

2 E-CITIES INDEX (AN 17-2002)

Dundee as one of the five Scottish Cities has been invited by Business Lab Ltd, a research company in electronic and new business to participate in a three year 'E-Cities Index project'. this will determine how Dundee compares to the other Scottish Cities and to the best practice worldwide on the following themes:-

- E Business
- E Learning
- E Communities
- E Government

In order to fund this ambitious project, each City has been asked to contribute £10,000 for each of the Cities to match the Councils' contributions and they will also recruit theme partners for each of the four themes who will between them contribute £50,000 per annum.

To date, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Compaq and BT have confirmed their participation and interest has been expressed by Scottish Enterprise as a possible theme partner. In addition, two other private sector companies have been invited to join as sponsors. St Andrew's University will provide the academic research underpinning the work to be done.

Therefore, for a contribution of £10,000, the Council would benefit from a project with an annual budget of £150,000.

This project has been under development for the last six months and funding has been allocated from the 2001/2002 revenue budgets for this project.

The details for the proposal have only just been confirmed, as has the participation of the other Scottish Cities. It was not possible therefore to place this matter before the Economic Development Committee before the end of March which meant a Chief Officer's approval was necessary to enable the funding to be committed in the 2001/2002 financial year.

It has been made clear to Business Lab and the partners that participation by the City Council beyond the first year is dependant on the results obtained and the availability of finance in the years' ahead. they have confirmed that this is acceptable to them.

On that basis, the Convener and the Opposition spokespersons were consulted and it was agreed that the City Council would participate in the project and the Committee is requested to note this position.