

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 4 OCTOBER 2001**

EXTERNAL FUNDING

**REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE/DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE
RESOURCES**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a report on the actions taken to secure an increase in external funding within East Ayrshire, and the gains to date.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting in June 2000, the Policy and Resources Committee agreed to create the post of External Funding Support Officer. This post was filled in October 2000, with a fixed term contract of, initially, two years.
- 2.2 The post was established to co-ordinate existing expertise within the Council in order to maximise all external funding opportunities via inter-departmental collaboration. This report reflects progress to date in the work of all departments.

3 SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

- 3.1 The External Funding Support Officer is the Council's general information co-ordinator in relation to external funding bodies, together with departmental service officers where appropriate.
- 3.2 To assist with the co-ordination of the process, an External Funding Network within the Council has been established. This comprises key officers from departments who have expertise in specific funding bodies. The Network meets on a bi-monthly basis. The main task of the External Funding Network is to both disseminate information on funds, and keep departments updated on work being undertaken across the Council, thereby minimising duplication and maximising the knowledge base on funds.
- 3.3 A second core component of the External Funding Support Officer's role is to provide advice, guidance and support to voluntary organisations and community groups. In respect of this, the following measures have been implemented:
- Funding Days –giving the opportunity for the voluntary and community sectors to meet and discuss project ideas with national funders, and to raise awareness of the funders and their criteria. Funding days have taken place in Kilmarnock and Cumnock and two “themed days” have been organised for October 2001.
 - Funding Clinics – providing the opportunity for the voluntary and community sectors to meet on a one-to-one basis and to access the expertise of the External Funding Support Officer. Two funding clinics have been organised to date, with a further two scheduled for November 2001.

- Promotional Materials - a range of material has been produced offering advice on Council support and funders criteria.

3.4 The production of the monthly 'External Funding Update' has been essential in keeping departments, elected members and community councils up to date on the latest funding opportunities, and changes in funding criteria. This will also be available on the Council's intranet from December 2001, along with standard application forms and links to funders' web-sites etc.

4 NATIONAL FUNDING BODIES

4.1 The External Funding Support Officer has established good working relationships with the following funders, providing a central contact point and raising awareness of the local agenda at a national level:

- Community Fund (previously National Lotteries Charities Board)
- Coalfields Regeneration Trust
- New Opportunities Fund
- Major Trusts e.g. Children in Need, Rank Foundation.

4.2 Colleagues on the External Funding Network retain their existing links with SportScotland, Arts Council, European Union Funding and where appropriate divisions of the Scottish Executive.

4.3 Significant work has been carried out by the External Funding Support Officer in highlighting the particular levels of deprivation within the authority's boundaries to ensure national funders are fully aware of the issues that our communities face.

4.4 A three-way agreement between the Council, East Ayrshire Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Community has been developed reflecting agreements reached at a national level through CoSLA. This agreement specified a number of actions to increase awareness of the fund, and set a pattern of joint working. This pattern is one that is being extended to other funders, including some major charitable trusts e.g. Children in Need.

5 GAINS

5.1 The total gains for East Ayrshire, in the period 1 April 2000 to 1 September 2001 are £8,910,615. An overview of these is included in Appendix 1. This represents the total gains that have been notified to the External Funding Support Officer, or where the External Funding Support Officer has had some engagement. It should be noted the figure is expected to be higher, as not all awards are reported to the Council.

The External Funding Support Officer has established a central database for all applications submitted by departments, which will allow comparisons with Scottish averages where information is readily available in that format. A more detailed account of gains to the area will be available in the future as a result of this work.

6 BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

- 6.1 The External Funding Support Officer has offered assistance of varying degrees to community groups and departments of the Council in the identification of funders and preparation of applications. The External Funding Support Officer has a record of 65 requests for information/advice. Advice and assistance of a more substantial nature has been given to 49 of these groups, once it was ascertained that there was a worthwhile opportunity of external funding being successful.
- 6.2 From the contacts made to date, it has become clear that the capacity of community organisations in East Ayrshire to access funding is low. Many organisations are poorly constituted, have low aspirations and lack the support to develop goals.
- 6.3 In partnership with the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership and the East Ayrshire Council for Voluntary Organisations, the External Funding Support Officer on behalf of the Council has produced a publication entitled 'Trusts & Funds – A Guide to Applying Successfully'. This is a comprehensive guide to building the credibility and management ability of community and voluntary groups and showing them how to present well-written applications. The Guide also contains contact numbers and information on a variety of relevant funders and trusts.
- 6.4 The publication is being supplemented by an autumn/winter training programme that will give community groups the opportunity to:
- become strong applicants through examination of their constitutions and management methods;
 - develop an awareness of funds through a series of evening workshops targeted at specific themes, and
 - allow them the opportunity to discuss their ideas with both other community groups and departments to investigate strong partnership bids.

