

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee	Subject: Caldercruix Community Food Co-operative - Funding Request
From: Chief Executive	
Date: 24 February 1999	Ref: CE/012/004/045

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee of the progress to date made by Caldercruix Community Food Co-operative and to request that the Sub Committee consider a funding award of £1,000 to assist with occupancy and operating costs.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Caldercruix Community Food Co-operative was originally established in the spring of 1997 and operated one morning per week from Caldercruix Community Centre. As membership of the Food Co-operative increased it quickly became apparent that these premises were unsuitable for a number of reasons detailed below:

- the premises were only available to the Food Co-operative for a limited number of hours per week due to competing demands on the hall made by other users and community groups;
- storage space available to the Food Co-operative was limited and all stock required to be set out and stored away at the start and finish of every session;
- an evening opening facility could not be provided; and
- considerable wastage of fresh produce occurred since the Food Co-operative was only open once per week.

- 2.2 In order both to address these issues and expand the operation of the Food Co-operative the Management Committee identified alternative, permanent premises within a shop unit at Dunbreck Avenue, Caldercruix. These premises, owned by North Lanarkshire Council, had lain vacant for some time and provided excellent development potential for the Food Co-operative. Accordingly, the Food Co-operative Management Committee entered into discussions with the Council's Property Services regarding a charity lease agreement.

- 2.3 The Council's Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee at its meeting on 21 January 1998 noted the developments proposed by Caldercruix Food Co-operative Management Committee and agreed to award the project a start up grant of £2,208 towards the payment of rates and operating expenses within the new premises and the installation of a security system.

- 2.4 Shortly after this, the Health Promotion Department of Lanarkshire Health Board awarded a grant of £2,000 to the Food Co-operative to enable the Management Committee to lease the premises on a commercial basis thereby securing tenure and providing the Health Promotion Department with the opportunity to pilot a community based healthy eating initiative in Caldercruix.

3.0 Progress And Development

- 3.1 The Food Co-operative has expanded considerably since moving to its own premises. Active membership now stands at 200 and the Food Co-operative is open twice weekly thus reducing the

- 3.2 loss of fresh foods through wastage. The Management Committee did operate an evening session for a trial period however, this proved unpopular with both members and volunteers alike. The Food Co-operative provides a home delivery service for elderly villagers and those caring for a sick relative at home. The range of stock sold through the Food Co-operative has been extended to include: Fresh fruit and vegetables; dried and tinned goods; cleaning materials; dairy produce; and prepacked cold meat and butchery products.
- 3.3 The healthy eating project piloted by the Health Promotion Department of Lanarkshire Health Board has proved to be very successful with the Food Co-operative now supplying fresh fruit to St Mary's Primary School and Glengowan Primary School and Nursery Classes within the village.
- 3.4 The shop unit itself is now fully fitted with shelving, scales and a cash register donated by Co-operative Wholesale Society and a chiller cabinet purchased through the Council's Interim Community Grants Scheme.
- 3.5 In addition, the Food Co-operative Management Committee has re-invested in the project by purchasing counters and increasing the volume and range of stock for sale.

4.0 Future Development

- 4.1 Whilst the Food Co-operative should aim towards self-sufficiency it is recognised that start up costs and operating expenses will be proportionately higher in the early stages of development whilst the Food Co-operative is in its infancy. The rent for the shop property is £2,000 per annum and the rates bill is some £1,500. In addition to gas and electricity payments there is an annual payment of £200 for the security alarm system.
- 4.2 The Food Co-operative Management Committee has applied to North Lanarkshire Council for funding in this financial year to assist with occupancy costs and it is suggested that an award of £1,000 may be granted. It is further suggested that the Food Co-operative should investigate the possibility of Discretionary Rates Relief from North Lanarkshire Council.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 The Policy and Resources (Community Development) Sub Committee is requested to :
- i) Note the progress and achievements made by Caldercruix Community Food Co-operative Management Committee since relocating to shop premises;
 - ii) Approve a grant award of £1,000 to Caldercruix Community Food Co-operative to assist with occupancy costs from the Chief Executive's Payments to Agencies and Other Bodies Budget 1998/99;
 - iii) Request the Director of Finance to consider the eligibility of Caldercruix Community Food Co-operative to apply for Discretionary Rates Relief from the Council; and
 - iv) Otherwise note the contents of this report.


M Chief Executive