
START YOUR BUSINESS EVENT

**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) -Councillor David Lyonette,
Regeneration and Planning Portfolio**

Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval to sponsor the Start Your Business Event organised by Darlington Business Venture to be held at Carmel College on Saturday 25 September 2004.

Information and Analysis

Background

2. Darlington Borough Council have been sponsoring these events, formally known as the "Getting Started" Exhibitions, for a number of years. Four "Getting Started" Exhibitions were held during 2002 and 2003 and these events were extremely successful, attracting over 430 people between them.

The Event

3. The event provides a one-stop-shop for people who are considering self-employment or who have recently started a business. A number of business support organisations will be attending and will provide a wide range of information and advice to potential entrepreneurs and to assist new businesses. In conjunction with the exhibition there will be a range of question and answer sessions, covering all aspects of self-employment, such as finance, law, marketing, franchising and financial assistance.
4. There will be a maximum of 20 exhibitors at the event representing the following five sectors:
 - (a) Finance – Banks and Building Societies
 - (b) Business Support – Darlington Borough Council, Darlington Business Venture and the Princes Trust
 - (c) Marketing – Public Relations, Printing and Design, Promotional Goods and Media
 - (d) Consumables – Computers, Copiers, Faxes and Telephones
 - (e) Legislation – Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue and Insurance.
5. The events generally attract an audience in excess of 100 people. On average, 40% of those attending follow up with appointments with Darlington Business Venture Business Advisors and 10% of these subsequently convert into real businesses.

6. The main costs attached to the event relate to advertising and marketing. Details are shown in the table below:

Detail	Cost (£)
Wrap-Around Advertising	2,905
Full Page Advert	1,625
Radio Advertising	980
Commercial Production	175
Leaflets & Distribution	650
Cheque Books	1200
Venue	400
Shell Stands	4,087
Refreshments & Carousel	650
Management & Organisation fee	1,328
Total	14,000

7. The event will be funded by Darlington Borough Council sponsorship of £12,000 and the other exhibitors contributing £2,000.
8. The conversion rate (i.e. people who attend the event and who go on to start their own business) equates to approximately 10 business started. With the event costing £14,000 this is equivalent to £1,400 per business start, which compares favourably with other business support schemes.
9. The funding necessary to enable the project to proceed can be provided from within the Economic Regeneration and Tourism Section's revenue budget.

Summary

10. The event provides potential entrepreneurs with a one-stop shop service for information and advice. Darlington Business Venture has a long-standing reputation for supporting business start-ups and for organising and running business start-up events

Outcome of Consultation

11. The Start Your Business Event is supported by Darlington's Community Strategy, One NorthEast's Regional Economic Strategy and by Business Link's Development Plan.

Legal Implications

12. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

13. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those

functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

14. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

Decision Deadline

15. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter

Recommendation

16. It is recommended that Members approve the sponsorship by the Council of the Start Your Business Event.

Reasons

17. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To enable the Start You Business Event to take place
 - (b) To provide residents of Darlington with the assistance and advice they require to establish their own businesses

John Buxton
Director of Development and Environment

Background Papers

A Community Strategy for the Future of Darlington

Suzanne Clark : Extension 2686
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