

ANGUS COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE – 30 SEPTEMBER 2014

**EAST OF SCOTLAND EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM (ESEC)
PROPOSAL FOR EXTENSION TO PERIOD AS HOST AUTHORITY**

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

The East of Scotland European Consortium is a well-established member organisation supporting the east coast local authorities on EU policy engagement and funding. It is proposed that Angus Council extends its role as host authority by a further two years to 31 March 2017.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee agree an extension of two years of the hosting of the ESEC secretariat by Angus Council until 31 March 2017.

2. BACKGROUND

Reference is made to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 28 February 2012 which authorised Angus Council to assume the role as host of the ESEC Secretariat from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2015.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 ESEC is serviced by a policy officer employed by a 'host' authority and funded through an annual subscription. The previous postholder left earlier in 2014 and a new officer started employment on 18 August 2014.

3.2 With new funding programmes awaiting EU approval and operational delivery mechanisms still to be agreed, ESEC will require to be actively participating in discussions and lobbying. Final details are unlikely to be available until late 2014.

3.3 As part of the annual ESEC workplan, members agreed to review the ESEC governance structure and the future of ESEC in 2014, however, due to the uncertainties in EU programmes and a period without a Policy Officer this year, this has been delayed. It is therefore proposed to extend the period of host authority by 2 years to allow for fuller discussion. In addition this would tie in to the local authority electoral cycle and allow elected members to remain on the ESEC Policy Board until pre election in April 2017.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 ESEC is funded through member authority annual contributions. This is currently £6,750 per annum per authority. These contributions are paid to ESEC but held by Angus Council on behalf of ESEC. All income and expenditure relating to ESEC is accounted for separately and any costs associated with the operation of ESEC are met in full from member contributions. Angus Council provides financial support services to ESEC and these costs are reimbursed by ESEC thus generating a small income for the Corporate Improvement & Finance Division.

4.2 ESEC currently has a general reserve balance as at 31 March 2014 of c. £83,000. This reserve would be used to fund any annual shortfall in net expenditure and any associated redundancy and/or pension payments should these occur.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective. An equalities impact assessment is not required.

7. CONCLUSION

ESEC provides an invaluable service to east coast local authorities and the hosting of the secretariat by Angus Council will ensure effective continuation of this and bring additional benefit to Angus.

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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