

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: BETTER HOMES – STRONGER COMMUNITIES – ESF OBJECTIVE 3 STAFFING
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 25 January 2001	Ref: JT/JG/Rep769	

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is submitted to the Economic Development Committee in order to seek approval for the appointment of a Development Officer (PO3) and a Part-Time Administrative Assistant (AP2) on a temporary basis initially until 31 December 2001.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Planning & Environment Department (Economic Development Unit) has been informed that a Capacity Building Initiative “Better Homes – Stronger Communities” has been approved for funding under the Scottish ESF Objective 3 Programme 2001 – 2006.
- 2.2 An ESF financial contribution of £35,159 has been approved towards the implementation of the project during the 2001 calendar year. A fundamental part of the original ESF application identified a requirement for temporary staff to be appointed in order to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the initiative.

3. Project Aims & Objectives

- 3.1 The project has been developed as a result of feedback received from community organisations and the results of an evaluation of a Community Economic Regeneration Project funded under Resider II and which ended in 1999. As a result of the experience gained in operating the Resider project the Economic Development Unit was made aware of a demand from housing based groups, housing associations and tenant groups, for assistance in addressing the regeneration of their areas. This is in keeping with the Government’s drive through Scottish Homes to get housing groups involved in non-housing activity which contributes to the economic and social regeneration of their areas. The project will focus on 3 areas suffering from exclusion, where significant housing investment is about to take place or has recently been completed. The project will, therefore, maximise the impact of the major injection of financial assistance which has gone into these areas via housing by investing in building the capacity of the communities to create local solutions to address the sustainable regeneration of their areas.
- 3.2 The project aims firstly to work with the housing groups which exist in the identified areas. These are: North Lanarkshire Council Housing Department, Clyde Valley Housing Association, Forgewood Housing Co-operative, Lanarkshire Housing Association, Link Housing Association and all associated tenants/residents groups. The project aims to harness the energy which has been created in these groups, through housing renewal to stimulate interest in the wider regeneration of the area. The project will work closely with housing groups who wish to develop local solutions to the problems of economic/social exclusion experienced in their areas. Beyond this the project will also work with other

community groups, new and existing, who see an opportunity to develop local solutions to suit the needs of their community. In addition to assisting groups on an individual basis, the project will provide opportunities for groups to network together, pull resources and further develop with greater experience in addressing the needs of their communities. A strong focus will be placed on developing mentoring links between groups to promote self-help and self-sufficiency.

4. Strategy Aims

4.1 The strategic aim of the Objective 3 Programme is to support economic growth by contributing to the sustainable development of a competitive economy, with an efficient and flexible labour market, where people have access to income earning opportunities. The "Better Homes – Stronger Communities" project contributes to this aim in that its primary goal is to work with communities who have been excluded to enable them to help themselves to participate in the economy and join in the economic prosperity of Scotland.

4.2 The project addresses the strategic objectives of the Objective 3 Programme as follows:

- The project will provide quality skills training in a wide variety of topics including Information and Community Technology.
- The project will provide capacity building assistance to community organisations within disadvantaged areas of North Lanarkshire.
- The communities served by the project are characterised by low educational attainment and apparent lack of interest in learning.

5. Funding

5.1 The application for Objective 3 funding was for a multi-annual bid covering a period of 3 years from 1 January 2001 – 31 December 2003. However, due to an overbid for multi-annual allocations the project has been offered funding as a single year project ie up to 31 December 2001. It is, however, the intention of the Economic Development Unit to apply in subsequent rounds for funding in later years.

5.2 The total funding package for the calendar year 2001 comprises of the following:

NLC contribution	£37,972.00
Scottish Homes	£5,000.00
ESF	<u>£35,159.00</u>
Total Project Costs	£78,131.00

5.3 The actual financial contribution by NLC amounts to £28,173 with a balance of £9,799.00 comprising of contributions to eligible project costs. The financial contribution of £28,173.00 has been identified and committed within existing Economic Development Unit budgets.

6. Staffing

6.1 The Director of Planning & Environment has consulted with the Head of Personnel Services to confirm the staffing requirements of the project. In order that the project can commence the undernoted staffing requirements of the project require to be approved by the Economic Development Committee.

- 1 x Development Officer (AP5/PO6)
- 0.5 x Administrative Assistant (AP1)

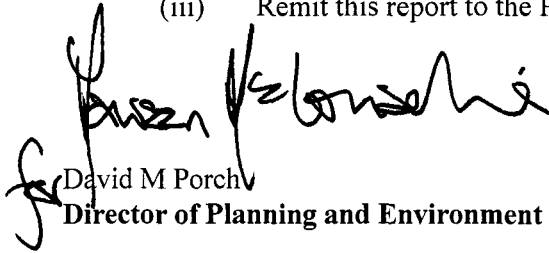
6.2 Given the fact that the project terminates on 31 December 2001 approval is requested to provide the above posts on a temporary basis until that date.

6.3 In addition to the above staffing requirements of the project the Economic Development Unit will provide in addition to management support the services of 0.5 Development Officer support to the "Better Homes – Stronger Communities) Project.

7. Recommendation

7.1 It is recommended that the Economic Development Committee note the contents of this report and:

- (i) Agree to the appointment of a Development Officer (AP5/PO6) and a part-time Administrative Assistant (AP1) on a temporary basis until 31 December 2001;
- (ii) Note that future reports on the "Better Homes – Stronger Communities" Project will be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly basis and;
- (iii) Remit this report to the Housing Committee for information;
- (iii) Remit this report to the Personnel Services Committee for interest and approval.



David M Porch
Director of Planning and Environment

For further information contact John J Turley, Senior Economic Development Officer, Tel 01236 616271

Date of Report 11 January 2001