



***Proposal
to support the recruitment
and induction of a Director
for the Northstowe Trust***

**for South Cambridgeshire District Council
from the Development Trusts Association**

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***the
Pool***

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the DTA's consultancy service

The Development Trusts Association

transforming communities for good

The Development Trusts Association (DTA) helps people set up development trusts, and helps existing trusts learn from each other and work effectively. Development trusts are community organisations using self-help, enterprise, and asset ownership, to find local solutions and transform their community for good. The DTA also influences government and others at national and local level, to build support and investment for the movement.

The DTA is the leading network of community enterprise practitioners, and is aiming for a successful development trust in every community. There are now over 440 development trusts in DTA membership, in both urban and rural areas. While many are still small, others are operating at scale: the combined turnover is £200m and development trusts have £350m of assets in community ownership.

The Pool - the DTA's Consultancy Service

The Development Trusts Association has a very special asset within its staff, members and wider contacts - a wealth of grassroots expertise and knowledge of community regeneration, asset development and cultivating local enterprise.

We have recently launched a new form of consultancy that taps into this fabulous resource and makes it available to the public sector, regeneration agencies and private developers. Directed by Jess Steele with the support of an experienced multi-talented advisory group, the consultancy offers an uncompromising quality of advice and support for central, regional and local government, public agencies, the private sector and everyone with an interest in the holistic regeneration of neighbourhoods.

The special experience available in and around the development trust movement focuses on community regeneration, community assets and community enterprise. We are currently managing the Advancing Assets programme for CLG, involving support to 20 local authority areas to develop fair and accountable frameworks for asset transfer from local government to local communities. We are also leading the CREATE Consortium's work funded by Hadley Trust on proposals for a Community Allowance to help residents undertake community work without losing their benefits.

DTA consultancy services include:

- The preparation, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community enterprise and assets projects and programmes.
- Capacity assessments, capacity building, governance advice, visioning/prioritisation
- A 'Constructive Review' service offering a self-contained review of your project or policy proposals using the collective intelligence of selected experts from our expert panel.
- An independent mentoring support service for senior staff in public, voluntary and social enterprise organisations within the neighbourhoods sector.

The Challenge

South Cambridgeshire DC has been supporting the establishment of a development trust to play a key role in the future local management of the new town of Northstowe.

SSDC has committed £25,000 and other partners (Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Horizons and the Developers) have all committed to investing an initial £25,000, to match the SCDC contribution, providing an initial budget for the first year of £100,000.

We have been asked to provide a proposal to offer guidance in the recruitment, induction and ongoing support of an Interim Trust Director to establish a flexible trust structure and board and produce a Trust business and development plan within 6-9 months.

Key aspects of this support could include:

- Drawing up the job description, person specification and role information pack
- Refining the personal profile
- Advice on salary levels and other benefits
- Advice on recruitment/head-hunting channels
- Preparation of interview questions and recruitment tests/challenges
- Serving on the interview panel, and/or providing a separate analysis (perhaps through telephone interview) before or after formal interviews
- Providing a tailored induction package to the successful candidate to ensure that they are able to 'hit the ground running'
- Providing a mentoring and support service for the first 6-12 months, utilising some of our most experienced associates

OR

- Providing an independent appraisal service to the board (not appropriate if a mentoring relationship is established)

Our approach

The Pool's unique resource is the diverse experience and expertise of our members. We are currently being asked by several new trusts for advice and support in selecting and supporting directors, particularly where trusts are established 'from above' by local authorities or developers rather than emerging from community activism. An example which shares characteristics with Northstowe is the North Shropshire Community Assets Trust where we are acting as a specialist adviser on several aspects, including recruitment of the trust's first director.

1. Defining the Role

Work with stakeholders to define the job description, person specification, key tasks, and skills/experience profile. Provide clear background information to prospective candidates on the challenges and the potential of the trust. Advise on salary levels and other benefits, including relocation allowance. Consider flexibilities (eg secondment? job-share? etc).

2. Attracting a strong field

Facilitate a competitive process that does not depend on traditional recruitment advertising. Prepare material that 'speaks the right language' to attract strong candidates. Advise on channels for advertising the post, including DTA membership networks. Undertake some targeted head-hunting within the development trust movement and our wider contacts, including in sustainable development.

3. Selecting the right person

Support with preparing for interviews, including a pre-panel briefing. Ideas for tests or 'challenges' that could be set in advance. Undertake telephone interviews to provide detailed background assessment, and/or provide someone from the Pool to serve on the interview panel. Provide detailed feedback to shortlisted candidates.

4. Supporting the new director

Plan and deliver an intensive induction programme for the new director, tailored according to their prior experience and identified development needs. Offer a choice of three senior mentors for the new director to provide advice and peer support over 6-12 months.

Timescale

To be advised by the client. We understand that the recruitment process should begin soon and that it is imperative to have someone in post by April 2008 if at all possible. In planning such a process, it is important to recognise how career timeframes differ from project management cycles - the best people often need a long lead-in period because they have other commitments to meet first. This can sometimes be addressed through a step-up start period or may be solvable through a temporary secondment.

Resources Required

The resource required will depend on the agreed level of support and involvement from the Pool in preparation, recruitment, selection and support. Our day rate for senior associates is £650/day plus VAT. To maintain quality, all contracts require one day of contract management and one day of contract administration as standard (ie £900).

A minimum service - encompassing telephone/email advice, limited head-hunting, serving on the interview panel and a short tailored induction programme - could be expected to take around 7 days (ie less than £5,000 plus VAT). A more intensive process whereby we 'get alongside' the stakeholders to provide the approach detailed above, including a mentoring service, would require an investment in the order of £12,000 plus VAT. An initial briefing meeting to agree the scope of the work programme could be followed by a firm price quote. Client satisfaction is of paramount importance to us and we would be willing to negotiate a performance-related element to the fees.