

# Feasibility Study

For

**MOTHERWELL AND WISHAW CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

**Training Centre**

**April 2016**

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# Organisation Administrative Details

**MOTHERWELL AND WISHAW CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU.**

**Registered Charity SC009733**

**Company Limited by Guarantee SC173485**

**Authorised by FCA FRN 617467**

**The CAB service is underpinned by 12 principles:**

• A free service	• Confidentiality	• Impartiality
• Independence	• Accessibility	• Effectiveness
• Community accountability	• The client's right to decide	• A voluntary service
• Empowerment	• Information retrieval	

## **Purpose**

The prevention or relief of poverty

The advancement of education

The advancement of health

The advancement of citizenship or community development

The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation

The promotion of equality and diversity

The relief of those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

Any other purpose that may reasonably be regarded as analogous to any of the preceding purposes

## **Object:**

The company's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the public benefit in Motherwell, Wishaw and Shotts areas by: - i). the advancement of education By providing clients with information, clarification and understanding of legislation and their legal rights and responsibilities. ii) the relief of those in need By assessing clients entitlement to welfare benefits, by providing assistance in claiming benefits and by assisting them to appeal against refusal to benefits and by doing so ensure that do not suffer from poverty iii) the advancement of human rights By ensuring that people do not suffer through ignorance of their human rights and by taking such actions required to redress the situation and restore justice. iv) advancement of health By providing a comprehensive advice service that deals with all aspects of clients problems and alleviates the stress and anxiety caused by unsolved problems. v) advancement of community development By recruiting, training and developing local citizens to become volunteer advisers in the Citizens Advice Bureau who in turn assist members of the public in their community and in doing so contribute to the development of their community.

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## Purpose

Kinga Kosakowska, Executive Manager Motherwell and Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau and Alana Forsyth, Business Development Manager Motherwell and Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau engaged with Just Enterprise for specific support with the development and creation of a feasibility study. The purpose of this feasibility study is to develop an idea which has been under discussion within the organisation and its partners, that of the development of the provision of training and employability services.

Motherwell and Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau have seen an increase in turnover over the past few years, from £400,000 in 2012 to around £680,000 in 2015. This is a direct result of successes in securing funding to launch new projects for the community. However they continue to seek opportunities to extend their services, while delivering value for money for our funders and a strong return on investment.

The environment for gaining funding alongside the continued pressure for the need for the wide services they offer has led to considering if there was a way to introduce a model which would allow them to have a more stable income source. This in turn would support longer term employment for current staffing rather than the short term project staffing which currently exists, creating a small surplus for reinvestment in other projects.

The objective is to complete a feasibility study which assesses both the need and demand for this potential service across North Lanarkshire in addition to the viability of the longer term opportunity for this model of delivery for the organisation.

## Executive Summary

The funding available to Citizens Advice Bureaux is currently being curtailed from many directions including Central Government, pressure on Local Authority budgets for core Citizens Advice Bureau funding and from other grant providers. Therefore many Citizens Advice Bureaux have to look at their core skill sets and consider how they can utilise these to develop an offering which can assist in funding future deliverables.

Motherwell and Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau are no different and have decided to reconsider a project which was started a couple of years ago, that of the development of a training facility. Training is a core capacity of any Citizens Advice Bureau function with almost 80% of all volunteers and staff training in a variety of specialisms and to a range of levels.

Add to this the target of the Scottish Government that;

- Scotland becomes recognised globally as the most creative and engaged learning society
- Every adult in Scotland will have the right to access learning to meet both their educational needs and their aspirations
- Adult learning in Scotland, and the outcomes that learners achieve, will be world-leading.

Motherwell and Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau already provide a considerable offering for internal staff through a range of activities, including being an accredited SQA training centre and also having a number of staff who are trainers, verifiers and advisors across a range of disciplines.

With access to their own training suite and with pre-arranged access to other locally based training suites, the key aim of this feasibility study is to consider the best options to move forward.

The first question is “Can the Citizens Advice Bureau deliver”? Whilst the answer to this is yes, in that they do have staff availability, it would, however, require a reworking of roles and the undertaking of staff training.

The second question is “Do they have the capacity to deliver?” This is a difficult one to answer. From a resource point of view yes, as they will be able to utilise current resources who may be looking for new

challenges. However, although they do not have adequate in house facilities, they do have the ability to use agreed external facilities.

Crucially the third question is “Is there a demand?” The answer to this is yes. Phase One should be the targeting of up to the 1000 staff within their own local Citizens Advice Bureau network. If correctly marketed, this alone would provide them with a considerable opportunity. The commercial market is considerably large, and the issue with subsequently targeting this is that it is also very well catered for by a large variety of small and national players. Therefore this is a Phase Two consideration.

In addition there are two other key objectives where they should be able to deliver some very good outcomes in terms of gaining contracts. (1) To ensure they are tender ready for the next Lanarkshire employability contracts. (2) That they enter the commercial market via a slightly different route; through the provision of an advice helpline to local business. This not only provides a very secure long term income source, but also gets them into the more competitive commercial market with the ability to sell a range of training offerings to this client base.

Given the proven ability of the management teams to nurture, grow and develop new projects, staff, volunteers and income, this does provide a very robust providence for the opportunity of developing a training centre as part of Motherwell and Wishaw Citizens Advice Bureau.