

Members' Library Service Request Form

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Document Title	The Industrial Communities Alliance

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East Lothian Council

Additional information:

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Date	12/07/12

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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

DATE:

BY: Executive Director (Support Services)

SUBJECT: The Industrial Communities Alliance

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the Alliance and background to the Council's renewed membership.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 East Lothian Council was a long-term member of the Alliance until 2011, when it left due to financial considerations. East Lothian's interest focused on the recognised ex-coalfield areas around Tranent, Prestonpans and parts of Musselburgh. Cllr Donald Grant represented the Council at regional and national meetings.
- 3.2 The Alliance is an all-party association representing local authorities in the present and former coal mining, steel and textile areas of England, Scotland and Wales. It remains a national UK lobbying organisation. Alliance Scotland takes the lead in relations with the Scottish Government and works with the British national body in making representations to the Westminster government and the EU institutions.
- 3.3 The aims of the Alliance are to:-
- Articulate the needs of traditional industrial areas.
 - Attract resources for regeneration.
 - Press for balanced growth within and between regions.
 - Provide a framework for information sharing and collaboration.

3.4 Industrial communities are the heart and heritage of Scotland. But they have been deeply affected by recessions and economic restructuring. A range of economic, physical and social factors have contributed to long-term persistent issues:-

- Poor job prospects
- A decaying physical environment
- Health inequalities
- Poor housing
- Low skills

3.5 The role of the Alliance is to ensure that these problems are highlighted and are addressed by key players in Edinburgh, London and Brussels.

3.6 Alliance Scotland's priorities are:-

- Re-balancing Scotland's economy towards industry.
 - A revival in industrial investment and production is a key part of what the economy needs to restore balanced growth.
 - A new emphasis on industry would be particularly beneficial to many of Scotland's industrial communities where a significant amount of manufacturing continues to take place and provides jobs for local people.
- Worklessness and job creation.
 - It is vital to ensure that local people are able to develop the skills and work experience to take up job opportunities as they arise. There continues to be a need for meaningful work experience linked to on-the-job training. A job creation programme which sits alongside more conventional economic development activities.
- Effective targeting and distribution of resources.
 - Scotland's industrial communities need access to a wide range of resources to address their significant and on-going difficulties.

3.7 There is also an established Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament. The Group plays a key role in Alliance lobbying. The Group provides an effective channel of communication with MSPs and the Scottish Government. It meets quarterly and provides a platform from which to pursue issues of concern.

3.8 The annual membership fee for East Lothian is £3,388 per annum.

3.9 Renewing membership with appropriate elected member and officer support will provide an opportunity for sharing best practice, informing and influencing employability and other economic development policy, and lobbying at national and European level.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equality groups and an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Financial** – within existing Economic Development budget.

6.2 **Personnel** – none

6.3 **Other** – none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 <http://www.industrialcommunitiesalliance.org/index.html>

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