

To: SCRUTINY PANEL STRATEGY AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION		Subject: GRANTS TO VOLUNTRY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS
From: CHIEF EXECUTIVE		
Date: 24 August 2005	Ref: YC/16/Grants	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report aims to address issues raised at the Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 1 June 2005 in relation to the development of a voluntary and community sector database and gives the results of the customers satisfaction survey of those organisations that receive community and voluntary sector funding from the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 The voluntary sector in North Lanarkshire as elsewhere, is diverse and accommodates a wide range and type of voluntary and community organisations.
- 2.2 These include small-scale community run organisations involved in locally based activities, interest groups and large scale voluntary organisations that provide services to North Lanarkshire residents.
- 2.3 The Council supports a significant number of community and voluntary organisations across the spectrum through various funding arrangements.
- 2.4 To support the Audit Scotland "Follow the Public Pound" code, a corporate funding process including guidance notes, application form and the assessment process has been developed and is used across the Council.

3.0 Voluntary Sector Data Base

- 3.1 It is estimated that there are in excess of 1500 voluntary and community organisations operating within North Lanarkshire. A number of these organisations are small and neighbourhood based.
- 3.2 It is difficult to identify and access up to date information on these organisations as they often, operate from people's homes and when responsibility for an organisation is given up contact is lost.
- 3.3 To try and overcome some of these issues the Community Regeneration Unit have been developing a community and voluntary organisations database.
- 3.4 Organisational details will be held under the organisation's name and give details of where and when they meet. The organisational information will also be held under geographical areas, linked to the six Area Committee Areas.
- 3.5 Under Data Protection legislation all organisations will have to be contacted and asked for their permission to be included in the database.
- 3.6 As part of the development community engagement and Community Forums the database will be updated yearly by the Regeneration Unit.

3.7 It is expected that the database will be operational in the new financial year.

4.0 Customer Survey

4.1 The Panel requested that a customer survey be undertaken with organisations and groups who receive funding from the Council.

4.2 A customer survey form was developed. The survey looked at all aspects of applying to the Council for funding.

4.3 The surveys were sent out in April 2005 and returned on the 27 May 2005. The results are highlighted in Appendix 1. Please note that not all organisations answered all the questions.

4.4 In general terms it seems that there is a high level of customer satisfaction with the majority of organisations feeling that they were treated courteously at all times. Organisations found out about the grants process through a variety of methods. However, it seems most commonly through a letter from the Council, the local councillor or other organisations.

4.5 As expected the majority of organisations applied for Community Grants and a high percentage of organisations received additional support from Officers to complete the application forms. Most organisations found the guidance notes easy to use and follow.

4.6 However, some organisations found that some of the questions were repetitive and 2 questions were found to be difficult to understand. Three questions were thought to require further guidance.

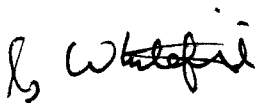
4.7 Out of 166 people who answered the question "did you find it difficult to contact us" only one organisation reported that they had.

4.8 In general terms those organisations that completed the customer feedback form felt that the system was operating well. The issues that were raised will be fed back to departments to action.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Panel:

- (i) note the content of this report.



Chief Executive
24 August 2005

Results Proforma – Appendix 1

Customer Feedback Form - Community and Voluntary Sector Grants

Questions

1. **Name of Department and person completing the form**

Housing and Property Services Social Work Early Years Community Services

2. **Total number of customer feedback forms sent out**

	409
Housing and Property Services	20
Social work	69
Early Years	70
Community Services	250

3. **Total number of customer feedback forms returned**

	172
Housing and Property Services	10
Social work	28
Early Years	22
Community Services	112

4. How did you first find out about the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants?

	Housing and Property Services	Social work	Early Years	Community Services	Total
Council website	0	2	0	6	8
Press Advert	0	1	8	11	20
Letter from Council	3	5	13	29	50
Other, please specify	6	17	1	65	89

5. If other, please give the three most common examples:

1. Local councillors
2. Local staff
3. Other Organisations

6. Which Grant did you apply for?

If you applied for more than one grant please complete one form for each grant applied for.

