

REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 19TH APRIL 2004
REPORT ON: FUNDING OF THE BUSINESS GATEWAY 2004-05
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
REPORT NO.: 290-2004

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the success of the Business Gateway and confirm the level of Council funding for the project.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree to fund the Business Gateway as detailed in the report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 A provision of £115,000 from the 2004/2005 revenue budget has been allocated.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Business Gateway as a publicly funded initiative will comply with all necessary local agenda 21 requirements.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Business Gateway has a written equal opportunities policy to the satisfaction of the council.

6 REPORT

6.1 The Committee will be aware that the City Council was a founding partner of the Business Shop Dundee Ltd. The Business Shop was amalgamated with Tayside's other Business Shops in Arbroath and Perth in 2001 to form the Small Business Gateway. That in turn changed in July 2003 into the Business Gateway for Tayside.

6.2 The three local authorities in Tayside in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Tayside fund the Business Gateway. The service provided by the Gateway has proved to be of good value over the past year, having achieved the following results for the 11 months to the end of February 2004:-

- new business start-ups - 612 in Tayside (252 in Dundee)
- information enquiries - 19,464 throughout Tayside (7326 from Dundee Companies)
- start-ups in SIPS areas – 35 (all in Dundee)
- start-ups by women – 207 (84 in Dundee)
- start-ups by under 26 year olds – 52 (26 in Dundee)
- high growth start-ups - 14 (8 in Dundee)
- existing business assists – 121 in Dundee
- community based marketing activities – 10 in Dundee

6.3 Performance targets have already been agreed for the year 2003/4, including:-

- new business start-ups – 670 (285 in Dundee)
- start-ups in SIPS areas – 30 (all in Dundee)
- start-ups by women – 218 (93 in Dundee)
- start-ups by under 30 year olds – 100 (43 in Dundee)
- high growth start-ups – 15 (6 in Dundee)

6.4 It is proposed therefore to continue funding the Gateway in 2004/05 at the existing level i.e. an overall contribution of £115,000, £45,000 of which is the rent for the property at 19 King Street, Dundee, and £70,000 of which is a contribution towards staff and marketing.

6.5 The change to the Business Gateway in July 2003 was carried out smoothly with no adverse reaction for clients. The Gateway is now the first point of contact for businesses that require business advice with enquiries referred on to the relevant agency.

7 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

DOUGLAS A A GRIMMOND
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DATE: 12TH APRIL 2004