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| To: Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub-Committee | Subject: Community Development Corporate Review |
| From: Chief Executive | |
| Date: 12 September 1998 | Ref: CE012/002/001 |

1.0 **Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Sub-Committee to initiate a corporate review of community development in accordance with the 1998/99 Service Plan for the Chief Executive’s Department.

2.0 **Background**

2.1 Community development is central to the Council as a working method, an approach to service delivery and a distinct professional contribution to the development of corporate policy and strategy.

2.2 The term community development is widely used within the Council. Community development is applicable as an approach to a range of service activities both in terms of tackling issues and in delivering and developing services. Community development approaches are employed to make services more responsive and attractive, to direct services to target groups, to encourage community self help and voluntary action and to develop partnership and co-operation between agencies and communities. Currently a number of departments engage community development staff.

2.3 At the present time there are no mechanisms for co-ordinating and evaluating community development across departments. The Council does not have a community development policy and the role of community development in relation to the Council’s corporate priorities remains undetermined.

2.4 As the Council faces a range of challenges which would seem to require extensive community development expertise (social inclusion, decentralisation, community planning, best value, partnership development, social strategy, youth strategy, anti-poverty strategy, equal opportunities initiatives, new deal, etc) community development resources are stretched and uncoordinated on a corporate basis.

2.5 These issues and others are identified in the Chief Executive’s departmental Service Plan for 1998/99. The Service Plan identifies a role for the department in co-ordinating the development of a corporate community development strategy to ensure that community development throughout the Council is complimentary and strategically focused. A corporate review of community development and the preparation of an interim policy statement on community development are identified in the plan as key tasks.

3.0 **Review Proposals**

3.1 The purpose of the review should be to clarify the role of community development within the Council and identify arrangements to ensure that community development is effectively co-ordinated, directed and focused in relation to the Council’s corporate priorities.

3.2 To ensure that the review is genuinely corporate, informed by the realities and potential of community development and that it is directly valuable to communities in North Lanarkshire it will be necessary to adopt an approach which:

- involves staff from several departments
- involves communities
- links community development to corporate priorities
- engages politicians and senior managers

3.3 A twin track approach is proposed with an in-house working group reviewing community development across the Council, preparing an interim policy statement on community development and developing a set of proposals or 'action plans' on key issues.

To help identify key issues and develop a corporate model for area focused community development it is proposed that the Council devise and develop community development strategies in 2 distinct and specific areas. It is proposed to develop these area strategies largely through existing resource's over a one year period. The main purpose of these strategies would be to develop, pilot and evaluate an inter-departmental and inter-agency approach to area-focused community development which if successful could be adopted on a wider scale. The pilots will also help inform the Council working group of real issues affecting the practice of community development. It is proposed to identify suitable geographic areas for these pilots and to report to the Sub-Committee on this in due course.

3.4 It is proposed that the National Evaluation Skills Strategy (Achieving Better Community Development) model of community development is used as a basis for developing the community development area strategies. Five staff from Chief Executives Department, Community Education and Social Work have undertaken training on the model and it is proposed that this group help initiate and support the area strategies.

3.5 The 'NESS' model of community development was developed with funding support from 6 government departments in the UK and Ireland including the Scottish Office with the aim of improving the quality of community development policy, programmes and practice. The model includes an approach to planning and evaluating community development which involves all main stakeholders - community members, development workers, agencies and funders. The model identifies 10 'dimensions' of community development with core elements, measures and indicators for each. The model can be used to assist the Council to identify, review and develop all aspects of community development.

3.6 An outline structure for the review and report of the proposed corporate working group on community development is attached as Appendix One. It is proposed that the working group report within 1 year and prepare an interim policy statement on community development for approval by the Council prior to completing their report. The working group will require to be genuinely corporate. It is proposed that the group is led by the Chief Executive's department and comprises a representative of each department which identifies itself as being involved in community development. All Directors will be invited to nominate a representative on this basis. The advice of the Sub-Committee is sought regarding the involvement of Elected Members in the working group and/or arrangements for the Sub-Committee to maintain involvement in the process.

4.0 **Recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that the Sub-Committee:

- (a) approve the proposed arrangements for reviewing community development on a corporate basis;
- (b) note that a future report will identify proposed areas for the development of pilot community development strategies; and
- (c) otherwise note the contents of this report.


P. Casals
Chief Executive

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: WORKING GROUP - DRAFT
OUTLINE STRUCTURE FOR REPORT**

- Background and Organisational Context
- Policy Basis/Context
- Locating Community Development
- Customers and Stakeholders
- Service Analysis
- Role of Community Development
- Strategic Priorities
- Decentralisation
- Organisation and Management
- Area Community Development Strategies
- Recommendations