

Agenda Item 5

Long term support and funding for the NPF: Report for information

The NPF executive has reviewed the need for long term funding and support for the Forum. For 2003/4, the Forum received 10K from the ODPM, matched by the LGA. In addition the LGA offered considerable back up amounting to more than one man/day week. The Secretary, retained on a one day/week basis is attached to the TCPA which offers admin and bookkeeping services. No dedicated project fund has been secured although the Forum has been pleased to attract funding for particular initiatives from the British Property Federation among others.

For the current financial year, the ODPM has maintained the 10K support but cannot offer any guarantees beyond march next year. The LGA has had to reduce support to 2K and although the 'in kind' support continues, this will be at a reduced level to reflect other work pressures. All this at a time when the work of the Forum is building.

It is evident that for effective and timely action, the best arrangement is for the Forum to be more self-supporting. Accordingly, Executive has agreed to submit a bid to the ODPM Special Grants Programme for a three year package of support for a full time secretary and a very small fund for commissioning scoping studies. If the bid is successful then the new arrangements can be put in place by next summer. To support the bid, the NPF will need to demonstrate that it is able to attract finance and support 'in kind' from other sources-in particular other than public finance. This is a challenge to which we must rise.