

report



meeting	Administration Committee		
date	30 June 2004	agenda item number	

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR REGENERATION, LEARNING, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

ACTE Association of European Textile Communities

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To recommend approval for
 - a) the County Council to host an ACTE Executive meeting on 2/4 October 2004
 - b) attendance at certain ACTE activities in 2004/05.

Background and Objectives of ACTE

2. ACTE is a non-profit making Association established in 1991 at Guimareas, in Portugal which brings together more than 40 local administration bodies in 8 European countries and Croatia. ACTE has become established as a prime European player and an active, dynamic association which has grown constantly in representing and defending the interests of a highly concentrated sector.
3. ACTE's principal objectives are to promote economic development, employment, the reciprocal opening up of international markets, business competitiveness and local production.
4. ACTE maintains that the contemporary textile-clothing industry enhances culture, creativity and innovation, which are rooted in European companies and areas. Its aim is that of encouraging the adoption of European policies aimed at modernising the sector in a competitive context and promoting ties of co-operation and partnerships among European companies and textiles areas.

5. Since its emergence, the activities carried out by ACTE have been numerous, both at a political level throughout a number of policy statements and at a local level, with development programmes, of economic, social or cultural character.
6. Strong links have been formed with the members, which have provided useful networks and information. The ACTE delegate based in Brussels has created a contact linked with the EU and who provides information on a regular basis on current and potential projects plus other topical news e.g. a report on the World Trade summit in Cancun, meetings with commissioners etc. the information from ACTE's activities is disseminated and made available to companies.
7. The Petition on International Trade, an accumulation of two years work, was presented to Commissioner Lamy in Brussels November 02 it was then developed into work on Fair Trade and the EU enlargement. The NICC has also, through ACTE, been invited on numerous occasions to present its work to European members and promote the Nottinghamshire textile/clothing industry.
8. Nottinghamshire County Council has made strong representations at meetings on its views regarding the industry sector and Europe. It made a strong case regarding the Made in Europe label and felt that countries should be able to keep their branding identities and this proposal was accepted by the members. It has also submitted proposals toward the local strategic plans.
9. Councillor Chris Winterton is currently the UK Vice-President of ACTE and Aija Gagans acts as the UK National Co-ordinator for ACTE.
10. Further work is currently being developed to create a network of activity and resources with the Member states through European projects. The Nottinghamshire International Clothing Centre will participate in a trans-national Project.

Matters for Consideration

a) ACTE Executive meeting October 2004

11. ACTE holds regular General Assembly and Executive meetings to achieve and promote the objectives. These meetings are hosted by different member countries and since Nottinghamshire County Council's admittance to the organisation in 2000 no meetings have been hosted in Nottinghamshire. The ACTE Committee have expressed that they would like the opportunity to visit Nottinghamshire.

12. The proposed meeting is for 2nd/4th October 2004 and it is anticipated that delegates would arrive Saturday (to take advantage of APEX fares) with a programme of activities, to promote Nottinghamshire, to be arranged for Sunday, the meeting to take place on the Monday.

13. The approximate costs associated with the meeting are as follows;

Lunch x 30 @ £25 =	750
Dinner x 40 @ £35 =	1,400 (allowing for County Council guests)
Gifts x 30 @ £10 =	300
Room Hire =	1000 (venue to be determined)
Miscellaneous items =	810 (contingency built in for possible under estimates)
Total	£4260

All of the costs will be met from the International Clothing Centre budget within the Economic Development Portfolio.

b) attendance at ACTE activities

14. Work is currently being developed to create a network of activity and resources with the Member states. Aija Gagans is currently undertaking work on a PAN European bid through Intereg 111C with other ACTE members.

15. Resulting from this, ACTE holds regular General Assembly/Executive meetings to achieve and promote the objectives. The General Assembly meeting will be held in Sabadell Spain in July and as described above, the October meeting will be held in Nottinghamshire. Proposed dates are 2nd/4th October 2004. Further dates are yet to be advised, although it is known that there are likely to be 4 meetings and a possible extra-ordinary meeting.

16. These meetings would usually be attended by Councillor Winterton plus an officer. Where possible, ACTE offer to reimburse the cost of accommodation and expenses at such meetings for Councillor Winterton and flight costs are kept to a minimum. A further 400 Euros are reimbursed annually for Councillor Winterton on proof of receipts for activities undertaken on behalf of ACTE. The officer's costs are met from her/his Department's budget.

17. For the Sabadell meeting, Councillor Warner's attendance is likely to be £720, to be met as follows:-

£480 International Clothing Centre
£240 from the Members' Conferences budget
within Economic Development Portfolio.

The costs associated with the remaining meetings are not yet known. In each case, they will be met from a combination of the ICC and Economic Development Members' Conferences budget.

Statutory and Policy Implications

This Committee is responsible for appointing Member attendance at conferences under the Travel and Conference policy and for the provision of hospitality. Although the hospitality costs are to be met by Economic Development, the amount is above the limit which can be approved under delegated powers and approval is therefore necessary from this Committee. Those attending the meetings referred to in section (b) of the report will be reminded of the need to observe the Travel and Conference policy, so that safety, financial and other issues can be considered when making final bookings.

The report refers to reimbursement of Councillor Winterton's expenses by ACTE. The Members' Allowances Scheme Indicates that, where this occurs, the claimant may not also claim under the County Council's Scheme.

Officer attendance at the meetings is a matter for agreement/approval within the individual's department where travel to Europe is for a maximum of 4 days/3 nights. The details in respect of officer attendance are therefore presented for information only.

Recommendation

- a) That approval be given for the County Council to host an ACTE Executive meeting in October 2004, with the cost being met as described in the report.
- b) That Councillor Winterton be authorised to attend up to 5 ACTE meetings during 2004/5.

Nigel Hamshere

Assistant Director, Regeneration, Learning, Skills and Employment.

Director of Resources Financial Comments(C.C)(P.B)

The total cost to the County Council of attending the General Assembly in Sabadell Spain is estimated at £720 and will be funded £480 from the International Clothing Centre and £240 from the members' conferences budget within the Economic Development Portfolio. There is a separate report on the agenda covering the costs and funding of the meeting to be held in Nottinghamshire.

Legal Services' Comments

The Administration Committee has the delegated authority under paragraph 11.2 of the Constitution to approve Members' attendance at conferences and seminars and travel abroad in accordance with the Council's Travel and Conference Policy. (JA 20.05.04)

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Background Papers Available for Inspection

- Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting, Biella 2003

Electoral Divisions Affected

All.