

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: LANARKSHIRE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CENTRE
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 24 August 2000	Ref: EB/Rep709	

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the activity of the Lanarkshire Technology and Innovation Centre during 1999 /2000 and the Operating Plan for 2000/2001.

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". In particular the scheme addresses the following areas:

- increasing employment opportunities for local people
- helping local and community businesses to set up and grow

3 Background

- 3.1 As Committee will be aware the Lanarkshire Technology and Innovation Centre was set up in 1998 to offer technology-orientated business development advice, pre-incubator units for innovative design and product development work and on-going business development support to technology product and process based businesses. The centre was established by the Council in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire and Strathclyde University with the participation of the private sector as a company limited by guarantee. The Council has two seats on the Board of Directors. The Council made a financial contribution of £65,000 over the three year period from 1998 to 2001 along with contributions from the other partners, which was matched by funding from the European Regional Development Fund.
- 3.2 The aim of the Lanarkshire Technology and Innovation Centre is to have Lanarkshire recognised as a region where innovation is at the heart of our corporate culture. This would be demonstrated through high levels of continuous product, service and process development, with companies successfully operating in global markets. The Centre has three major objectives: Improving the competitive position of Lanarkshire companies through the adoption of innovation as a crucial element of ongoing business development; Improving knowledge of the innovation process and technology management skills; Developing a comprehensive support infrastructure where technical and commercial information, advice and financial support offered by the Centre is complemented by other partners in the network including North Lanarkshire Council.
- 3.3 Services available to companies in Lanarkshire include: commercialisation of new products, innovation support, technical assistance, expert help, innovation/creative workshops, and has links to our own Economic Development programmes where relevant.

4 Activity in 1999/2000

4.1 During the year 1999/2000 the following activities took place:

Total Enquiries	1322
Adviser Visits	247
Events	33
Projects completed	112
Projects in progress	186

4.2 The projects included: product development, patent advice and assistance, support for product testing, expert help and Technical assistance.

5 Operating Plan 2000/2001

5.1 The Centre will continue to offer the support currently delivered. In addition, it is recognised that the enhancement of existing services and the development of new services are crucial in order to encourage more companies to become innovative. It is proposed that the following ideas will be developed and delivered during 2000/2001

- The development of a Product Engine that will generate and test the feasibility of new product ideas, which can be accessed by Lanarkshire companies.
- Technology Skills Bureau to match company skills needs via professionals/graduate/undergraduates to support project activity.
- Lanarkshire Graduate Engineer Show, which will showcase graduate/projects to Lanarkshire companies and help encourage recruitment.
- Develop a new Project Management Tool to assist companies develop products.
- Creativity Workshops with company management to generate new business ideas.
- Technology Network utilising telecomms, link companies to Centre and other organisations.
- New monitoring procedures to gather company project impacts.

6 Recommendation

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.



David M Porch
Director of Planning and Environment

Date of Report: 30 June 2000

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