

AGENDA ITEM No. 6

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

To: Policy & Resources Committee	Subject: Interim Community Grants Scheme
From: Chief Executive	
Date: 24 April 1996 Ref: SM/jj	

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to approve the establishment and operation of an Interim Community Grants Scheme. This will enable the Council to respond quickly to the numerous requests for grant assistance which have been received. An interim arrangement also creates an opportunity for further consideration of the Scheme as the Council develops relevant policies and strategies.

The role of voluntary sector organisations and community groups in providing community based services and in promoting community development has long been recognised by local authorities. Local authorities' statutory powers in relation to payments to such bodies derive from various sources including:-

- Section 83 - Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973
- Section 17 - Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act, 1982
- Section 10 - Social Work (Scotland) Act, 1968
- Section 6 - Education (Scotland) Act, 1980

2. Guiding Principles

It is proposed that at this early stage in the development of a policy framework for North Lanarkshire Council, that an Interim grants scheme should operate under the following guiding principles:-

- (i) The Scheme will be for voluntary organisations and community groups operating in the North Lanarkshire area.
- (ii) The Scheme will support such voluntary organisations and community groups whose activities bring direct community benefit, promote equal opportunities, and do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, and religion.
- (iii) Access to and operation of the Scheme be fair, accessible, and procedures ensure high levels of accountability.

3. Outline of Proposals for Interim Scheme

There is a sum of £345,000 in the Chief Executive's revenue budget for 1996/97 for community grants. This is based on previous ward schemes and community grants operated in the former authorities.

A consultation paper on decentralisation is in preparation and is likely to suggest that all community grants be handled through any area committees which might be established. Budgets for these would then pass to the areas committees on a pro-rata basis. In the meantime the budget would be managed by the Community Development Sub-Committee of Policy and Resources.

An integral part of any grants scheme must be that it is accessible to its applicants and that applications are processed timeously. The purpose of devising an Interim Community Grants Scheme is to enable the Council to respond quickly to the numerous requests for grant assistance which have been received whilst, at the same time, creating opportunity for further consideration of the Scheme as the Council develops its community development and decentralisation policies and its social and economic strategies. To this end the following proposals are made:-

- (i) All requests from voluntary organisations and community groups for financial assistance are made by application form as contained in Appendix 1.
- (ii) The maximum grant allowed will be £1,500.
- (iii) All applications must meet the eligibility criteria and adhere to the conditions of grant, as detailed in Appendices 2 and 4 respectively.
- (iv) Monitoring arrangements will be set in place. Details of which are contained in Section 8 of this report.
- (v) A further report be presented containing detailed aspects of a final Community Grants Scheme.

4. Options for Operation of Interim Scheme

For the Interim Scheme, 3 options have been identified. These options are not mutually exclusive.

Allocation

Decision Making Process

Option 1

Total budget allocated equally to 69 wards. Policy and Resources Sub-Committee on Community Development in interim.

Option 2

£2,000 ringfenced allocation to each ward. Policy and Resources Sub-Committee on Community Development in interim.
Balance of budget allocated to areas

Option 3

Total budget allocated to areas (eg based on needs analysis) Policy and Resources Sub-Committee on Community Development in interim.

A summary of advantages and disadvantages for the 3 options is as follows:-

<p><u>Option 1 - Total budget allocated equally to 69 wards</u></p> <p><i>Advantage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal allocation to each ward. 	<p><i>Disadvantages</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantages organisations operating more widely than in a single ward. • Limited capacity to use grants in line with strategic policy context.
<p><u>Option 2 - £2,000 ringfenced allocation to each ward</u></p> <p><i>Advantages</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal allocation of part of the budget to each ward. • Retains resources for decentralised decision making within policy framework. 	<p><i>Disadvantages</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial ringfencing of budget to wards is more complex to administer.
<p><u>Option 3 - Total budget allocated to areas (eg based on needs analysis)</u></p> <p><i>Advantages</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retains resources for decentralised decision making within policy framework. • Encourages planned approach to local funding strategies. 	<p><i>Disadvantage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential opposition to non-uniform allocation of resources.

Option 2 is recommended.

5. Implementing the Interim Scheme

Following approval of the Interim Scheme by the Committee, the Community Development Section will publicise the Scheme and make application forms available to potential applicants throughout the Council area. At the same time, detailed guidance on the Scheme and its operation will be provided to all members of the Council.

Until Area Committees are operational, it is proposed that the Policy and Resources Sub-Committee on Community Development deals with all applications referred to Committee.

