

REPORT

To: POLICY AND RESOURCES (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT) SUB-COMMITTEE		Subject: REQUEST FOR FUNDING: CUMBERNAULD RESIDENTS FEDERATION
From: CHIEF EXECUTIVE		
Date: 4th July, 1996	Ref: MC/GN	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cumbernauld Residents Federation applied to the Council in January 1996, for funding for running costs. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 1
- 1.2 At that time they were funded by Cumbernauld Development Corporation who awarded the organisation £70,000 in 1995/96.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Federation was set up to deal with issues arising from the wind-up of the Development Corporation, including stock transfer, factoring and common charging, ballot arrangements and advice to tenants.
- 2.2 However, the Federation state that this initial remit has altered significantly and that the services it now provides include, information and advice to individuals on all matters relating to housing; debt and welfare benefit advice; providing a resource for local community groups, including production of materials and training on a range of topics, e.g. negotiating skills, public speaking and Local Government finance.
- 2.3 The Federation also produce a quarterly newsletter which is delivered to every household in Cumbernauld.
- 2.4 The area covered by the Federation has expanded and now includes the 'Northern Corridor' of North Lanarkshire.

3. Consideration of the Application

- 3.1 At a Special Meeting of the Housing Committee held on 3rd June, 1996, representatives of the organisation gave a presentation in support of their application.
- 3.2 The Committee decided to remit this request to the next meeting of the Housing Committee
- 3.3 At the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 12th June, 1996, it was decided that the application be remitted to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The funding from Cumbernauld Development Corporation ceases at the end of July, 1996.
- 4.2 The Project Leader and Project Worker have been made redundant and ceased employment on 28th June, 1996.
- 4.3 The Federation occupy offices in Carron House for which the annual lease is due to expire on 15th July, 1996.
- 4.4 The premises are utilized by a number of organisations who are affiliated to the Federation including 8 Community Councils.
- 4.5 As the Policy and Resources Committee is not due to meet until 20th August, 1996, when the remit from the Housing Services Committee will be considered, the organisation has requested an urgent payment from the Council which will allow it to continue to function until then.

5. Funding Request

- 5.1 The Assistant Chief Executive (Operations) met with representatives of the Management Committee on 2nd July, 1996.
- 5.2 At that meeting The Chairman and Secretary indicated that in order to negotiate a three month lease of the premises, pay running costs and continue to employ a part-time member of staff a minimum amount of £3000 was required
- 5.3 The period between now and 20st August, 1996 would be used by the organisation to explore in conjunction with the Council and the groups affiliated to the Federation, future funding arrangements, with a further report submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee on that date.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The instructions of the Sub-Committee are sought.

M. Caske.
Re -
Chief Executive

Cumbernauld

Residents Federation



Working Together
For Our Community

25/26 Carron House

Carron Way

CUMBERNAULD

G67 1ER

Tel No 01236 453131

Fax No 01236 453434

FS/LS

29 January 1996

Ms Mary Castles
Assistant Chief Executive
North Lanarkshire Council
Civic Centre
Motherwell
ML1 1TW

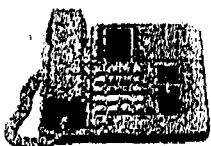
Dear Mary

Further to our recent discussions, I would like to submit an application for partial funding for Cumbernauld Residents Federation for the year 1995/1996. At present, our sole funder is Cumbernauld Development Corporation who are in the process of Winding-Up this year. They grant us £70,000 per annum. We are meeting with them on 31 January 1996, and hope to secure at least partial funding for the year 1996/1997.

We will be requesting that Cumbernauld Development Corporation fund us for 6 months after March 31st 1996 which would be £35,000; this is not guaranteed however, but if we receive it, we would hope that North Lanarkshire Council could make up at least the shortfall between the level granted by Cumbernauld Development Corporation and the budget total of £70,000. This figure does not take any account of an increase for inflation.

Although Cumbernauld Residents Federation was initially conceived around issues developing from the Wind-Up of Cumbernauld Development Corporation, its role has significantly altered; the services provided are now quite diverse:

- dealing with Wind-Up issues including stock transfer, landscaping, the local economy, factoring & common charging, ballot arrangements and advice to tenants
- information and advice for individuals and groups including advice on housing issues (repairs, allocations, homelessness, rent arrears, improvement grants, tenancy types and agreements); debt advice and repayment; council tax rebates; housing benefit advice; welfare benefits.



