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**Press Release 08/06/09**

## **RDA Confirms Funding for Developments in East Devon**

Today the South West RDA pledged its continued support for the major developments East of Exeter by standing by its funding commitments despite heavy cuts in its capital budget\*.

Today's announcement was welcomed by the Exeter and East Devon New Growth Point partnership who are driving forward the developments in East Devon, these include the Exeter Science Park, Flybe Skills Academy, Cranbrook and Skypark.

Commenting on news Councillor Peter Halse, EDDC's Portfolio Holder Economy said: "This is a massive vote of confidence for the credibility of the work we and our partners are doing to the east of Exeter."

Early this year the RDA announced that their budget was under considerable pressure and that they would be undertaking a complete review of their investment plan. Despite a £56 million shortfall today's announcement confirms a sizeable £260 million investment in the southwest over the next two years.

Councillor Peter Halse went on to say "Through no fault of their own, the RDA have less money to invest in the coming years. Against that backdrop, it's all the more heartening that they are keeping faith with the projects that we and our partners have been working so hard to initiate."

As well as confirming their continued investment in Exeter Science Park and the East of Exeter Skills Academy, today's announcement also confirms the RDA's allocation of the Regional Infrastructure Fund for the improvements to junction 29 and the new Cranbrook Railway station.

Councillor Graham Brown, EDDC's Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder Environment, said: "The Regional Infrastructure Fund is modelled on the package that includes Cranbrook, with its vital element of affordable housing; the transport hub; the Flybe Skills Academy; Exeter Science Park and Skypark. We know only too well that we have the skills and the will to deliver, but that counts for nothing without the tools – and that includes the all-important funding. Once public funds have been committed to a package like this, the aim of confidence will grow and we can look forward with more confidence to the private sector doing their bit".

The South West RDA, have also pledged their continued support for the New Growth Point Delivery Team - providing additional capacity for a professional team to manage the Growth Area Projects.

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### **Notes to editors**

\* In a report issued today, the SW RDA confirms that despite a £56 million hole in its capital budget to 2011, it will maintain its commitment to:

The Regional Infrastructure Fund that will help finance Cranbrook station and the M5 Junctions 29 and 30, plus the Clyst Honiton By-pass and a new primary school to the tune of £10 million-plus;

Funding of up to £19 million for the proposed Exeter Science Park;

Funding of around £3 million towards the cost of the proposed Flybe Skills Academy scheduled to be built next year with additional funding from the Learning and Skills Council;

Continued funding for the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point Delivery Team, who are project managing the multi-faceted initiative.

### **For more information:**

<http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/news/release.asp?ReleaseID=2997>

### **New Growth Points**

A New Growth Point is a Partnership initiative between the Government and local authorities wishing to pursue large scale sustainable growth.

Exeter and East Devon New Growth Point is a partnership commitment between Devon County Council, Exeter City Council, East Devon District Council, The South West Regional Development Agency and the Government to deliver sustainable economic growth. Exeter and East Devon was recognised by the Government as a New Growth Point in 2006.

Further information about New Growth Points and Partnership for Growth with the Government, can be found at:

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/newgrowthpoints](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/newgrowthpoints)