



NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO.12.....

REPORT

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: TENDER FOR TRADE EVENT - FEBRUARY 2001; ORGANISATION & DEVELOPMENT
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 23 November 2000.	Ref: PB/REP743.	

1 Purpose.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform committee of the progress being made in the organisation and development of the North Lanarkshire Council "Tender for Trade" meet the buyer event.

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 8 "Social Needs". In particular the scheme addresses the following areas:

- reducing poverty and low pay
- increasing employment opportunities for local people
- helping local and community based business to set up and grow

3. Introduction.

- 3.1 As committee will be aware the Economic Development Unit is currently developing a project that will encourage and promote good practice in local purchasing initiatives and will increase the level of trade between local companies and North Lanarkshire Council. In addition the project will promote the Council as "business friendly" and establish links across the North Lanarkshire business community. It is proposed that the Economic Development Unit will lead this initiative corporately, and through its working with other departments, will establish new working practices and requirements to implement the project.
- 3.2 The "Tender for Trade" event was the subject of a previous report to committee, - 24 August 2000, Report No. 718. This report outlined the aims, objectives and proposed structure of the event and requested that committee approve expenditure of £20,000 on the organisation, promotion and delivery of the event.
- 3.3 As described at paragraph 1.1 previously, the purpose of this report is to inform committee of the progress to date of the organisation and development processes preceding the event.

4. Event Venue & Date.

- 4.1 The date of the event has been confirmed as Tuesday 20 February 2001. The venue in which the event will be held is the Hilton Hotel, Strathclyde Business Park, Bellshill.

5. Corporate & External Commitment.

- 5.1 Corporate organisation of the event across all council departments has resulted in departments nominating 'representatives' who have specific 'purchasing' responsibilities within their respective organisations.
- 5.2 The participation of the Authorities Buying Consortium (ABC) in the event is considered critical. This organisation performs a key strategic role in the procurement of goods and services within all local authorities in the West of Scotland, including North Lanarkshire Council. To this end ABC have agreed to provide active, professional assistance where necessary, before, during and after delivery of the "Tender for Trade" event.
- 5.3 The participation of Lanarkshire Health Board (LHB) has been invited but has yet to be confirmed. There is however an issue with regard to the likelihood of LHB participation. As committee will be aware, the local health board are due, in early 2001, to begin the delivery of healthcare and hospital care services from two new build hospitals at Hairmyres, East Kilbride and at Wishaw. This will result in health board management and support staff being heavily committed to the organisation of hospital site moves. A potential consequence is that health board participation in the event may not be possible.
- 5.4 The participation in the event of Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire and the Small Business Gateway network during the afternoon 'exhibition' and 'meet the buyer' sessions will provide delegates with an opportunity to discuss procurement issues relevant to these organisations.
- 5.5 Corporate and external organisation commitment to the "Tender for Trade" event has been confirmed through a series of meetings. The first of these was held on June 21 2000 and was chaired by the Director of the Planning and Environment department. This meeting introduced the event to departmental purchasing representatives and 'signed-up' their commitment. A subsequent meeting was held on 24 August 2000 when attending participants were advised of the progress of event organisation, the proposed event structure and what would be required of them and their departments in terms of input.
- 5.6 All council departments were issued with a 'buy' survey questionnaire that asked for information on the type and quantities of goods and services purchased by departments. The survey also asked for notification of any issues that impact upon the buying decisions taken by council departments.

6. Event Structure & Content.

- 6.1 A structure for the "Tender for Trade" event has been devised. (Committee will be issued with this information, separately, at this meeting). The event will consist of an introductory session featuring a number of speakers who will: (a) open the event and welcome delegates; and (b) give a short talk on issues relating to public procurement.
- 6.2 Following the opening session of the event a number of 'workshops' will be delivered to groups of delegates based on issues involved in the 'tendering' process. Workshop topics will include:
- Financial procedures for tendering.
 - Standing orders on procurement.
 - The tender process unveiled.
 - Training grant and loan assistance available from North Lanarkshire Council.
 - Special tendering requirements for Construction Services Department procurement.
- 6.3 The event will have an interval at lunchtime that, in addition to hospitality, will allow delegates an opportunity to discuss issues raised during the morning session on an informal basis. At this time the 'exhibition' area in the foyer will provide attending council departments, other agencies and private sponsors to 'showcase' their organisations.

