

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY
1 MARCH 2007

UPDATE – GLOBAL GRANTS

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on progress in the delivery of activities under the European funded Global Grants Programme, known as the ‘Exeter Positive Steps Fund.’

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On the 15 March 2005 Executive approved funding support as part of a bid to secure funding for Exeter from the European Global Grant programme. In October 2005, the Government Office South West approved the bid and, following negotiations, an initiative entitled Exeter Positive Steps Fund was launched in January 2006. The money from the Fund is available for allocation only to community and voluntary groups that help people of working age in Exeter, particularly those living in deprived wards, to improve their skills, build confidence and raise self-esteem, assisting them on the road to work and/or improve their earning potential.
- 2.2 A report to November Scrutiny Committee updated Members on the performance of the Fund. Initially the grants allocated from the Exeter Positive Steps Fund had been behind the anticipated profile. However, following a change in the method and delivery of outreach by Devon Community Foundation (DCF) the management and demand for grants had improved significantly.
- 2.3 A total of 15 projects had been approved for grant awards including 3 which had yet to be finally ratified by DCF. A summary of each one was reported to Members. In total £130,000 of grants had been allocated, added to which, applicants had secured a further £22,000 to the costs of delivering projects. A forecast number of 584 people will be supported by these projects.

3. UPDATE

- 3.1 By the end of January 2007, 24 projects have been supported with nearly £181,000 of grants allocated to groups for the delivery of projects. In addition, applicants had secured just over £51,000 towards costs. The forecast number of people supported by these projects had grown to 823. A summary of all the projects supported to date is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Recipients of grant awarded projects since November 2006 are summarised below.

Recommended projects reported at the November Scrutiny Committee

- a) Double Elephant Print Shop - £8,590
This project was reported at the November Committee, although at the time, it was only recommended and details of the recipient could not be revealed. It provides workshops to help a target group of 20 people who are either unemployed and/or offenders and are also

recovering from brain injuries. The workshops will help them to develop practical skills in the creative industries and improve their self-confidence to help them prepare for part-time employment or if not possible, voluntary work.

- b) Westbank League of Friends - £9,777
This project also recommended at the November Committee will provide training and support for 36 young carers who are isolated through home life and often disengaged from school. The project will run a series of workshops for three groups of 12 people to raise their confidence, improve IT skills, assist them in writing CV's and also in producing personal development plans that helps recognise their previous and newly acquired transferable skills.

- c) Spacex - £8,000
This project also recommended at the November Committee will provide training and support to enable 23 disadvantaged young people including those with basic skills, disabled or offenders to form and participate in a project management team to organise and deliver an event. The project will help the participants to understand their career options and also improve their skills in for example, teamwork, communication and budgeting.

New projects approved

- d) Exeter YMCA - £9,215
This project will support 50 offenders in custody at HMP Exeter and provide group activity and one-to-one support. Most prisoners have very low abilities in basic skills for life and many of them when they are released from custody will remain resident in Exeter. They will undertake a skills for life programme involving reading, writing and a range of interpersonal and communication skills. A significant number of participants are expected to go on and undertake other courses within the prison.
- e) Olive Tree - £6,591
This project will work with 16 women from black and minority ethnic backgrounds who have never held a regular job and lack self-esteem. They will follow a programme of self-development, improve their English Language speaking skills, learn practical skills in relation to textiles and sewing and be encouraged to establish a small business co-operative.
- f) Exeter Shilhay - £6,900
This project will work with 12 homeless people and seek to increase their skills for employment through a music production training programme. Two previous clients of Shilhay have devised the project and through links with Exeter College an accredited basic skills programme will be delivered. It will involve people that would not normally engage in any form of training, who will participate in twice weekly, 3-hour sessions over a 12-week programme.
- g) Wren Trust - £6,554
This project will work with 45 people from Newtown and St David's and users of the St. Sidwells Centre, whose first language is not English, who will be unemployed, have health problems or learning disabilities. Participants will plan and run musical activities, which will help them to work well in team environments and take up learning opportunities.

