

Report to: **Executive**
Date: **22 July 2008**
Report of: **Executive Member for Social Inclusion & Culture**
Subject: **East Durham Community Development Trust (EDCDT)**
Ward: **All**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To confirm the Council's level of funding for the East Durham Community Development Trust (EDCDT) for 2008/2009.
- 1.2 To agree in principal to the content of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with EDCDT, attached as Appendix 1.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 In preparing this report, consultation has taken place with the Regeneration Initiatives Manager and the Monitoring Officer who have agreed the content of the SLA and the Senior Regeneration Officer (Finance and Management) who has advised the funding detailed in this report is available within 2008/2009 budgets.

3. Background

- 3.1 In the summer of 2006, in a move to improve services to the Voluntary and Community Sector in East Durham, Easington Council for Voluntary Services (ECVS) and East Durham Community Empowerment Network (EDCEN) agreed to merge and form a development trust. EDCDT was 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 EDCDT 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 new Development Trust building is now complete and has been occupied since April 2008. As well as offering a Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) 'One Stop Shop' it has rentable office space, which will generate income for EDCDT.
- 3.4 EDCDT 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

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- 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.
- 3.5 The Council has previously given four-year commitments to fund 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; however in February 2007 the Executive approved that the 2006/2007 grant previously approved for ECVS be transferred to EDCDT.
- 3.6 An SLA (Appendix 1) has been developed and drawn up in conjunction with EDCDT and accepted by EDCDT's Board at their meeting in May 2008. The SLA covers the period April 2008 to March 2011, which spans vesting day in terms of the Local Government Review (LGR). For the purpose of this report the SLA is a basis to secure funding for 2008/2009, as provided in current budgets and to assess performance to 31st March 2009.
- 3.7 It is accepted by all parties that the SLA will need the approval of the County Council given the overall timescales and therefore the Executive is requested to adopt the SLA as a performance tool for 2008/2009.
- 3.8 Section 5 (Sustainability) of the SLA refers to the establishment of a Community Loan Fund (CLF) for the VCS in East Durham. The CLF will offer interest free bankrolling loans to VCS organisations that have already secured funding or income streams. It is being established with £140,000 NRF and will be available from the end of July. In addition to NRF, the Council has agreed to contribute £200,000 to the CLF from DoE reserves once it is operational. Provision for this additional contribution has been made within existing budgets and a further report will be brought to the Executive regarding access to this funding.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 A budget provision of £45,000 (50% increase on 2007/2008) has been made for 2008/2009 financial year to support the core services and increase capacity. This report is seeking approval to award £30,000 in the first instance with the remaining £15,000 being awarded upon the satisfactory delivery of additional services outlined in the SLA.

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 is now delivered by EDCDT, however in light of the Local Government Review this report is recommending that a single year commitment is made at this time.

4.4 Local Government Review

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4.4.1 This report seeks agreement to commit resources to funding of EDCDT in 2008/2009 based on the principals in the SLA recognizing that it will be used as a basis of agreement for the new Council. It does not commit resources beyond 2008/2009 but will be used to negotiate funding with the new Council.

4.4.2 In view of the above the SLA will be communicated to the County Council for consideration when the 2009/2010 budget allocations are being discussed.

4.5 Risk

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

4.6 Communications

4.6.1 EDCDT 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 EDCDT.

4.7 Corporate

4.7.1 The role of 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.

4.8 Equality and Diversity

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

4.9 E-Government

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

4.10 Procurement

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

4.11 Social Inclusion

4.11.1 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 EDCDT for 2008/2009.

5.2 The Executive agrees in principal to the content of the SLA for 2008/2009 and approves a further funding contribution of £15,000 to EDCDT for 2008/2009 subject to satisfactory delivery of additional services detailed in the SLA.

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- 5.3 The Executive note that a further report on accessing the £200,000 contribution to the CLF will be forthcoming.

Background Papers/Documents Referred to in Preparing this Report:-
District of Easington Risk Assessment