Grant applications must be:

- (i) on the approved form;
- (ii) checked against the eligibility criteria;
- (iii) assessed against the approved assessment criteria, as contained in Section 7 of this report; and
- (iv) submitted to the Chief Executive's Community Development Section for processing.

6. Eligibility and Conditions of Grant

It is suggested that the Council adopt eligibility criteria and conditions of grant as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 and all applications for funding are assessed in order to ensure that, both the organisation and the purpose for which funding is sought, adhere to legislation, reflect North Lanarkshire Council policies and provide a service, purpose or activity which is open and in the interests of the local area or local people.

The adoption and implementation of eligibility criteria ensures that all applications are considered in a fair and responsive manner. Furthermore, it is possible to standardise practice regarding the consideration of grants, and Council decisions about the relevance and suitability of an organisation to receive funding across North Lanarkshire. This is particularly relevant when remembering that North Lanarkshire Council is required to merge five previous local authority grants' procedures in order to adopt its own scheme and community organisations are used to applying to these various schemes.

7. Application and Assessment Procedures

It is recommended that:

- i) All requests for funding must be submitted in writing on an application form provided by the Chief Executive's Department. Applicants will also be issued with a copy of the eligibility criteria, conditions of grant and monitoring/evaluation requirements and officers of the Council will be available to provide further advice and assistance to applicants where necessary.
- ii) Only organisations, and not individuals, may apply for funding and only projects under the complete control of the applicant organisation will be considered. Completed application forms should be accompanied by a copy of the organisation's constitution and financial statement.
- iii) Applicant organisations should be properly and appropriately constituted and should operate strict financial controls including depositing funds in a bank/building society/post office account.
- iv) Application forms should be signed by the Chairperson and Secretary representing the organisation.
- v) It will be necessary when assessing any application for funding, to seek a report from the most appropriate department of the Council.
- vi) All approved funding awards will be issued to the applicant organisation in the form of a cheque, made payable to the organisation, or by credit transfer into the organisation's bank account.
- vii) Applications will be acknowledged by the Chief Executive's Department.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Council will wish to monitor both the administrative operation of the Community Grants Scheme and also the extent to which Council funds are being effectively used by voluntary organisations to promote community activity and where relevant, provide quality services. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Council adopt strict monitoring procedures for the implementation and operation of the Community Grants Scheme. Such monitoring should not be viewed by voluntary organisations as prohibitive or questioning, but rather as the Council seeking to ensure the most effective use of limited resources and also maintain contact with and offer support to voluntary organisations. There is also the opportunity, through monitoring and evaluation, for the Council to learn of, and where appropriate replicate in other areas, examples of successful initiatives or good practice developed by the voluntary sector.

Monitoring and evaluation by the Council should include:

- i) Applicants when signing the application form must agree to abide by the Council's Conditions of Grant.
- ii) Applicants must agree in writing to any further conditions of grant imposed by the Council before the award cheque is released.
- iii) Applicants must ensure that all expenditure is adequately monitored and recorded and should be encouraged to detail on the application form the monitoring and evaluation methods they will put in place.
- iv) Applicants must submit to the Chief Executive's Department within six months of the grant being awarded:
 - a report and expenditure statement detailing how the grant was spent; and
 - copies of all relevant receipts.
- v) Applicants should make financial records available to the Council for inspection upon request.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee:

1. approve the establishment of an Interim Community Grants Scheme;
2. approve the allocation of the Community Grants budget, whereby £2,000 is ringfenced for each ward;
3. approve the interim application form, eligibility criteria, notes of guidance, conditions of grant, officer assessment report form, as detailed in Appendices 1 to 5; and
4. otherwise note the contents of this report.



 Chief Executive

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Reference	
Category	
Date Received	
Final Committee Decision	
Date of Decision	
Statutory Authority	
Ward Allocation	

Interim Community Grants Scheme**APPLICATION FORM***(Please complete in block capitals using black ink)***Section I - General Information**

1▶ NAME & ADDRESS OF ORGANISATION.

2▶ NAME & ADDRESS OF CONTACT PERSON.

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

3▶ NOTE OF WHERE AND WHEN ORGANISATION MEETS.

4▶ LIST OF YOUR OFFICE BEARERS.

Chair/President: _____

Tel No: _____

Secretary: _____

Tel No: _____

Treasurer: _____

Tel No: _____

Others: _____

Tel No: _____

Tel No: _____

Tel No: _____

5▶ APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATE REGULARLY.

6▶ HOW LONG HAS ORGANISATION BEEN OPERATIONAL?

