

Report to: **Executive**
Date: **6 November 2007**
Report of: **Executive Member for Social Inclusion & Culture**
Subject: **East Durham Community Development Trust (EDCDT)**
Ward: **All**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the Council's level of funding for the East Durham Community Development Trust (EDCDT) for 2007/2008.

2. Consultation

2.1 In preparing this report, consultation has taken place with the Executive Member for Regeneration, Director of Regeneration and Development, Head of Regeneration and Partnerships, Regeneration Initiatives Manager and the Senior Regeneration Officer (Finance and Management).

3. Background

3.1 In the summer of 2006, in a move to improve services to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in East Durham, Easington Council for Voluntary Services (ECVS) and East Durham Community Empowerment Network (EDCEN) agreed to merge and form EDCDT. The EDCDT was subsequently launched in March 2007 and the original two charities were dissolved. The Trust is registered as a limited company by guarantee by Companies House and is also registered for charitable status by the Charities Commission.

3.2 The aim of the Development Trust is to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of urban or rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation in the East Durham and surrounding area. This will be achieved by means of the relief of unemployment and poverty; the advancement of education; the advancement, protection and promotion of health; the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large, or those who by reason of their youth, age or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances have the need for such facilities; to further people's learning and development opportunities in order to improve quality of life, and also to establish a building as a community resource centre.

3.3 The Development Trust now offers the following services:

- Support and Development for local groups, including information and advice (funding, accounting, legal issues, etc.)
- Representation through consultation; training of community members to sit on decision-making bodies and lobbying/advocacy.
- Sector promotion through development of the skills of the sector; policy development; setting quality standards and best practice; research; and liaison with other sectors.

3.4 The Development Trust will also establish a VCS 'One Stop Shop' by establishing a new building. Building work is estimated to be complete by March 2008. The building will be used to house the new charity, and have rentable office space to VCS groups to generate income for the Trust.

Item no.

3.5 The Council has previously given four-year commitments to fund the ECVS to allow the organisation to plan ahead. In May 2004 the Council agreed to give a further four-year commitment to fund the ECVS until March 2008, with the actual level of funding being subject to an annual review.

3.6 At the Executive meeting held on Tuesday 27th February 2007 it was recommended that the £30,000 grant for 2006/2007 previously approved for ECVS be transferred to EDCDT.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

4.1.1 This report is seeking approval to award a grant of £30,000 to EDCDT for the 2007/2008 financial year for which a budget provision has been made.

4.1.2 Bank accounts have been established by EDCDT and proper financial management systems are in place.

4.1.3 A further report regarding the Council's future commitment to the EDCDT will be forthcoming following wider discussions on the funding of the VCS throughout County Durham together with the implications for the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

4.2 Legal

4.2.1 It is not considered that there are any legal implications.

4.3 Policy

4.3.1 Previous Council policy has been to fund the CVS for the life of each Council and it is recommended to maintain the commitment to fund the service, which will, now be delivered by EDCDT.

4.3.2 Work is ongoing to formalise a service level agreement between the Council and EDCDT in order that this agreement can be used as a basis to assess performance. This will be formalized once the EDCDT business plan is complete.

4.4 Risk

4.4.1 A risk assessment has been completed and the necessary actions required to manage the identified risks have been/will be implemented.

4.5 Communications

4.5.1 The Trust will be informed as to the outcome of this request and publicity will be sought regarding the handover of grant and an appropriate press statement made. In addition the District Council will ask to be recognised on any publication produced by the EDCDT.

4.6 Corporate

4.6.1 The role of the EDCDT fits in with the corporate plan by working in partnership to give support to local community group that deliver services and facilities which improve the health of residents, develop locally based learning opportunities and builds capacity.

4.7 Equality and Diversity

4.7.1 It is not considered that there are any Equality and Diversity implications as EDCDT is required to deliver its services equitably.

4.8 E-Government

4.8.1 It is not considered that there are any E-Government implications.

4.9 Procurement

4.9.1 It is not considered that there are any procurement implications.

4.10 Social Inclusion

4.10.1 Core funding of EDCDT will give further support to community/voluntary groups operating throughout the district who offer a wide range of facilities/services to the community some of which are located in areas of greatest need.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Executive approves a funding contribution of £30,000 to the East Durham Community Development Trust for 2007/2008.

5.2 The Executive note that a further report on the future funding of EDCDT will be forthcoming when countywide discussions concerning the funding of the voluntary sector are completed.

Background Papers/Documents Referred to in Preparing this Report:-

District of Easington Risk Assessment
Letter from EDCDT