



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

one Derby one council

RT Hon Eric Pickles MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local
Government
House of Commons
London
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Your ref
Our ref
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Date 16 September 2010

Dear Mr Pickles

Derwent NDC Programme

I write to you on behalf of the Derby City Council's Resources Overview and Scrutiny Commission and seek your help and support to enable us to complete the Derwent New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme in Derby. To draw the scheme to its natural conclusion, Derwent NDC requires access to the remaining £3.75 million pound funding that was awarded to the city and an extension until 30 September 2011 and an early decision please by 30 September.

You will be aware Derwent New Deal for Communities programme is one of 39 community led regeneration programmes in England. The resident led board, which is responsible for the NDC, was created in 2000 to oversee the delivery of the scheme in a very deprived area of Derby. It is one of the few NDC's that has had a resident led approach from the very beginning and fits in neatly with the Governments blue print for the 'big society'.

Like all NDC areas, Derwent suffers from the effects of multiple deprivation including poor health, high levels of unemployment and anti social behaviour. However local residents, together with service providers, have improved the area and done a great deal to improve the quality of life for local people.

Derwent NDC has not been without its challenges. The programme was intended to be experimental and a new way of working. However, the resident ownership and management of the assets has not delivered the long term sustainable results that were expected. This has caused civil servants from Government Office for the East Midlands and national Department for Communities and Local Government to raise questions. Whilst the NDC has responded and has completed revised delivery plans, recovery plans and has been subject to review by Local Improvement Advisors, the NDC is no further forward in delivering a sustainable conclusion to the programme. As a direct consequence of the 15 month delay, there is now insufficient time to complete the scheme before the official end date of the 31st March 2011. This is the reason why the NDC requires an extension. However, whilst we estimate that the programme could be completed within an



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additional 6 month period, this will depend on when, or if, the NDC is granted approval and is able to begin delivering its objectives.

There are enormous benefits to the residents in completing the programme. The board members have learnt from previous errors and have worked tirelessly to restructure the programme and, in partnership with the Local Authority, develop a viable succession strategy. All the residents are volunteers and have invested thousands of unpaid hours in developing strategy documents and attending meetings with officers, including civil servants, who are responsible for the NDC within CLG. The residents are passionate about completing the programme and leaving a sustainable legacy in place, but recognise that this can only be achievable if the £3.75m is released and they are granted an extension.

By releasing the additional funding the NDC will be able to complete its succession strategy. This involves developing a community health and fitness facility at the Gateway Centre in Derby. This project was intended to develop an inclusive community health facility to target those residents with the poorest health. Similarly, the Revive Centre was to become a base to deliver vital support services for children and families in the greatest need in Derwent. Remaining funding was to be spent on delivering affordable accommodation for families. All of these projects are vital to the future success of the scheme.

Without the funding, the NDC will not have a legacy and the hard work and dedication shown by the residents of Derwent, will amount to nothing. If the extension and funding are not approved, there will not be a legacy and, instead of having a viable succession strategy and assets that will continue to benefit local people, the NDC will be forced to develop close the programme. This will undoubtedly involve selling buildings that were intended to house services that would meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents.

There is a cross party support from the Council in seeing this programme through to a successful completion. I do hope that you will consider this request and release the outstanding grant and giving us six month extension to complete the programme.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should wish to discuss this matter in further detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Naitta". The signature is stylized with a large initial 'N' and a trailing period.

Councillor Joe Naitta – Chair of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Commission