

<b>To:</b> Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee	<b>Subject:</b> ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO NORTH LANARKSHIRE CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAUX 1997/98
<b>From:</b> Chief Executive	
<b>Date:</b> 9 January 1998	
<b>Ref:</b> CE012/004/027	

**1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub-Committee to consider an award of additional funding for service development purposes to the five Citizens' Advice Bureaux in North Lanarkshire.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Airdrie CAB outreach service was originally established as a voluntary Urban Programme project, sponsored and supervised by the Planning and Development Department of the former Monklands District Council.

2.2 Urban Programme funding for the outreach service terminated in May 1996 and North Lanarkshire Council's Planning and Development Committee, which had inherited supervisory and budgetary responsibility for the service during local government re-organisation agreed to continue the project by awarding an annual grant from its mainline budget. Accordingly, the Airdrie Bureau was awarded the sum of £44,574 in 1996/97 to continue to provide the outreach service. In addition the core element of the Bureau's operation was awarded an annual grant of £28,310 from the Chief Executive's Department Payments to Agencies and Other Bodies budget, and considered as part of the Council's annual support to voluntary organisations.

2.3 In 1997/98 the core element of the Airdrie CAB's operation was again funded through the Council's Chief Executive's Department Payments to Agencies and Other Bodies budget and an application was also made by the Airdrie CAB to the Council for funding to continue the outreach service. At this time it was considered more appropriate and advantageous for both the Council and Airdrie CAB if the source of funding and supervisory responsibility were dovetailed and located within one Council Department.

2.4 Accordingly, Members will recall that the Council's Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee at its meeting on 23 April 1997 considered a report submitted by the Chief Executive which suggested that the budget within the Planning and Development Department identified to fund Airdrie CAB outreach service be transferred to the Chief Executive's Department. In approving the report the Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee agreed to the proposed transfer of both the budget and the supervisory responsibility for Airdrie CAB outreach service from the Planning and Development Department to the Chief Executive's Department. The Sub Committee further agreed in principle to fund Airdrie CAB outreach service in 1997/98 at an equivalent level to the award in 1996/97 subject to the transfer of funds as described above and a satisfactory evaluation of the operation of the outreach service.

### 3.0 PRESENT POSITION

3.1 The budget to fund Airdrie CAB outreach service was duly transferred from the Council's Planning and Development Department and the sum of £44,570 credited to the Chief Executive's Department budget.

3.2 At this time however, the Chief Executive's Department was aware of a number of operational matters within Airdrie CAB which required to be addressed before the funding for the continuation of the outreach service was released. In addition, the Bureau's Management Committee intimated that they would wish to take the opportunity created by the termination of Urban Programme funding and its associated conditions and criteria to review the staffing structure within the Bureau. These matters were addressed by the Chief Executive's Department and other Council departments where appropriate during the summer months and upon a satisfactory evaluation, the funding approved to continue the outreach service was released in November 1997.

3.4 Given that the outreach service was withdrawn during the spring and summer whilst the matters referred to in paragraph 3.2 above were addressed, the Airdrie CAB outreach service only required six months operational expenses in the remainder of financial year 1997/98. Accordingly the sum of £26,775 was released. This award was calculated on a pro rata basis equivalent to six months operating expenses although the budgets for staff travel and outreach promotion and development were increased only for 1997/98 to take account of the need to publicise and extend the outreach service after its closure.

3.5 The reduced grant to Airdrie CAB outreach service has resulted in an underspend in this financial year of £17,725. The opportunity exists to consider allocating these resources to fund those elements of Citizens Advice Bureaux service development which are recognised as advantageous but not normally prioritised for funding due to financial constraints facing the Council.

### 4.0 CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU - FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

4.1 The Citizens' Advice Bureaux have identified capital requirements and proposed service development initiatives which they would wish to be considered for funding.

4.2 Given that this budget is only available in the remainder of this financial year, the Citizens' Advice Bureaux, when identifying any funding requirements were requested to consider items of a non-recurring nature. The Bureaux were also requested to demonstrate how the funding allocation would assist and enable them to improve the quality of services provided.

4.3 A list of the requirements identified by individual Bureau is attached as Appendix One to this report. The items are listed in priority order following meetings to discuss the individual requirements with representatives from each of the Bureaux.

### 5.0 PROPOSED FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

5.1 The suggested funding awards to individual Bureaux are detailed in Appendix Two. These recommendations are based upon the Bureau's own priorities and include justification for the expenditure and an explanation of the anticipated outcomes in terms of improved service delivery. It should be noted that funding priority has been given to Airdrie CAB in recognition of the withdrawal of the outreach service and the requirement both to promote the reinstated service and ensure the provision of a comprehensive, quality advice service.

5.2 From Appendix Two it can be seen that the proposed funding allocations provide a similar level of funding to each of the Bureaux with the exception of a higher suggested award to Airdrie CAB.

