
BUILDING FUTURES

**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. The purpose of the report is to:
 - (a) seek endorsement for the Tees Valley Building Futures Project 2004 – 2009; and
 - (b) to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Hartlepool Borough Council as lead and accountable body for this initiative.

Information and Analysis

Background Information

2. The Tees Valley local authorities have been working together over the last two years to increase entry level training into the Construction Sector through an Intermediate Labour Market scheme. This joint application has been encouraged by the Tees Valley Partnership and the Learning Skills Council as a strategic initiative to meet skills shortages within the Construction Sector.

Building Futures Project

3. The Building Futures Project aims to develop employment and training initiatives within the Construction Sector, tackle unemployment and focus upon skills shortages and upskilling within this industry. It is developed to run in parallel with the increased demand for labour within the construction sector within the Tees Valley arising through Housing Stock Transfer within the other Tees Valley authorities and the major regeneration developments programmed to take place over the next 5 years. The timing of the initiative is crucial at a time when construction companies are beginning to source labour from Europe.
4. The project is managed by a partnership of the five Tees Valley Local Authorities, Construction Skills (formerly Construction Industry Training Board) Jobcentre Plus, and Learning Skills Council. The partnership will receive quarterly reports upon the project including outputs and financial management.
5. Building Futures will operate from March 2005 – March 2009, utilising funds of £2.48m from the Tees Valley Partnership Single Programme. These funds will cover officer costs and training allowances for beneficiaries. The Project will be delivered by Project Officers employed by Hartlepool Borough Council on behalf of the Tees Valley authorities. The

Project aims to:

- (a) encourage Small to Medium Sized Enterprises within the Construction Sector to provide training opportunities for young people not in education or work to gain onsite experience, training and accreditation,
 - (b) provide the long term unemployed that may have already achieved NVQ level 2 qualifications in construction sector skills to progress to NVQ level 3;
 - (c) provide one to one support and skills training to beneficiaries from entry level to high level construction craft skills;
 - (d) develop a progression route to sustained employment within the Construction sector and to meet skills shortages.
6. By 2009 it is anticipated that the Building Futures project will have created across the Tees Valley 545 jobs, 20 new businesses, 383 learning opportunities and 383 work based learning opportunities.

Financial management

7. Hartlepool Borough Council is the accountable body for this scheme. Darlington Borough Council is not required to put any funds into this scheme from 2005/06 – 2008/09 . The Council has contributed £3,000 towards the costs of employing the Project Officer in year 1. The Council is requested as a partner to find suitable office space when working out of Darlington. This can be accommodated within the Economic Regeneration & Tourism Section upon a rotational hot desk basis.
8. The role of the Council is to work with the Building Futures Project Officers (s) and work with local partners within Darlington to source potential training beneficiaries, training providers and public and private sector trainee placements.

Summary

9. It is truly strategic sub-regional initiative bringing the five local authorities, Learning Skills Council, former CITB (Construction Industry Training Board), Further Education Colleges and private sector training providers to work together to grow the local labour market in the construction sector, and to begin to address the skills shortage in this sector.

Outcome of Consultation

10. External consultees such as Learning Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, and the other Tees Valley local authorities are supportive of this initiative.

Legal Implications

11. 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

12. 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

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

Decision Deadline

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

Key Decisions

15. It is a key decision as the project is about to be approved by the Tees Valley Partnership and become operational across Darlington and the Tees Valley, and a Service Level Agreement needs to be in place with Hartlepool Borough Council.

Recommendation

16. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Members support the Tees Valley Building Futures Project 2004 – 2009;
 - (b) Members agree to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Hartlepool Borough Council as lead and accountable body for this initiative.

Reasons

17. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To encourage training opportunities for the unemployed of Darlington to gain entry level skills and experience within the Construction Sector, and progress to higher level skills training.
 - (b) To support the local economy by tackling the skills shortages of the Construction Sector through this intermediate labour market initiative.

John Buxton
Director of Development and Environment

Background Papers

- (i) Tees Valley Partnership Building Futures Single Programme Application
- (ii) Service Level Agreement with Hartlepool Borough Council

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