

**INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE: 9 MAY 2013****FINAL UPDATE ON ABERDEENSHIRE TOWNS PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRUSTS****1 Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Committee agree to:-**

**1.1 Note the contents of the report.****2 Discussion**

- 2.1 On 19 October 2008, following the cessation of the Aberdeenshire Towns Partnership (ATP), ISC agreed a transition process for the period from January 2009 until March 2011. Funds allocated to ATP were used to create independent groups in the ATP Towns and to assist them achieve a sustainable future.
- 2.2 On 17 March 2011 (Item 17) ISC approved a reduced extension of funding of £35,000 in 2011/12 to each of the four Trusts as a contribution towards employee and premises costs with the proviso that no further contribution from the Council's ATP budget would be made after March 2012.
- 2.3 On 6 October 2011 (Item 15) it was reported to ISC that although none of the Trusts was yet fully sustainable they had good reasons to consider themselves as going concerns and were continuing to make significant contributions to local economic, social and environmental activity.
- 2.4 The Trusts subsequently made an approach to the Council regarding their financial position for the year 2012/2013 and on 26 January 2012 (Item 19) ISC agreed to recommend to Council that funding per Trust of £17,500 should be included in the 2012/13 budget. This was subsequently agreed by Council on 9 February 2012 (Item 1). ISC agreed the funds were conditional on a new Service Level Agreement and that the Trusts should submit plans which illustrated how they would achieve sustainability, not just prevent their demise.
- 2.5 Since then, three of the four Trusts achieved the required conditions and were paid on a quarterly basis in arrears. The fourth, Banff and Macduff Community Trust, was subject to a winding-down process.
- 2.6 Performance Indicators (PIs) and a Service level Agreement (SLA) have been in place since agreed by ISC on 8 October 2009 (Item 18) and modified on 26 January 2012 (Item 19). The SLA governs standards on membership, on encouraging the involvement of elected members and with Local Community Planning. Monitoring is carried out by the ATP Co-ordinator. The current Performance Indicators are:
- (1) Financial Leverage – the amount of money attracted as a result of the Council's investment in the development Trusts. (See Paragraph 2.6.1)

- (2) 'Activities' and how they contribute to outcomes in the Local Community Plan. (Further detail for each Trust is covered in Appendix 1).

- 2.6.1 *Leverage* - From formation in 2009 to last year the Trusts had used the Council's support to attract £600,000 of additional external investment. The previous report estimated that this would increase by over £100,000 during 2012/13 from a mixture of loans and grants. That figure has been substantially exceeded with Huntly Development Trust alone having played a key role in attracting £100,000 funding from Creative Scotland. The final figure is estimated at £900,000 with several large funding applications still pending.
- 2.7 This report marks the end of the programme of core financial support to the Trusts. They will continue to operate through their own resources and through such grants, income or services that may be available from the Council and other sources. They will remain, as intended, a partner to the Council on community and regeneration matters and an important resource within their communities. This is well illustrated by the double-digit membership growth achieved by all three organisations over the past year.
- 2.8 While no formal evaluation has taken place the objective, to assist new, independent groups in the ATP towns to achieve an independent sustainable future, has been met in three out of the four cases. In the process, more than 10 jobs have been created, c£900,000 of additional investment has been attracted and the Trusts have established themselves as community champions and anchor organisations. They are actively supporting the development of their own projects as well as those of others and they act as a bridge between the Council and their respective communities.
- 2.9 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services have been consulted and their comments incorporated in the report.

### **3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications**

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because there are no new actions or decisions arising from this report.
- 3.2 There are no specific staffing and financial implications arising from this report.

**Stephen Archer**  
**Director of Infrastructure Services**

## APPENDIX 1

**ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE DEVELOPMENT TRUSTS**

The Trusts do not operate under the same business model but all have the goal of acquiring assets to ensure their long-term sustainability. The Boards of all three Trusts have been stable over the last year and this seems to have contributed positively to their performance and development. They have all performed in line with their business plans and undergone noticeable improvements in their organisational development and financial reporting.

*Peterhead Projects Ltd*

Membership of Peterhead Projects continues to increase up by 45% from 115 to 166 and they attracted leverage of £94,000 during the year. Their portfolio of activities ranges from car-boot sales and recycling to a community woodland, the management of Peterhead caravan site and the community (Farmers) market as well as health improvement activities. They are also providing volunteering opportunities for employability and independent living skills. In partnership with Fraserburgh Development Trust they have taken on the contract to manage the Reaching Out (social regeneration) projects in the two towns.

Their work contributes to Local Community Plan objectives: A2 Social and Economic Regeneration; A5 Health & Inequalities; B2 Support for Employability; B4 Social Enterprise; C2 Financial Inclusion; D2 Town Regeneration; C3 Community Assets; D4 Environmental Improvements; and E1 Increasing Community Involvement. In particular, they are the lead contacts for the objective D6 Waste through their work in significantly reducing waste to landfill.

*Fraserburgh Development Trust Ltd*

Fraserburgh increased their membership this year by 30% from 168 to 219 and attracted leverage of £39,000. The Hub, their High Street premises refurbished using £250,000 from the Town Centre Regeneration Fund, continues to be the main source of income. It provides letting rooms to a range of community service providers such as employability, health and finance. The Trust is also involved in a £1m project with Big Lottery to acquire an established craft bakery and enhance the business through new premises, equipment and the offer of training and employability services. They are also developing three renewable energy projects and are working with the business group, Fraserburgh Forward, on town centre regeneration through a marketing and events initiative called Super Saturday.

The work of the Trust contributes to the Local Community Plan through: A1 Reducing Teenage Pregnancies; C2 Building Community Capacity; C4 Community Facilities for Fraserburgh; D4 Promote Renewable Energy.

*Huntly Development Trust Ltd*

Huntly's future income continues to be heavily reliant on their renewable energy projects but they have consolidated their role as a community anchor organisation. A recent example of their involvement was Huntly winning the Creative Place Award 2013 from Creative Scotland and with it £100,000 of funding for creative projects. They have received many testimonials for their work ranging from local individuals to national organisations and are widely acknowledged as an exemplar for their

innovation community cohesion efforts. During the year this included the Dragons Y'Ken initiative to boost local entrepreneurship. Their Energy Efficiency project (in conjunction with Gordon Rural Action) resulted in 225 installations and is said to have been the most successful community scheme. On a similar theme they were involved with a renewable switch scheme (with SSE and SCVO) which attracted 105 Expressions of Interest, more than half the total number of the consortium and won funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change to enable the installations. The Trust has also received an invitation to speak at an event in the Scottish Parliament on 26th April organised by the Scottish Community Alliance. The theme is "The Future is Local", and HDT will talk about the Creative Place Award and other regenerative initiatives.

Their activities continue to link with Community Plan priorities: A5 Health Inequalities; A10 Encouraging Use of Forest Estate; A11 Resilient Communities; B1 & 2 Tourism; B3 Employment Land; B7 HDT Business Plan; C11 Cultural Activity; D5 Walks; D13 Gordon Way and D21 Renewable Energy.