

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

13 JUNE 2002

**SUBJECT: RURAL SHOPS AND COMMUNITY POST OFFICE  
CONVERSION GRANT SCHEME – REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE TO SET UP THE LUNANHEAD COMMUNITY POST OFFICE**

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

**Abstract: The existing shop and post office at Lunanhead closed earlier this year. The applicant is proposing to set up a Community Post Office within her house.**

**1 RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee authorises the Director of Planning & Transport in consultation with both the Director of Finance and the Director of Property Services and with the approval of the Convener of Planning & Transport to progress the application for grant to allow the applicant to open for business in mid August of this year.

**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The owner of a farmhouse on the edge of Lunanhead is at present negotiating with Post Office Counters Ltd. to establish a Community Post Office in her kitchen for 10 hours each week. The provision of a Community Post Office within a residential property is now quite common place, particularly in isolated areas.
- 2.2 The applicant is to be interviewed for the post very shortly and will if suitable be appointed prior to this Committee meeting. The Director of Planning will report on the outcome of the interview and the appointment at the Committee meeting.
- 2.3 An application for change of use would be required under the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

**3 RURAL SHOPS AND COMMUNITY POST OFFICE CONVERSION**

- 3.1 If appointed the applicant has agreed with Post Office Counters Ltd. an opening date of 28 August 2002. Certain works will require to be carried out before that date and it is this work for which she will be seeking grant assistance. The works comprise the upgrading of door and window locks, the purchase of a lockable filing cabinet and the provision of a free standing Post Office sign.
- 3.2 The applicant at the proposed Community Post Office at Lunanhead meets the eligibility criteria under the above scheme. The works comprise essential physical alterations to the premises to satisfy Post Office Counters Ltd. operational requirements. As the premises are less than three miles from the nearest provision a discretionary grant of £2,500 or up to 90% of the approved works would be applicable.

- 3.3 However as there is no Committee meeting during the summer recess and the next Committee meeting is after the proposed opening date, authority is sought for the Director of Planning in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Property Services and with the approval of the Convener, to process the application and award grant if appropriate.

#### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The approved budget for the grant scheme for the current financial year is £5,000 and no other grants have so far been awarded this year.
- 4.2 Any offer of grant would not exceed the ceiling of £2,500.

#### **5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

#### **6 CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Having lost the Post Office in Lunanhead, there is a desire to see the facility re-established as soon as possible, for the benefit of both the local community and Angus in general.

#### **NOTE**

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

- Report No. 875/96 by the Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development
- Report No. 704/96 by the Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development

AA/GEP/KW

5 June 2002

Alex Anderson  
Director of Planning and Transport