6.4 The afternoon 'Meet the Buyer' session will consist of a pre-arranged system of appointments where delegates will be able to pre-register to consult with specialist 'buying' representatives on specific purchasing matters.

6.5 The event will conclude at 4.00pm on the day.

7. **Training & Development.**

7.1 During the event, as a result of workshop delivery, delegate companies will be able to identify individual 'tender process' training and development required by their companies. The purpose of training will be to enable 'trained' companies to effectively tender for the large amount of public works contracts available to the business community.

7.2 Following identification of company 'training needs', the Economic Development Unit will analyse information gathered and organise a series of complementary training programmes. Training programmes organised will facilitate the development of new skills within North Lanarkshire based companies, with identified training needs, enabling them to become fully competent in the public tendering process.

7.3 Delivery of training programmes will take place in the in the months following the "Tender for Trade" event.

8. **Marketing & Promotion.**

8.1 The event was officially launched to the business community at the start of November 2000, in the form of a front cover story in the Business Focus newsletter, the flagship publication of the Economic Development Unit. The feature outlined the aims of the event and provided details of the programme to run on the day.

8.2 An identity for the event has been agreed and this will form the basis of all promotional activity linked to the event. Copies of the logo will be circulated at the meeting.

8.3 A promotional leaflet for the event has been designed. The purpose of this publication is threefold; firstly to provide local businesses with a comprehensive guide to the event programme, outlining keynote speakers, conference topics and workshop themes. Secondly the leaflet contains a registration form, complete with a freepost response mechanism to encourage delegates to pre-register for the event and to indicate their preference of workshop topics. This will enable the team to monitor interest in the event. Thirdly, this publication will be the first opportunity for us to mention the event sponsors and to feature their logos in association with the event. Copies of this leaflet will be circulated at the meeting.

8.4 This publication will be distributed in the first instance via the Business Focus newsletter. It will be inserted into over 3000 newsletters and distributed to businesses across North Lanarkshire. Additional copies will be distributed through the Small Business Gateway organisations and Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire.

8.5 Sponsorship has been sought from 4 major organisations – SEL, UK Steel Enterprise, the Royal Bank of Scotland and NTL. To date, SEL have verbally agreed to £5000 in sponsorship and UK Steel Enterprise has confirmed a £1000 donation towards the event. Discussions are still being held with the other two businesses to establish their level of interest in this event.

8.6 The North Lanarkshire Council corporate website should now be carrying an announcement relating to the event, encouraging people to get in touch with the Economic Development Unit for more information.

8.7 The North Lanarkshire Council's public newsletter, "North Lanarkshire News" should also be carrying an article in its next edition to announce the date of the event.

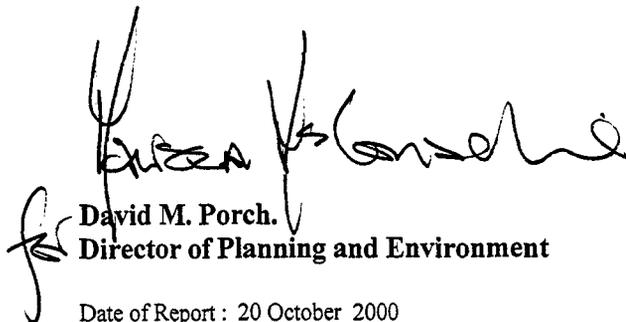
- 8.8 The next phase of the promotional programme will include a series of small advertisements in the local press throughout January. Work will shortly be commencing on the Delegate Handbook which will be the principal publication to be distributed at the event.

9. **Conclusion.**

- 9.1 The "Tender for Trade" event will be a high profile, integrated, quality event which will promote North Lanarkshire Council as business friendly and active in assisting the development and improved competitiveness of local companies. This in turn will deliver social benefits to North Lanarkshire residents through assisting and encouraging local companies to create new, additional employment opportunities. The organisation and development of the "Tender for Trade" event is a continuous process, requiring considerable Officer time and commitment. As reported, the structure of the event is now established. Despite this 'establishment' circumstances may require that changes be made within specific areas to meet unforeseen demands. Issues relating to any such changes will be described in subsequent reports to committee.

10. **Recommendation.**

- 10.1 It is recommended that committee note the content of this report, and further note that the continuing organisation and development of the "Tender for Trade" event will be the subject of subsequent reports to committee.


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Director of Planning and Environment

Date of Report : 20 October 2000

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