

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING
20TH DECEMBER 2007

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE 5TH DECEMBER 2007

BEWDLEY DEVELOPMENT TRUST REVIEW PANEL

The Bewdley Development Trust Review Panel was established by the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 7th November 2007 to establish a keener understanding of Bewdley Development Trust's role and its ability:

- To develop and manage community facilities in Bewdley.
- To develop and manage start-up businesses.
- To increase events based activity for Bewdley.
- To locally target training provision for adult and business learners.
- To develop a locally based carbon neutral energy supply.

The terms of reference for the Panel were to consider the role of Bewdley Development Trust in the regeneration of Bewdley and how the Council can improve partnership working with BDT, including sustainability and potential transfer of community assets.

The Panel noted that Bewdley Development Trust received funding from the Market Town Initiative funds between 2002 and 2006 and that the District Council was the "Accountable Body" for this funding. It was also noted that the Development Trust had secured funding from the Esmee Fairban Foundation which runs until January 2010 and that a condition of this funding is that a minimum of £15,000 is sought each year in match funding.

Bewdley Development Trust specified that their aim was to achieve self sufficiency and that in order for them to achieve this they needed a revenue generating asset.

Following discussion the Members felt that there could, potentially be, two Council-owned buildings in Bewdley that could be transferred to a community organisation, the British Red Cross Society Hall and the Guildhall.

Members noted that the updated Asset Management Plan would identify other buildings in the Council's portfolio that could potentially be suitable for community transfer and that the results of this exercise would be available in early 2008.

Bewdley Development Trust requested that the annual contribution it receives from the District Council be increased from £5,000 to £10,000.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

1. **The Council reaffirm its commitment to include a "community portfolio" in the proposed Asset Management Plan and pro-actively**

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promote Community Ownership by transferring appropriate assets to the community either freehold or long leasehold on “soft” terms.

- 2. The Quirk Review recommendations be endorsed relating to community management and ownership of public assets, which can be used as the basis of developing a policy led approach in implementing community asset transfer including The British Red Cross Society Hall and the Guildhall in Bewdley to the Bewdley Development Trust.**
- 3. The Cabinet be invited to confirm that it is minded to promote the disposal of community assets and open initial talks with the Bewdley Development Trust in respect of the British Red Cross Society Hall and the Guildhall, Bewdley.**
- 4. The funds allocated to Bewdley Development Trust from the District Council be increased from £5,000 to £10,000 per annum, to be considered as part of the budget process.**