CUMBERNAULD RESIDENTS FEDERATION

WE ARE ONLY A PHONE CALL AWAY - 01236 453131

- campaigning on issues affecting local areas or the whole town such as campaigns against recent proposals to open a medical waste processing plant, seeking by-laws to prohibit drinking alcohol in public places, and seeking the demolition of unacceptable housing in Campsie View.
- campaigning with national organisations such as The Scottish Tenants Organisation, Scottish Homes Freedom Of Choice Campaign, Shelter and the Joint Tenants Forum.
- providing a resource centre and back-up unit for local community groups - secretarial and administrative assistance; production of stationery, leaflets and newsletters; provision of meeting rooms; provision of library services; loan of equipment such as video camera, TV & Video, Overhead Projection equipment etc.
- working with local community groups to deal with issues arising from local government reorganisation.
- working with groups from other areas who will be governed by North Lanarkshire Council - groups in Wishaw, Stepps, Moodiesburn, Cardowan, Muirhead and Millerston.
- representing tenants and tenants groups to their landlord.
- With other voluntary groups, exploring a representative structure for community groups in North Lanarkshire.
- Providing training for community organisations in the local area; training courses have included committee skills, negotiating skills, interview techniques, secure and assured tenancies, housing finance, Compulsory Competitive Tendering and its implications, public speaking & presentations and local government finance.
- Running at least one annual conference to inform interested parties of issues important in the town; speakers have include John McAllion MP, Ken Collins MEP, Norman Hogg MP, Tom Chalmers (SNP spokesman on Housing) as well as many local Councillors and representatives from national training and advice organisations.
- Assisting in the setting up of local community groups.
- We meet regularly with Federations in the other 4 Scottish New Towns, forming the Scottish New Towns Tenants & Residents Council; this mirrors the work carried out by SLANT.

The Federation also produces a quarterly newsletter, The Resident, which is currently received by every household in Cumbernauld. This allows us to inform the whole town of issues which affect the local communities.

At present, the Federation has a 3 tier Committee structure which provides effective checks and balances; policy is made by the full Federation Committee which consists of up to 2 delegates from each affiliated organisation. The full Federation Committee meets monthly. There is a Management Committee which meets monthly and is responsible for ensuring that Federation policy is carried out. An Office Bearers Committee meets each week to deal with business, and has a weekly meeting with the staff. This structure allows us to operate effectively as an organisation, and ensures that business is conducted in a professional manner. The Project Leader has overall responsibility for ensuring the organisation runs effectively on a day to day basis.

The staffing structure is as follows:

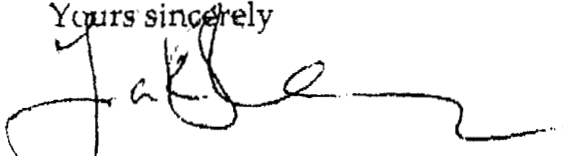
Project Leader

Project Worker

Administrative Assistant

I hope that this information is sufficient, but should you wish any further information, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Frank Sheeran
PROJECT LEADER

for and on behalf of
Cumbernauld Residents Federation.

Cumbernauld Residents Federation Funding Application to North Lanarkshire Council

Cumbernauld Residents Federation was established as a voluntary organisation in October 1991 when a number of Residents Associations and Community Councils came together to deal with issues which were arising from the proposed Wind-Up of Cumbernauld Development Corporation. Initially, the organisation was run entirely on a voluntary basis and met regularly once a month to discuss and deal with issues which would affect residents of the town. A formal constitution was adopted which set out the aims and objectives of the Federation, and laid down the criteria for organisations who wished to affiliate to the Federation. This constitution remained unaltered until April 1995, when it was changed to reflect the fact that Cumbernauld Residents Federation had become a Company Limited by Guarantee. The amended constitution did not make any substantive change to the organisational aims and objectives, nor did it change the criteria for affiliation. Copies of both constitutions are enclosed. As an organisation, the Federation consists of over 40 local groups who are active in the town. At present, affiliation is free, but this is an issue which may have to be explored in the light of funding applications. Organisations who are affiliated to the Federation enjoy wide ranging support both in terms of practical help (such as admin and secretarial support) through to professional support from our qualified staff as well as access to extensive professionally run training programmes (both in-house and external training courses). The Federation also runs a least one full day conference each year, and produces a regular newsletter, *The Resident*, which is distributed to every home in Cumbernauld. We do not specifically restrict ourselves to tenants or residents associations as we believe that housing and other major issues affect the lives of the majority of groups serving the residents of Cumbernauld. As a result, our constitution includes a clause which will allow 'like-minded' groups to affiliate to the Federation. We are a strictly non-political organisations and would not accede to any political affiliation. As an organisation, we will not accept discrimination or bias on any ground. Both of these ideals are contained within our constitution.

