

7. HUB INITIATIVE - SCOTTISH FUTURES TRUST

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Property Services advising members of the progress made to date with the Hub Initiative and seeking agreement for the Blackburn Partnership Centre to be included in the first group of projects for the Hub Company to deliver.

A report on the principles of the Hub had been presented to the Council in 2009 when it was agreed that West Lothian would continue to participate in the Hub until summer 2010 when a decision would be required on whether West Lothian would continue to participate in a longer term partner in the project.

The report outlined the claimed benefits of the Hub model.

The Head of Property Services reported that Scottish Futures Trust was currently working through the European Community process of advertising for and procuring the private sector partner required to create and drive forward the South East Territory Pathfinder Hub Company. This required participants in the Territory to commit to the first group of projects to be delivered by the Hub Company.

West Lothian Council was being asked to agree that, if it eventually decided to participate in Hub, then Blackburn Partnership Centre would definitely be included as an early project for delivery by the new Hub Company. In doing so, the incentive to the Council was that the project would then attract an additional £1.6 - £1.8 million from the Government's "enabling" fund for the Hub Initiative specifically for the Blackburn Project.

It was recommended that:-

1. the Council continued to participate in the Hub Initiative
2. Blackburn Partnership Project was included in the first group of projects to be delivered by the Hub Company.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.