

report



meeting Administration Committee

date 21 September 2005

agenda item number

Report of the Assistant Director, Regeneration

ACTE Association of European Textile Communities

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for attendance of one member and one officer for the following ACTE activity on 21st November in Varazdin, Croatia.

Information and Advice

Background and Objectives of ACTE

2. ACTE is a non-profit making Association set up in 1991 at Guimareas, Portugal and brings together more than 50 local authorities within textile/clothing regions in Spain, Italy, France, Portugal, Belgium, UK, Croatia and Greece.

The General Assembly of Igualada in July 2005 also approved memberships from the Consell Comarcal de l'Anoia, the Consorci de la Vall del Ges, Oris i Bisaura in Spain, the City Halls of Lodz, Tuszyn, Piotrkow Trybunalski, Tomoszow Mazowiecki in Poland, the City Hall of Verviers in Belgium, the Provincias de Milano, Macerata Novara, y Pistoia in Italy.

3. ACTE's aims are to encourage European policies to be adopted in order to modernise the sector within a competitive environment and create links and partnerships between European companies and textiles regions.
4. The activities carried out by ACTE have been numerous, both at a political level through a number of policy statements and at a local level through economic, social/cultural development programmes.

5. Cllr Chris Winterton is currently the UK Vice-President of ACTE and Aija Gagans acts as the UK National Co-coordinator for ACTE.
6. ACTE, through an invitation from the European Commission, is participating in the High Level Group on the future of textiles after the enlargement of the EU and the liberalisation in 2005. ACTE is leading a working group on regional policy.

The meeting of the High Level Group on the textile and clothing sector on 14 June 2005 was attended by the Commissioners Verheugen (Enterprise and Industry), Mandelson (Trade) and Potocnik (Science and Research). ACTE was represented by its President, Mr. Jean Pierre Perdieu, who presented the actions made by ACTE and its members in the field of regional policy: the EOS and Regiotex projects, the strategic plans and the project "Preparatory actions for the attendance of workers of the textile sector". In addition, the ACTE President asked the Commission representatives to boost aid to regions affected by the current crisis of the sector.

The HLG called on the national authorities to soften the negative impacts of the restructuring of the textile industry by offering new opportunities for modernisation and social relief to the hardest-hit regions. The Commission recommended continuing work at Sherpas level with a view to present new recommendations by the end of the year. The next meeting of the Sherpas is scheduled for 27 September 2005.

7. Resulting from this ACTE holds regular General Assembly/ Executive meetings to achieve and promote the objectives. The next Executive meeting is planned to be held in Varazdin, Croatia in November 2005. The Executive meeting will include a meeting with the Croatian Minister of Economy and with different Croatian cities that are interested in joining ACTE.
8. Where possible, ACTE offer to reimburse the cost of accommodation and expenses at such meetings for Cllr Winterton and flight costs are kept to a minimum. A further 400 Euros are reimbursed annually for Cllr Winterton on proof of receipts for activities undertaken on behalf of ACTE. Meals within the programme for the officer are met by ACTE.

9. **Costs**

The approximate costs associated with each meeting are as follows based on a three/ four day stay depending on flight times:

Description	Amount
Flights from Manchester (cheapest available fare) approx.	£160 per person

Subsistence	£17 per day per member
Accommodation	£90 maximum for officer per night
Travel to and from airport	£60 approx. per person
Car parking	£36

The total cost for the member, per meeting, will be approximately £324 and £526 for the officer whose costs will be met through the NICC budget. The member costs that are not reimbursed will be funded from the members' conference budget.

Statutory and Policy Implications

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, Crime and Disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material; they have been described in the text of the report.

Recommendation

11. It is recommended that approval be given for Councillor Winterton and one accompanying officer to the next Executive meeting in Croatia.

Director of Resources' Financial Comments

12. The financial implications are as outlined in the report. (CC/PB 25.8.05)

Legal Services' Comments

13. The Administration Committee has the delegated authority under the Constitution to approve Members' attendance at conferences and seminars and travel abroad in accordance with the Council's Travel and Conference Policy. (JA 23.08.05)

Date decision becomes effective

14. If approved, this decision will become effective on the sixth working day after it is published on the Decision Log system.

Nigel Hamshere
Assistant Director, Regeneration
(Contact Officer: Aija Gagans)

Background Papers Available for Inspection

- Minutes of the **Igualada** General Assembly
- Igualada Declaration
- High Level Working Group results

Electoral Divisions Affected

All