



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Development Trusts NI: Support for Conference 2014
Date:	18 February 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	This paper is to seek Members' approval to sponsor the Development Trusts Northern Ireland annual conference in June 2014.
1.2	Development Trust NI are the leading network of community enterprise practitioners dedicated to helping people set up development trusts and helping existing development trusts learn from each other and work effectively. They encourage, support and empower local communities to develop new and inspiring projects, thus enabling them to become independent and sustainable.
1.3	Local people set up development trusts to tackle local issues and to improve the quality of life in their community. As a result, development trusts become involved in a very wide range of activities. Despite the diversity that is reflected in what they do, all development trusts are underpinned by a strong ethos of self help and self reliance and a belief that community regeneration which is achieved through community owned enterprise and assets is the way to build strong and sustainable communities.
1.4	DTNI's vision is to have a successful development trust in every community that wants one and to achieve this they:
1.5	1. Encourage the growth of new development trusts through the provision of information, resources and a variety of direct contact. They assist interested communities to explore the benefits and relevance of the development trust approach and they also provide useful resources, training and limited support to communities wishing to establish a development trust.
1.6	2. Support and strengthen established development trusts through facilitating learning and development via a range of networking opportunities including an annual conference, a programme of training seminars and the provision of funding to resource visits between members and potential members.

1.7	3. Provide advice and a range of bespoke training opportunities and regular information on opportunities and resources. Established development trusts can access a wide range of membership benefits and many useful resources (including a regularly updated funding guide) through the member only section within this website.
1.8	DTNI is also committed to contributing, wherever possible, to the income of their members, including commissioned member arrangements, consultancy opportunities through the Pool, the hire of development trust facilities and payments for contributing to training sessions and for hosting visits from other development trusts. The organisation also promotes and represents the interests of development trusts so they can influence the context within which development trusts operate and maximise the opportunities and resources available to further their aims.
1.9	DTNI is therefore involved in a range of promotional and representational activity within the community, social enterprise and voluntary sectors, with local authorities, the Northern Ireland Government and with a range of other relevant agencies.
1.10	DTNI has a close working relationship with their sister organisation Locality. Together with DTA Scotland and DTA Wales there is now a UK wide network with over 450 members
1.11	DTNI are developing new ways of working and effective cooperation with the regional government and local authorities to explore opportunities for asset transfer within local communities.

2	Key Issues
2.1	A key objective of DTNI is to support members to become stronger, more enterprising and more sustainable, and a central element within this is the provision of a wide and flexible range of learning and development opportunities. This includes an annual programme of free training events, our annual conference, study visits to successful development trusts, visits between developmental trusts, networking meetings and our own leadership course.
2.2	DTNI have approached BCC to become involved in their 2014 annual conference titled The NI Conversation 14: Making Local Work (Government Reform, Community Ownership, Community Enterprise)
2.3	The dates for the conference have been set as the 18th and 19th of June 2014.
2.4	DTNI see the conference as a key opportunity (post election to the new council structures) to discuss the evolving nature of local authority democracy and better understand the complementary role that local communities will play as the local authorities assume new powers and responsibilities. As outlined, the specific interests of DTNI lie in supporting existing and setting up new development trusts. In particular they are keen to support their existing and emerging membership in enterprise development and in acquiring an asset base to help underpin their own sustainable development. That interest also includes support to members and the wider community and voluntary sector to explore what role the transfer of surplus public assets and or the management of public assets can bring to their sustainable development.

2.5	They will look to address these matters at the conference as well as Urban and Neighbourhood Planning, Social Finance and Investment, Social Impact and to showcase exemplar community enterprise initiatives across the city.
2.6	As part of the sponsorship package, the council will benefit from the positive media and communications activity both in the run-up to and during the event.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The sponsorship package for this event is £5,000.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No specific equality and good relations considerations at this stage

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the contents of this report - Agree to sponsor the DTNI 2014 Annual Conference at a cost of £5,000.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: March 2014 Reporting Officer: Cate Taggart	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DTNI Development Trusts Northern Ireland	