	Housing and Property Services	Social work	Early Years	Community Services	Total Number
Community Grant	3	4	8	88	103
Community Learning and Development Annual Grants	0	1	0	26	27
Social Work – Section 10 Grants	10	17	1	0	28
Trading Standards – Annual Grant	0	0	0	0	0
Education – Early Years Voluntary Sector Grant	0	0	20	2	22
Carer Development Fund	0	8	0	0	8

7. What type of service did you receive from the Council?

	Housing and Property Services	Social work	Early Years	Community Services	Total Number
Information or advice from Council Staff	8	17	11	54	90
Assistance i.e. complete a form by Council staff	2	3	2	17	24
Information or advice from your Local Councillor	3	1	1	35	40
No assistance at all	0	7	10	29	46
Other, please specify	0	0	0	4	4

8. Did you find it easy to contact us?

	Easy	Difficult
Housing and Property Services	10	0
Social work	27	0
Early Years	20	0
Community Services	109	1
Total Number	166	1

9. If difficult, please give 3 most common examples

1. Nil response
2.
3.

10. Did you receive guidance notes on the grant scheme along with your application?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	9	1
Social work	25	3
Early Years	22	0
Community Services	106	6
Total Number	162	10

11. Did you find the notes clear and easy to understand?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	9	0
Social work	24	0
Early Years	20	0
Community Services	104	3
Total Number	157	3

12. Please rate the guidance notes

	Housing and Property Services	Social work	Early Years	Community Services	Total Number
Easy to follow	7	14	17	70	108
Excellent	2	4	2	13	21
Good	1	7	4	30	42
Poor	0	0	0	1	1
Written in clear language	4	0	10	59	73
Easy to read (print size)	6	0	5	48	59

13. If no, please give the three most common examples:

1. The questions were repetitive
2. Questions 4.2 and 4.3 were difficult
3. Electronic application was excellent

14. Please rate the grant application form

	Housing and Property Services	Social work	Early Years	Community Services	Total Number
Easy to follow	9	12	16	71	108
Excellent	1	4	2	17	24
Good	1	12	5	29	47
Poor	0	0	0	3	3
Written in clear language	4	0	7	50	61
Easy to read (print size)	4	0	6	42	52

15. If below average or poor, please give the three most common examples

<p>1. The questions were repetitive</p> <p>2. Electronic application was excellent</p> <p>3.</p>
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16. Were the timescales for the whole process (application to award) fully explained to you?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	9	1
Social work	26	1
Early Years	15	6
Community Services	96	13
Total Number	143	21

17. Were the timescales met?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	8	0
Social work	28	0
Early Years	16	3
Community Services	95	6
Total Number	147	9

18. If not, please give the three most common examples:

- | |
|---------------------------------------|
| 1. No time scale given |
| 2. No acknowledgement sent |
| 3. Received grant later than expected |

19. Were you treated courteously at all times?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	10	0
Social work	27	0
Early Years	21	0
Community Services	109	1
Total Number	167	1

20. Do you think the Council's grants process is transparent? (from application to award)

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	8	1
Social work	26	2
Early Years	18	4
Community Services	97	9
Total Number	149	16

21. If not, please give three most common examples:

- | |
|---|
| 1. Difficult to understand |
| 2. Do not know what the process is once application is received |
| 3. No feedback before submission |

22. Did the grant process meet your overall expectations?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	9	0
Social work	26	2
Early Years	19	3
Community Services	102	8
Total Number	156	13

23. If not, please give the three most common examples:

1.No communication
2. Period between application and award is too long
3. Advised grant was not within the set criteria when it was

24. Did you receive a grant from North Lanarkshire Council in 2004/2005?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	9	1
Social work	28	0
Early Years	22	0
Community Services	104	6
Total Number	163	7

25. Did you receive the full amount of funding applied for?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	9	0
Social work	16	12
Early Years	11	11
Community Services	40	68
Total Number	76	91

26. If no, did you receive a full explanation as to why not?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	0	0
Social work	8	6
Early Years	10	1
Community Services	23	49
Total Number	41	56

27. Did you receive funding for you project from any other funding body?

	Yes	No
Housing and Property Services	3	5
Social work	19	8
Early Years	6	16
Community Services	25	83
Total Number	53	112

28. If yes who? Please give the three most common examples:

1. Lottery including Awards for All
2. NHS
3. Communities Scotland