

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work (Planning and Administration) Sub Committee	Subject: URBAN FUNDED PROJECT NO: 458/89 COATBRIDGE COMMUNITY PRINT WORKSHOP
FROM: David McKendrick Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 3 July 1996	
REF.: DMcK/MC/PB/JMcF	

PURPOSE

To make recommendations to Committee on the future of the Community Print Workshop. Urban funding terminates at the end of October 1996.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Coatbridge Community Print Workshop received approval in 1989. The project is managed by a voluntary committee comprising representatives of user organisations. The supervising departments are Social Work and Community Education.
- 1.2 Staffing - There are six members of staff:

Project Leader	APIII
Print Resource Worker	Tech 1/2
Graphic Design Assistant	Tech 1/2
Resource Assistant	GS2
Print Trainee	GS1
Cleaner (part time 10 hours per week, manual grade)	

2. FUNDING

The project received Urban Programme Funding of £78,410 in the financial year 1995/1996. The income and expenditure account for the year end March 1995 reveals that the total cost of the project was £93,447. The consequent grant overspend is offset against an income from sales of £32,650 for the same financial year. The project has fixed assets to the value of £63,187. The Education Department has provided support "in kind" during the life of the project through rent free accommodation and free heating and lighting. The cost of this support has not been quantified to date.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1 The objectives of the project were:

- (i) To provide a wide variety of printing and reprographic facilities to all community groups in Airdrie and Coatbridge APTs.
- (ii) To provide training on use of print equipment and design of newsletters, handouts, publicity materials, etc.
- (iii) To provide an information/resource library for community groups using the workshop.

3.2 The project has attempted to work to its objectives over the period of its funding. It produces a variety of high quality pieces of work from leaflets and posters to information packs, newsletters and display material. The project's success led to an extension of its services to organisations throughout North Lanarkshire and beyond, with the result that it now services a significantly wider client group than set out in its original objectives.

3.3 48% of the project's workload is from locally based organisations in North Lanarkshire. Those range from the community based organisations covered by the project's objectives such as One Plus Coatbridge and Monklands Victims Support to a variety of organisations such as Albion Rovers Supporters Association, Lanarkshire Orchestral Society and Shotts Gala Day Committee. 42% of the workload is from council departments and commercial or larger voluntary organisations in North Lanarkshire. The remaining 10% of the workload comes from organisations outwith North Lanarkshire. To date 2338 jobs have been completed for 469 organisations.

3.4 The project created a print trainee post within the workshop. It is funded in part through the urban programme and in part through income generated by the project. The first trainee is now in full time employment elsewhere. The second trainee has been in post since September 1995.

3.5 A vital component in the success of this project is considered to lie in it being user friendly and accessible. User groups recommend the project unconditionally to other groups. The project offers a personal and welcoming service which user groups readily acknowledge. The project has built up an accessible library of artwork to allow groups to design their own material. A number of desktop publishing courses have been set up by the project in association with Community Education and Coatbridge College. Local user groups identify strongly with the project.

4. EVALUATION

4.1 The future of the project has been the subject of discussion between the Director of Social Work, Director of Education, Public Relations Manager, Director of Administration and the Chief Executive's Department.

4.1 cont'd)

The key points to emerge were:

(i) The project has not had the benefit of a business plan, a marketing strategy or consistent accounting methods. However if the project did attempt to become economically viable it may not be able to meet the perceived needs of local community groups.

(ii) The future role and business plan of this project are considered to be key to its continuation.

(iii) Although the quality of the work produced by the project is of a high standard, it was agreed that the project is unlikely to be viable as a commercial organisation without funding.

(iv) Despite the fact that the project is held in high regard by local groups the Social Work Department does not consider that it would be an appropriate host department for a printing project nor does it have the capacity to fund the project from the Social Work budget when Urban Programme funding runs out. However should a solution to the management and future funding of the project be found, the Social Work Department would be willing to assist in its continuation by being a significant user of its service, subject to the normal contracting procedures established by the council.

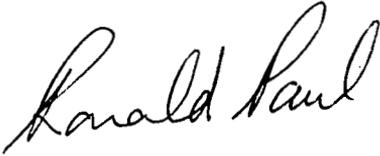
(v) Support for the project has been expressed in principle by the Education, Public Relations and Chief Executive's Departments. However these Departments are unable at the present time to offer a financial contribution to the project, except as possible users of the service. The Public Relations Manager visited the project to assess the quality of its stock, fixed assets and staff expertise. Notwithstanding the Director of Education's support in principle for the continuation of the project, he has stated that the Education Department is not in a position to make any firm commitment, not least because of the financial issues which require to be resolved. The nature of any continued "in kind" support would also require review.

(vi) It has not, as yet, been possible to identify an appropriate department within North Lanarkshire Council which could assist the project in developing a business plan and marketing strategy to ensure its successful future.

5. RECOMMENDATION

Committee is asked

- (a) To note the Director of Social Work's view that the project could not be maintained within the Social Work Department.
- (b) To remit this report to the Policy and Resources Committee to consider possible ways in which the future of the project might be secured



David McKendrick
Director of Social Work
June 1996

For further information on this report please contact Megan Casserly, Principal Officer, Strategy Section (TEL: 01698 332060)