

AGENDA ITEM NO.6.....

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: COMMUNITY SERVICES (COMMUNITY (DEVELOPMENT) SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject: NORTH LANARKSHIRE COALITION OF DISABLED GROUPS - REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
From: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	
Date: 17 February 2000	Ref: JMcG/BF/MF/MC

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the sub-committee of a request from North Lanarkshire Coalition of Disabled Groups for financial assistance.
- 1.2 The North Lanarkshire Coalition of Disabled Groups was established in 1996 to promote and develop advocacy projects, promote the development of local access groups, provide information and make representation to the council on matters of disability.

2. DEVELOPMENT TO DATE

- 2.1 Since its inception the coalition has met regularly bringing together representatives of the local disability forums. The organisation has made progress in heightening awareness of the needs of disabled people in North Lanarkshire through activities such as European Day of Disabled People in December 1997. Since that time, the coalition has focussed its effort on developing networks with single issue disability groups. Support to the coalition has been on an ad hoc basis through the social work and community service departments.
- 2.2 The coalition has continued to meet with a view to enhancing its identity and creating networking amongst disability groups. Recently it has been involved in discussions with the council to explore the feasibility of developing a "shopmobility" scheme. Capital costs for the project have already been secured as part of Millennium Events and Projects Fund.
- 2.3 The coalition has requested funding for running costs both for its day to day business and for participation in the development of the "shopmobility" scheme. In considering this request it is necessary also to consider the development potential of the coalition. Assessment of progress over the last 3 years would suggest that the organisation struggles to achieve its stated aims and would benefit from a more organised and structured approach to its activities.
- 2.4 Notwithstanding this there is undoubtedly a need to support and maintain any organisation which strengthens the infrastructure of disability groups. Therefore it is suggested that in considering the request for financial assistance for running costs consideration should also be given to funding a feasibility study into the long term viability and sustainability of the coalition. The results of the study would then inform the discussion regarding the proposed shopmobility scheme and the potential involvement of the coalition.

- 2.5 The coalition has requested a sum of £3000 to assist with running costs. It is also proposed that the department allocate an additional sum of £2,500 to commission a small-scale feasibility study by an appropriate external agency. These awards would be met from the 1999/2000 revenue budget for equal opportunities.

3. RECOMMENTATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the sub-committee:

- (i) approve the request for £3000 to support the running costs of the coalition (within existing estimates)
- (ii) approve further expenditure of £2500 to carry out a feasibility study as detailed above:
- (iii) refer the report to social work and social inclusion committees for their information and interest.

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