

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2001

PEOPLE'S NETWORK FUNDING

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform committee that Library Registration and Information Services has been allocated £363,028 by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) for People's Network infrastructure.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Information on the proposed People's Network project was previously notified to the Leisure Sub-Committee on 21 December 1997 and 19 May 1998 and the Community Services Committee on 13th April 1999. The NOF funding will provide the public with free, fast, Internet access through computers from the service's 23 static service points. Library Registration and Information Services proposals to NOF for achieving the aims of the project met with approval and were given "exemplar status".

3. PROJECT AIMS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 All library datacommunications lines will be upgraded to 2MB where possible to provide fast Internet and email access. This improved network, together with the installation of high specification public access computers in all libraries, will make up the People's Network of Learning Centres within East Ayrshire.
- 3.2 The public access computers will enhance learning opportunities, access to community, business, government information, the library catalogue and other on-line information providers.
- 3.3 NOF has already funded ICT training for library staff and this complements the People's Network infrastructure project by equipping library staff to support their customers.
- 3.4 Scottish Arts Council funded reader development training programme also complements the aims of the project.
- 3.5 The infrastructure programme sits comfortably with the SIP aims.
- 3.6 The People's Network may also be used as platform for the delivery of e-government and Modernising Government projects.
- 3.7 With committee approval the plans will be made available through the Scottish Library Information Council to assist other authorities ensure that their plans meet NOF's standard.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 NOF funding includes capital costs for infrastructure and equipment and 3 years' revenue costs.
- 4.2 The improved datacommunications will incur additional revenue costs, part of which will be covered by Departmental recharges for shared lines. The remainder may be met from existing revenue.

5. LEGAL/ POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 European Union Procurement Legislation has been complied with.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The grant of £363,028 from the new opportunities fund will bring major benefits to the East Ayrshire Library, Registration and Information Services (EALRIS).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to:-
 - (i) note the successful funding application to NOF for the development of public library service within East Ayrshire.
 - (ii) approve making the EALRIS submission available through Scottish Library Information Council to other Scottish Library Services; and
 - (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

WS/EG
27th August 2001

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. New Library: the People's Network
- 2. Building the New Library Network
- 3. Report by Director of Community Services to Leisure Sub-Committee, 23 December 1997
- 4. Report by Director of Community Services to Leisure Sub-Committee, 19 May 1998
- 5. Report by Director of Community Services to Leisure Sub-Committee of the Community Services Committee on 13th April 1999
- 6. East Ayrshire Library, Registration and Information Services' funding submission

Anyone wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should contact John Griffiths, Head of Leisure Services on 01563 576264.

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AGENDA