Initially the organisation ran without any formal funding; the exceptions to this were occasional grants from Strathclyde Regional Council and Cumbernauld & Kilsyth District Council to assist with particular conferences, training courses etc. Cumbernauld Development Corporation also provided Cumbernauld Residents Federation with occasional funding.

However, in February 1994, after devising a strategy for the future, the Federation applied to Cumbernauld Development Corporation for substantial funding to allow the organisation to employ full time staff and open office premises. Cumbernauld Development Corporation have, since then, funded the Federation by awarding a grant of £70,000 per year in order to enable the Federation to provide service to new town residents, dealing mainly with Wind-Up. Recently, Cumbernauld Development Corporation have acknowledged that the Federation has begun to change its role; this change in role has been necessary, firstly to respond to the needs of the community in Cumbernauld and secondly to provide a role which the organisation can fill after Wind-Up. This changing role has involved the Federation spending a great deal of time providing an information and advocacy service to people in Cumbernauld. This service focuses primarily on housing issues, but will, when necessary, deal with other issues which arise. The service being provided is an independent information and advice service, and is modelled on the Scottish Homes 'HomePoint' idea. Indeed, the Federation applied to HomePoint for funding for 1996/1997, but the application will not be considered until 1997/1998 due to budget cuts within Scottish Homes. We feel confident that this application will be successful. As well as diversifying in terms of the services which are on offer, the Federation is aware that in light of these changes and local government reorganisation, we have extended our catchment area to include the portion of Strathkelvin which is now covered by North Lanarkshire as well as Kilsyth. We have also been in touch with groups within other areas covered by North Lanarkshire Council, and have already begun exploring the idea of a 'North Lanarkshire Federation'. It is also acknowledged that funding from North Lanarkshire would almost certainly necessitate providing a service to the wider area, and we are in the process of preparing a structure which would allow satellite/surgery services in other areas.

The links with Cumbernauld Development Corporation and our reporting arrangements are flexible, and semi-formal. We send the Corporation a copy of our monthly accounts and our year end audited accounts. To date, we have had no criticism or query from the Development Corporation on how we have spent our funding. We believe this to be an indication that our accounting practices and spending profiles have been correct and unquestionable. We would expect to operate a similar arrangement with future funders, but believe that the reporting arrangements and monitoring & evaluating procedures would be laid out in a more prescriptive fashion, probably with a service agreement between the Federation and our main funders. This we believe would ensure that our accountability for the use of public money would stand up to any scrutiny.

Internally, the Federation scrutinises its expenditure via the Management Committee and the full federation Committee, both of whom meet on a monthly basis. The treasurer produces a monthly report for each of these meetings. Our year end accounts are audited by William Duncan & Co; copies of our most recent audited accounts are enclosed. We are awaiting an audit on our accounts for 1995/1996.

The Federation operates from premises at 25/26 Carron House, Town Centre, Cumbernauld; the premises consist of a small office for confidential work and interviews, a large main office which can accommodate 4 or 5 people and a meeting/training room which can accommodate up to about 80 people. The premises are paid for until June 1996, with the option to extend the lease subject to our achieving satisfactory funding. All the equipment in the offices is owned by the Federation. An inventory of the main items is enclosed. This equipment includes state of the art computing, telephone, photocopying, video and presentation equipment.

We have approached Cumbernauld Development Corporation to apply for funding throughout the remainder of the Wind-Up process; the level of this funding will depend to an extent on the timescales for Wind-Up, but we already have had an indication from the Development Corporation that further funding will be forthcoming. The level of this funding will depend on the securement of additional funding which will enable the Federation to continue as an organisation which can provide the services currently on offer.

Apart from this application to North Lanarkshire Council, future funding strategies include the HomePoint application (described above) and an application to the National Lotteries Charity Board sometime in 1996/1997 when the grants for 'Community Involvement' will be distributed. We would hope that our application would be favourably received in light of the work already carried out in the community, and new initiatives we will be undertaking (e.g. the establishment of a 'North Lanarkshire Federation').

We would request that the Committee would look favourably on our application for funding. We feel that, as an organisation, we have been disadvantaged by the fact that when funding applications were reviewed by the new Council, it was felt that organisations funded by Cumbernauld Development Corporation should be viewed as 'new applications' and not in the same terms as those organisations funded by the old district and regional councils. We have been funded by public sector money, and would hope that the council will take the same view.