a joint meeting. I do hope that this proposal meets with your approval to allow the College to rapidly progress this exciting initiative.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Lister', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Lister
PRINCIPAL