

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

AGENDA ITEM No. 46

To: PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE	Subject; TRADING STANDARDS –CREATION OF TEMPORARY FINANCIAL INCLUSION DEVELOPMENT POSTS
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT	
Date: 10 th May 2006	Ref:

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authority for the creation of two temporary financial inclusion officers within the Planning & Environment Department resulting from the Scottish Executive Financial Inclusion Funding Award.

2. Background

2.1 The Scottish Executive announced a funding stream in 2005 to promote financial inclusion. North Lanarkshire Partnership has been awarded £1 million (£500,000 - 2006/07; £500,000 – 2007/08) to support this initiative.

2.2 The funding is designed to:

- Prevent individuals or families falling into debt (prevention);
- Provide routes out of poverty for individuals and families (routes out of poverty);
- Sustain individuals or families in a lifestyle free from poverty (sustainability)

2.3 Details of the proposed services following approval by the Scottish Executive were reported to the Policy & Resources Committee on 18th April 2006.

3. Considerations

3.1 The proposals include the creation of 2 temporary financial inclusion development posts within the Planning & Environment Department to take forward the recent review of financial advice and information services.

3.2 The aim of this project is to ensure that the quality of advice and information given across all partner organisations in North Lanarkshire complies with Scottish national standards and competencies. This will be achieved by:

- the inclusion of the appropriate standards in service level agreements and improvement plans, and
- the provision of training in practice competencies to paid and voluntary staff within money advice and welfare rights providers in North Lanarkshire.

3.3 Further assessment of opportunities for improving equality of access to advice services across North Lanarkshire will be carried out and any gaps in provision identified. This will be achieved by:

- developing common monitoring indicators in line with Scottish national standards competencies,
- using existing IT systems to generate a precise picture of money advice and welfare rights service uptake, and

- developing inter-agency referral protocols to allow residents fast track access to the most appropriate service.
- 3.4 The funding for financial inclusion is for a period of two years from 1st April 2006. It is proposed to create the post of Development Officer, grade PO2, and Financial Inclusion Support Worker, grade AP4, up until 31st March 2008. The sum of £80,000 per annum is included for this part of the project in the award to North Lanarkshire Partnership by the Scottish Executive and the delivery of outcomes will be monitored and evaluated as part of the existing Regeneration Outcome Agreement.

4. Corporate Considerations

- 4.1 All salary and other costs will be met in full by the funding from this financial inclusion award.
- 4.2 Financial inclusion contributes to the corporate priorities of promoting social inclusion and health, well being and care.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Sub-Committee
- i) Approve the creation of the post of Development Officer, grade PO2, and Financial Inclusion Support Worker, grade AP4, for the period up to 31st March 2008, and
 - ii) Remit the report to the Policy & Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee



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