7▶ WHO DOES YOUR ORGANISATION CATER FOR (eg young people, children, elderly, etc)?

If providing services for children under the age of 8, is your organisation registered with Pre 5 Services?

If Yes, what is your Registration Number?

8▶ PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH GEOGRAPHICAL AREA(S) YOUR ORGANISATION COVERS.

Section 2 - Financial Information

1▶ AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUESTED:

£

2▶ WHAT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION WILL YOUR ORGANISATION MAKE TOWARDS THE TOTAL COST?

£

3▶ GRANT DETAILS

(a) What is the purpose of the grant?

(b) Detail how the grant will be spent:

Equipment

Administration

Other Costs

Amounts (£)

DRAFT

4► IF EQUIPMENT IS TO BE PURCHASED PLEASE SPECIFY:-

- (a) Address of where equipment is to be stored.

- (b) Name of person responsible for equipment.

- (c) What security measures are in place to safeguard the equipment.

5► HOW WILL THIS GRANT HELP TO DEVELOP YOUR ORGANISATION AND HOW WILL IT HELP YOU TO HELP THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?

6► PLEASE INDICATE BELOW ANY OTHER GRANTS OR ASSISTANCE BEING APPLIED FOR, RECEIVED OR PROMISED FOR ANY PART OF THIS APPLICATION.

Name of Funding Body

Amount Applied For/Received (£)

7► FUNDRAISING

(a) What fundraising do you intend to undertake?

(b) How much did you fundraise in the last year?

£

8► BANK DETAILS

Name of Bank Account: _____

Type of Account: _____

Bank Sort Code: _____

Name of Bank: _____

Account Number: _____

Address of Bank: _____

Applications will not normally be considered unless all of the following information is received. Please tick the undernoted boxes to indicate that you have submitted this information with your application.

A current Financial Statement
(income and expenditure)

A copy of your most recent Bank
Statement/Book

A copy of your Constitution.

A quotation for proposed single item
equipment purchases over £50.00.

On behalf of and as authorised by _____ (insert name of organisation)

We undertake that the Council's Conditions of Grant, which have been received, will be complied with.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(Chairperson)

Date: _____

(Secretary)

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
INTERIM COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

1. Only voluntary organisations, and not individuals will be eligible to apply to the Council's Community Grants' Scheme.
2. Applicant organisations should be properly and appropriately constituted and the aims and objectives of their constitution should be consistent with the statutory framework. Applicants should also have formal arrangements for meetings and membership. They should have objectives which concern social or community benefit and should have a democratic and accountable management structure.
3. Only projects under the complete control of the applicant organisation will be considered eligible.
4. Some examples of projects likely to be considered eligible for funding through the Community Grants Scheme include:
 - i) Those voluntary organisations and community organisations whose activities bring community benefit, promote equal opportunities and do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race and religion.
 - ii) Voluntary organisations which provide a service, such as day care or information and advice;
 - iii) Voluntary organisations which represent the interests of a particular section of the community, such as disabled people; and
 - iv) Self help groups in which people suffering from some form of disadvantage take steps to help themselves.
5. Projects or funding applications which are unlikely to be considered eligible for funding may include:
 - i) Projects which have commenced or are indeed past, prior to the application for grant being made;
 - ii) Projects which involve purchasing items of equipment of a personal nature;
 - iii) Applications for activities which are eligible for support from other grant schemes or funding sources operated by the Council (for example: Education Category 'C' Grants to Voluntary Organisations; Housing Grants to tenants associations and Social Work Section 10 grants);
 - iv) Applications to fund hall letting or rental costs for Council property;
 - v) Applications from political parties; and
 - vi) Applications from religious organisations or projects promoting religious activity (although this would not exclude applications from community or voluntary organisations operating from church premises or other places of worship).

6. Applicants must:
 - i) have a sound financial system and the capacity to manage the resources for which they are applying;
 - ii) keep proper financial records and make them available to the Council on request; and
 - iii) use any grant awarded only for the purpose for which it is intended.
7. The activities of the organisation should be consistent with the Council's policies, priorities and strategies.
8. Applicants should be able to demonstrate the need for the proposed project and show that the service or equipment is not provided locally in any other way. If the application is for an existing project then the applicant must outline why a continuation is required and what (if any) development an award would allow.
9. Applicants should provide details of their capacity to fundraise. For some projects the Council may insist on a contribution from applicants towards the total cost.
10. Where a particular item of equipment or service is available from another source locally organisations will be encouraged to 'network' and share. By this method, the most efficient use can be made of the available funding.
11. Where an organisation uses a Council grant to employ staff for a project, the said organisation is encouraged to meet all statutory requirements and abide by all national and local agreements (maternity and paternity leave, domestic leave etc.) in relation to the terms and conditions of employment of their staff. It is strongly recommended that organisations use the Council's own codes of practice on employment, which may be made available to the organisation together with appropriate advice.
12. Where the grant is to be used for repairs, maintenance or adaptations to a building, the applicant must provide evidence of ownership, lease (at least 5 years) or other agreement of use for premises. Applicants must comply with all relevant legislation in relation to planning, building control etc.