- h) Exeter Community Initiatives - £10,000
This project will run a programme of training courses for 20 people who are leaving care to ease their transition in becoming independent and help them to have improved levels of confidence, life skills and encourage them into further learning, volunteering and/or employment.
- i) Wolf & Water - £ 9,700
This project will target 24 young people working through schools, youth offending teams and those that are not in employment, education or training (NEET). Three 12 week structured music courses will aim to bring about changes in behaviour and help participants to gain skills through a choice of 3 levels of accreditation within the National Foundation for Youth Music. Participants will also learn basic working skills such as regular attendance and team working. The project also has the commitment of a previous beneficiary, who will be employed as a trainee and be a 'peer mentor' with the participants. Post completion of the courses, the project will continue to support participants.
- j) Refugee Support Group - £9,597
This project will support 10 women from black and ethnic minorities and whose language is not English. The project aims to reduce social isolation and also deliver an outreach programme of activity, which will improve self-confidence, develop English language speaking skills and signpost participants to opportunities in further education and training.
- k) Headway Devon - £7,355
This project will support 10 people who have suffered brain damage through a serious accident or illness. The project will start as a pilot dedicated employment service for adults in Exeter and will help to identify voluntary and/or paid work opportunities, work placements and/or training courses and also liaise with and support employers. The client group should achieve improved self-esteem and self-confidence to help them progress towards work opportunities.
- l) Exeter Foyer Residents' Association - £7,003
This project will support 52 young residents of a supported housing scheme by employing a part-time development worker for 12 months to work with the group to enable them to run their own association and management committee. This will result in the development of self-esteem, personal skills and accredited learning in active citizenship and community involvement.

Next Panel meeting

- m) Grant allocation - £9,555
This project will employ 3 part-time staff to work with 20 prolific offenders to improve their self-confidence and inter-personal skills and advise and support them in finding accommodation.
- n) Grant allocation – £6,650
This project will work with 10 people who are homeless and help them to improve their life skills, basic skills and self-confidence. Participants will participate in the completion of a radio broadcast in Exeter that provides them with valuable work experience and also receive help with the preparation of their CV.

- 3.3 In March 2007, to support groups that have been awarded grants for their projects, DCF are organising an event that will enable participants to network and meet a range of organisations in Exeter whose role is to help people find employment, for example Job Centre Plus, Next Steps, Exeter CVS and local recruitment agencies.
- 3.4 European funding for this programme ceases at the end of December 2007, the last date at which a grant can be awarded. DCF has been working with Officers and the private sector to establish a Community Fund to continue the work of this project. It is hoped that the focus and framework for delivery of such fund, will be similar in nature to that of the Global Grants Exeter Positive Steps Fund. A series of meetings to consider the establishment of such a Community Fund is being led by the private sector, supported by presentations by DCF and the Exeter CVS.
- 3.5 Following on from the lead taken by the City Council and the success of the Exeter Positive Steps Fund (managed on its behalf by DCF) and chaired by the City Council, Devon County Council have been working with the Foundation to extend the programme to the rest of the County (excluding Plymouth and Torbay). The County Council has committed £50,000 to the new programme, called the Devon Step Up Fund, with a further £50,000 currently under discussion. The Foundation is also contributing £70,000 from the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People, a programme it manages on behalf of the Department for Employment and Skills (DfES). The Devon Step Up Fund was launched in January this year and too will run until December 2007. The existing Exeter Positive Steps Fund panel, chaired by the City Council, has been asked to assess applications received.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Table 1 below summarises the amended funding contributions from the various partners to the project. A small funding shortfall of £9,500 identified in previous reports has remained unmet, which is still being pursued by DCF. Unfortunately, to date HSBC have been unable to release their full contribution to the Fund, as it will only be made available on a project-by-project basis and must have members of their staff actively participating within them. DCF have made presentations to HSBC staff and submitted project proposals, but no interest has been forthcoming. It seems unlikely that funding will be released as a consequence of this restriction, other than £7,500 released by HSBC in recognition of their attendance at Panel meetings and participation in project approval decision making. This means that the shortfall for the Fund has risen to £52,000 plus a loss of £42,500 ESF matched funding.