- 5.3 By comparing the funding requests detailed in Appendix One with the proposed budget allocations described in Appendix Two it can be seen that the proposed allocations satisfy the majority of Bureaux requirements. The shortfall between the funding requests and the proposed allocations totals £9,519 and it is understood that Citizens Advice Scotland Development Board will consider meeting this shortfall.
- 5.4 The Sub Committee will note there are three exceptions in terms of items requested and potential funding allocations:-
- i. Airdrie Bureau - replacement vehicle request. The original outreach service van was purchased with Urban Programme funding. It is suggested that it is inappropriate to purchase a dedicated vehicle for this type of service given the relatively low level of usage and it may be more appropriate to consider reviewing arrangements for volunteers travelling expenses.
  - ii. Bellshill Bureau - purchase of fax machine. The fax machine has already been purchased and therefore this is a retrospective application and funding may not be considered.
  - iii. Coatbridge Bureau - purchase lap top computer. This item has been funded through the Programme for Partnership Regeneration Programme.
- 5.5 The Sub Committee may also note that the proposed funding allocations include an award to Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Bureau for items presently applied for within an Interim Community Grants' Scheme application. Given that the Bureau is currently in receipt of an annual grant from the Chief Executive's Department it is considered more appropriate that this application is funded through this source.
- 5.6 It is recommended that if approved the Bureaux be required to incur this expenditure within the remainder of this financial year and provide copies of receipts and invoices to the Chief Executive's Department by 13 April 1998.
- 6.0 RECOMMENDATION
- 6.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee:-
- i. note the transfer of the sum of £44,570 in respect of Airdrie CAB outreach service from the Planning and Development Department budget to the Chief Executive's Department Payments to Agencies and Other Bodies budget;
  - ii. note the release of grant payment of £26,775 to Airdrie Citizens Advice Bureau for the operation of the outreach service in the period October 1997 to March 1998;
  - iii. note the remaining budget underspend of £17,725 and approve the additional funding allocations to the North Lanarkshire Citizens' Advice Bureaux as detailed in Appendix Two and totalling £17,440;
  - iv. request the Citizens' Advice Bureaux to incur the approved expenditure within the remainder of this financial year and submit a report of the work undertaken, appropriate receipts and proof of expenditure to the Chief Executive by 13 April 1998; and
  - v. otherwise note the contents of this report.

Chief Executive



## NORTH LANARKSHIRE CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT REQUESTS

**BALANCE £17,725****TOTAL**

<b>AIRDRIE</b>	2 Portable computers plus modems, printer cables and cases £4,105	2 office computers with CD Rom and Microsoft Office '97 and 2 laser printers £2,855	Ford Fiesta Van/Car £8,010			<b>£14,970</b>
<b>BELLSHILL</b>	Redevelopment of Bureau office £2,500	Carpet £50	3 Chairs at £70 each £210	Fax Machine £229.99		<b>£2,990</b>
<b>COATBRIDGE</b>	Purchase photocopier £1,900	1 office desk £314	1 Laptop computer Computer with network card £1,600	1 colour printer £329	1 Brother Fax machine £173	<b>£4,316</b>
<b>CUMBERNAULD</b>	Photocopier purchase £1,864	Interim Community Grant Application (Ref 604) Files, Toner and Ink Cartridges and Confidential Waste for increasing volume of debt related caseload £350				<b>£2,214</b>
<b>MOTHERWELL</b>	Typist Table £264.38	Filing Cabinet £431.80	To redecorate main office £455	Shop sign for Training & Development Unit £528.75	Blind for Entrance Door £83.00	<b>£2,754</b>
	Domestic fridge (Motherwell office) £179.00	Domestic fridge (Wishaw Office) £159.00	1 water heater for Wishaw Office £190.35	2 desks for Wishaw Office £162.15	Various Health and Safety Signs £300.10	
					<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>£27,244</b>
					Difference between Council budget available	(9,519)
					<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£17,725</b>

## PROPOSED FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

BUREAU	ITEM	EXPENDITURE	SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
<b>AIRDRIE</b>	2 portable computers plus modem, and ancillary equipment	4,105	Provision of comprehensive information service to outreach clients. Timeous processing of clients enquiries
	2 office computers, printers and software	2,855	Establish computerised case recording and statistical information systems. This will also enable the Bureau to access the Benefits Agency benefits information software
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>6,960</i>	
<b>BELLSHILL</b>	Redevelopment of Bureau office	2,500	Increase working space available for volunteers. Improve interview facilities for clients
	Purchase carpet and 3 chairs	260	Improve interview facilities for clients
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>2,760</i>	
<b>COATBRIDGE</b>	Purchase photocopier	1,900	Long term saving to Bureau since existing lease agreement will be terminated. Improved Bureau efficiency
	Office desk	314	Required for outreach service clerical assistant
	Colour printer	329	Production of quality information leaflets and letterheads. Effective savings in printing costs
	Fax machine	173	Improved Bureau communication with external agencies
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>2,716</i>	
<b>CUMBERNAULD AND KILSYTH</b>	Purchase photocopier	1,900	Long term saving to Bureau since existing lease agreement will be terminated. Improved Bureau efficiency
	Replacement printer toner cartridges, filing system and confidential waste	350	Increasing volume of debt related work has resulted in significant increase in administration requirements
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>2,250</i>	
<b>MOTHERWELL AND WISHAW</b>	Typist workstation	265	Bureau has secured £24,000 from Lloyds over 3 years to employ a part-time clerical assistant

BUREAU	ITEM	EXPENDITURE	SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
<b>MOTHERWELL AND WISHAW</b>	Filing system	432	Improved Bureau efficiency
	Redecorate Bureau office	455	Improved office facilities for clients
	External sign for Training and Development Unit	529	Improved accessibility and increased profile of service. Increased staff and trainees' security
	Blind for office door	83	Increased client confidentiality
	2 office refrigerators (Motherwell and Wishaw)	338	Improved health and safety
	Water heater (Wishaw)	190	Improved health and safety
	2 desks (Wishaw)	162	Improved client interview facilities
	Health and Safety signs	300	Improved health and safety
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>2,754</i>	
	<b>Total proposed allocation</b>	<b>17,440</b>	
	<b>Total budget available</b>	<b>17,725</b>	