7 MATCH FUND BUDGET

- 7.1 The Policy and Resources Committee of 22 February 2001 agreed the creation of a 'Match-Fund' budget from existing resources. The main purpose of this fund was to lever in external funding in situations where Council funding was seen as strategically important to national funders. In addition, it would encourage strategic co-operation between departments to achieve the Council's priorities. A report on the first round of applications is made separately to the Policy and Resources Committee.

8 FUTURE OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The External Funding Network has identified a number of opportunities within existing Council resources and structures that will increase the potential funding gains to the East Ayrshire area. It is proposed that the principle of maximising external funding is one which should be considered on a more strategic basis, and this will be the subject of a future report to the Policy and Resources Committee.

- 8.2 The External Funding Support Officer will work to progress the existing enquiries and projects that have been raised during this first year. A report detailing how enquiries and projects have been progressed will be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee. It is expected that there will be an equal amount of new project ideas in the coming year, as the workshops and general confidence and aspiration building continues.
- 8.3 To further enable Council staff to target funding enquiries a number of national funders e.g. the Community Fund, Coalfields Regeneration Trust and Heritage Lottery Fund have been asked to provide training for our staff on the criteria and assessment processes in force.

9 LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None arising from this report.

10 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The principle of maximising external funding is consistent with the general approach of the Council to ensure strategic and effective use of its resources in consideration of other available funding opportunities.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The committee is asked to:
- i) note the financial gains awarded in respect of East Ayrshire as detailed at section 5.1 and in Appendix 1;
 - ii) note the work being carried out by the External Funding Support Officer and Service Departments to secure external funding;
 - iii) agree to receive a further report in six months time detailing the progress made in respect of enquiries from community and voluntary groups;
 - iv) invite the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources to submit future reports on External Funding on an annual basis, and
 - v) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

Fiona Lees
Director of Corporate Resources/Depute Chief Executive
28 September 2001/FL/MG/AMD

List of Background Papers

Nil

Implementation Officer: Douglas I Campbell, Head of Corporate Development and Communication (01563) 576165.

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APPENDIX 1

East Ayrshire Council
Gains to East Ayrshire
Financial Years 2000/2001 to 2001/2002

	2000/2001		2001/2002 (as at 1 Sep 2001)		Comments
	Number of Awards made	Total Value of Awards £k	Number of Awards made	Total Value of Awards £k	
Coalfields Regeneration Trust	11	250,000	N/a	0	<i>Funding dried up March 2001. New round from September 2001.</i>
Better Neighbourhood Fund	N/a	0	1	6,250,000	<i>Fund announced in 2001/2002. Allocation is for 3 years.</i>
New Opportunites Fund	11	966,921	6	601,557	
Awards for All	69	96,000	27	39,000	
Spors Scotland	11	120,4	5	154	

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▪ Community Fund (previously NLCB)	▪ 4	▪ 324,000		▪ 0	▪ 0	
▪ European Funding	▪	▪ 0		▪ 4	▪ 966,000	
▪ Heritage Lottery Fund	▪ 3	▪ 89,000		▪ 0	▪ 0	
▪ LandFill Tax	▪ 17	▪ 175,230		▪ 7	▪ 94,800	
▪ Health Improvement Fund	▪ N/A	▪ 0		▪ 5	▪ 395,000	<i>In September 2000, the Scottish Executive announced the creation of the Health Improvement Fund, utilising the revenues accrued from higher tobacco taxation. The funding awarded is for x years. £778,666 is the East Ayrshire share of 8 PAN Ayrshire projects approved. The awards shown include those more than 1 authority area with a consequential adjustment made in the financial values shown.</i>
▪ Social Inclusion (Scottish Executive)	▪ 0	▪ 0		▪ 1	▪ 410,000	<i>Additional resources for the coalfield area in 2001/2002</i>
▪	▪	▪ <u>2,021,601</u>		▪	▪ 8,910,615	▪

AGENDA

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