Table 1: Funding for the Exeter Positive Steps Fund – including management and outreach costs		
Organisation	Budget	Actual
Exeter City Council	£80,000	£80,000
Local Network Fund (DCF)	£70,000	£70,000
HSBC	£50,000	£7,500
Devon County Council	£15,000	£15,000
Independent Charitable Contributions	£11,500	£11,500
Other Funding	£9,500	£0
ESF Global Grant match funding	£193,000	£150,500
Total	£429,000	£334,500

- 4.2 To make good the shortfall, DCF have been in negotiations with a local organisation that may provide money to replace part of the gap in funding left without HSBC's finance. Any further funds secured to reduce the shortfall for the Fund will draw down 45% match from the European Social Fund (ESF), thus enhancing significantly money available for projects. To date, the average cost per individual supported by the Fund equates to around £220 per person.
- 4.3 The Economy and Tourism Unit has some £30,000 within its budget (2006/2007) for helping people in deprived wards to develop their skills and in view of the success to date of the programme, it would be appropriate that the City Council extend its funding support for this Global Grants Fund to help draw down the maximum amount of ESF monies for projects. The additional contribution of £30,000 would be spread over the next financial year and secure matched ESF money of £24,500.

5 RECOMMENDED that

- 5.1 Members note the report
- 5.2 That Members support the further release of £30, 000 from the Economy and Tourism Budget to support the deliver of the Fund and finance additional projects with ESF monies.

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HEAD OF ECONOMY AND TOURISM

ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers:

Global Grants report to Executive 15 March 2005

Global Grants reports to Scrutiny – Community and Economy

APPENDIX 1

Exeter Positive Steps Fund – grants awarded and people supported as at January 31st 2007.					
The rows shaded have been to the Panel since November report to this Committee					
Name of Applicant		Grant Awarded	Applicant's secured contribution	Total Project Costs	Number of people to be supported
1	Exeter Home Start	£3,111	£200	£3,311	12
2	CARD Training Project (ECI)	£7,060	£750	£7,810	30
3	St Petrocks	£10,000	£7,533	£17,533	60
4	Telephone Box Company	£4,750	£500	£5,250	15
5	Devon Development Education	£6,000	£2,525	£8,525	12
6	Exeter Forum Theatre	£9,300	£2,575	£11,875	35
7	Olive Tree	£8,922	£500	£9,422	35
8	Exeter CVS	£9,820	£5,300	£15,120	15
9	Age Concern	£2,500	£0	£2,500	250
10	Magic Carpet	£9,950	£0	£9,950	25
11	Ivy Project	£9,681	£0	£9,681	15
12	Ivy Project (individual)	£500	£295	£795	1
13	Double Elephant Print Shop	£8,590	£0	£8,590	20
14	Westbank League of Friends	£9,777	£0	£9,777	36
15	Spacex	£8,000	£2,000	£10,000	23
16	Exeter YMCA	£9,215	£1,295	£10,510	50
17	Olive Tree	£6,591	£1,000	£7,591	16
18	Exeter Shilhay	£6,900	£500	£7,400	12
19	Wren Trust	£6,554	£3,403	£9,957	45
20	Exeter Community Initiatives	£10,000	£0	£10,000	20
21	Wolf & Water	£9,700	£21,401.80	£31,101	24
22	Refugee Support Group	£9,597	£0	£9,597	10
23	Headway Devon	£7,355	£0	£7,355	10
24	Exeter Foyer Resident Association	£7,003	£2,000	£9,003	52
Total		£180,876	£51,777.80	£232,653	823