INTERIM COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME NOTES OF GUIDANCE

The Interim Community Grants Scheme is operated Policy and Resources Sub-Committee on Community Development which meets at 6 weekly intervals. It is likely that once Area Committees are established this function will transfer to them.

1. Purpose of the Interim Community Grants Scheme

To assist projects which, in the view of the Committee are in the interests of the local area or of the people living there.

2. Who can apply

Any properly constituted local community or voluntary organisation or group.

3. Level of Grant

The maximum amount of grant one applicant can receive for any one project is £1,500.

- i) Application must be submitted in advance of the proposed starting date of the project in order that the necessary administrative work may be completed and the application considered in advance of the project starting date.
- ii) If the application is successful, the applicant will be notified by letter which will specify the purpose of the award and advise if any special conditions are attached, the applicant must accept these conditions in writing before the grant can be paid. A grant will be made on receipt of this acceptance.
- iii) In cases in which no special condition has been attached, arrangements for payment of grant will be made simultaneously with the notification of award.
- iv) If an application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be notified within 7 working days after the meeting at which the application will be considered. The letter advising that the application has not been approved will normally give reasons and, if possible, will advise on any alternative sources of funding which may be available.

4. General

- i) The monies available for the Community Grants Scheme consist of 2 elements:
 - (a) an allocation which can be used to fund all types of projects; and
 - (b) a playscheme allocation which can be used only to fund applications from playschemes.
- ii) Before submitting the completed application form, the applicant should ensure that all necessary discussions and consultations with other agencies/organisations have taken place. Relevant agencies/organisations may include Lanarkshire Development Agency, Health Boards, local landowners, etc. The applicant may also require to seek advice of officers of North Lanarkshire Council.
- iii) While applications for running costs are eligible for grant aid, assistance for this purpose may be restricted to a one off start up grant.

- iv) In considering applications, account will be taken of the amount which the applicant will contribute from its own resources towards the cost of the project.
- v) Applicants can make any number of applications in one financial year. However, no guarantee can be given that any specific application will be approved.
- vi) While the maximum an applicant can receive for one project is £1,500, the Scheme provides for several applicants to come together to mount a project with each applicant being able to apply for grant aid up to that figure. It should be stressed, however, that only in exceptional circumstances could funding over £1,500 be granted for any one project.
- vii) If the costs incurred in any project are less than the amount approved, the remainder of the grant must be returned to the Area Committee.
- viii) If the project is one which involves and is dependent on contributions from a number of services (for example: the Local Enterprise Company or Health Board) North Lanarkshire Council will require to be satisfied that such contributions are forthcoming before payment of grant will be made. The applicant should ensure, therefore, that approaches to other bodies are made at the same time as, or in advance of, submission of grant application to the Committee as North Lanarkshire Council will require to be satisfied that the applicant has the means to meet the costs of the project.
- ix) On receipt of a completed application, an officer from North Lanarkshire Council may contact your organisation to undertake a report for the Area Committee.

5. Projects for which Grants Aid is not normally available

- i) Projects which have commenced or are indeed past, prior to the application for grant being made;
- ii) Projects which involve purchasing items of equipment of a personal nature;
- iii) Applications for activities which are eligible for support from other grant schemes or funding sources operated by the Council;
- iv) Applications to fund hall letting or rental costs for Council property;
- v) Applications from political parties; and
- vi) Applications from religious organisations or projects promoting religious activity (although this would not exclude applications from community or voluntary organisations operating from church premises or other places of worship).

6. Notes specific only to Community Councils

Where the applicant is a Community Council, an application for running costs is not competent since this funding will be considered by the Council's Administration Department. The Committee may however consider community development applications submitted by Community Councils. Community Councils remain eligible for assistance from the Council Community Grants Scheme for specific projects which are of benefit to the local community but not for the actual operating requirements of the Community Council itself.

INTERIM COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME

CONDITIONS OF GRANT

Applicants must read and agree to abide by the undernoted Conditions of Grant. ALL applicants should read Section A and either Section B, Section C or Section D whichever is relevant to your grant request.

A. General

1. The grant is allocated for this project only and no guarantee can be given that further funds will be available. The main purpose of the Council's Scheme of Grants is to assist organisations in the initial stages of a project. Therefore, only in exceptional circumstances will a further grant be approved for the same project.
2. The grant must be spent only on the purpose for which it is granted.
3. The Council's liability shall be to make payment of the grant to the organisation. All other liabilities or claims are the responsibility of the organisation.
4. The organisation will, at any time, if requested:
 - a) provide information or copies of financial records, as may be required by an authorised officer of Council; and
 - b) make items purchased or projects developed available for inspection.
5. Assistance with purchase may be available through the Council's V.A.T. exemption scheme.
6. A report and an expenditure statement detailing how the grant was spent and copies of all relevant receipts should be submitted to the Named Officer within 6 months of the date of the award or on completion of the project, whichever comes first.
7. If the costs incurred are less than the amount specified in the grant application, the Council may request that any surplus may be repaid.
8. The project will be carried out under the complete control of the organisation.
9. Any group receiving grant aid should acknowledge the support of the Council in all publicity materials.
10. Additional conditions may be set by the Area Committee at its discretion.
11.
 - (a) The applicant should demonstrate the widest possible involvement of the relevant sector of the community.
 - (b) The organisation should be able to demonstrate its ability to manage the project.
12. If the community group or voluntary organisation is disbanded then any remaining monies which were awarded as a grant or any equipment or facilities purchased through the Community Grants Scheme will revert to North Lanarkshire Council.

B. Equipment

Organisations awarded grant funding for the purchase of equipment will ensure that:

1. the equipment will be owned and controlled by the organisation;
2. the equipment will be kept in secure premises;
3. the organisation will undertake to ensure that the equipment is fully and properly maintained;
4. equipment purchased with a grant will not be disposed of without prior consultation with the Area Committee; and
5. if the community group or voluntary organisation is disbanded any equipment or facilities purchased through the Community Grants Scheme will revert to the Council, or if the equipment or facilities have been lost, stolen or damaged and not replaced, any monies obtained from insurance will revert to the Council.

C. Land or Buildings

Community organisations awarded grant funding towards the cost of land or building works will ensure that:

1. written evidence of the acquisition or lease of property (a lease should be for a period of at least five years) will be submitted by the applicant;
2. all appropriate planning and building warrants can be obtained and evidence to same produced;
3. an undertaking will be given by the organisation that all works involving land, buildings or roads will be carried out only with the written approval of the owner, this should be submitted with your application;
4. following any work involving land, buildings or roads owned by the Council, reinstatement work will be carried out to the full satisfaction of the Council, a written statement to this effect will be produced by you;
5. the organisation will submit to the Named Officer, for information, a copy of the invoice for the work, and in due course, when the work has been completed, an audited and certified statement of final costs; and
6. the grant will be applied only to the part of the premises as stipulated in the application e.g. roof, interior decoration, kitchen.

D. Employment Practice

Where an organisation uses a Council grant to employ staff for a project, the said organisation must meet all statutory requirements. It is strongly recommended that organisations use the Council's own codes of practice on employment, which can be made available to the organisation together with appropriate advice.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Interim Community Grants Scheme

OFFICER ASSESSMENT REPORT

The undernoted Organisation has applied for funding from the Grants Scheme. In order that the Committee can consider the application at its next meeting your are asked to provide an assessment of the application and return it to the Officer not later than _____.

Reference Number: _____
Name of Organisation: _____
Name of Reporting Officer: _____
Designation: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Department: _____
Date Visited/Contacted: _____
Statutory Authority: Section 17 <input type="checkbox"/> Section 83 (i) <input type="checkbox"/> Section 83 (iii) <input type="checkbox"/> (please tick)
Amount Requested: £ _____ Amount Recommended: £ _____
Previous Awards: 19 / : 19 / :

~ 3 ~

4. Will the grant be used to develop the Organisation or to continue existing activities/provision? (If this is a new Organisation, please specify.)

5. If the Organisation caters for children under the age of 8, does it comply with the Children Act?

Yes

No

6. Officers are invited to add comments which may assist Members when considering the application.

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7. Officer's Recommendation(s).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Once completed, please return to:

(Named Officer)
Community Development Section
Chief Executive's Department
North Lanarkshire Council
(Address)

Telephone:
Fax: