

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	24 May 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Applications for funding from the International Twinning Budget 2011-12
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/11/136

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to bring before the Committee applications for financial assistance from the International Twinning Budget 2011-12 and to make recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure Committee recommend approval of the following grants from the International Twinning Budget 2011-12 :

- a. £2,050 towards the cost of the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group visit to Gomel, Belarus from 5th-12th October 2011
- b. £1,940 towards the cost of Jazz Scotland participating at the Regensburg Jazz Festival 14th-17th September 2011.
- c. £3,600 towards the cost of Stavanger Vocalensemble participating at the Sound festival from 10th-13th November 2011.
- d. £1,950 towards the participation of the Havard Holland Gallery, Stavanger and the Ostwestkunst Gallery, Regensburg at the Inaugural Aberdeen Art Fair, Aberdeen Music Hall, 12th-14th August 2011.
- e. £4,700 towards the participation of Vardeneset BK Stavanger at the inaugural Aberdeen International Festival of Football, 18th-22nd July 2011.

These awards will only be made following confirmation that the proposed visit or event is going ahead.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full Council approved the International Twinning Budget for 2011-12 of £137,350 at its meeting of 10th February 2011. The approved budget from the Common Good Fund, provides approx £90,000 of monies towards the support of twinning projects and/or visits.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Health and Safety: The health and safety implications of all visits are taken into account during planning, with any exceptional implications to be addressed at the time of application.

Officers regularly review the travel advice provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and are in close contact with counterpart officers in the twin cities to ensure information provided to participants is accurate and up-to-date.

Participants are offered comprehensive pre-visit briefings by the relevant officer and have the opportunity to ask questions and request support. When participating in overseas visits, Council employees are covered by the Council's insurance policy while non-Council employees are advised to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. The relevant officer carries out a risk assessment process for officer and Elected Member travel on twin city initiatives.

Risk Management: Long established community links will not be maintained without support from the international budget and people in Aberdeen would lose a wide range of opportunities to engage effectively with the international community.

In addition, incoming visitors to the city on twin city projects support the local economy through their use of the hospitality and retail sectors in particular, and it is important to build on this added value.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The following applications to the International Twinning Budget 2011-12 have been received for consideration:

a. Application from the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group to travel to Gomel, Belarus to participate in English teaching projects with schools 10 & 71, to deliver teaching materials to schools 10,71 & 60 and Gomel Children's Centre and to maintain links and develop further relationships following the success of the visit initiated in October 2010.

During the proposed visit to Gomel from 5-12th October 2011, the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group will undertake a number of joint projects in conjunction with Linguistic schools 10 & 71, Gomel City Council, Gomel State Children's Centre , Aberdeen Gomel Trust, Gomel University and Gomel Association of Children & Youth.

These projects include:

- talks on Scouting in Aberdeen

- presentation on the Aberdeen-Gomel Twinning Link
- visit to Gomel Central Market
- visits to local museums & galleries
- discussion and teaching on the Scottish language
- presentation on a typical school day in Gomel
- food experience including recipes, samples and dining out
- signature of an agreement between the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group and pupils from Gomel Schools
- media activity to promote the visit in Gomel and Aberdeen's twinning relationship

By participating in this programme, the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group will continue the promotion and development of the twinning link, in particular between young people in schools 10 & 71 and provide assistance to the Gomel Children's Centre.

The total cost of the visit to Gomel is £7,820 with £5,420 being raised through participant contributions, sponsorship and fund raising activities.

The group has also submitted an application to the Aberdeen City Council Youth Activities Small Grant Fund for £350 which will be considered on the 16th June 2011.

Due to the Youth Activities Small Grant Fund Committee meeting after this E P & I Committee it is proposed that this sum be deducted from the funding request of £2,400 from the International Twinning Budget 2011-12, leaving the final award contribution at £2,050.

5b. Application from Jazz Scotland to attend Regensburg Jazz Festival, 14-17th September 2011.

Following an approach to Aberdeen City Council by the Regensburg Jazz Festival, discussions were facilitated between Jazz Scotland and Regensburg representatives to explore the opportunity of jazz musicians from Aberdeen participating in this well established jazz festival.

By supporting Jazz Scotland's participation at the Regensburg Jazz Festival, citizens of and visitors to the festival will be exposed to the cultural diversity of the jazz scene in Aberdeen, benefit from the existing twinning co-operation between Aberdeen and Regensburg by encouraging jazz musicians to participate in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival in future and also assist with the development of musician exchanges in Regensburg and other twin cities.

Four musicians including Aberdeen's leading jazz musician and composer Graeme Stephen, have agreed to participate at the Regensburg Jazz Festival should the application for support be approved.

The total cost to Jazz Scotland to participate at the Regensburg Jazz Festival is £4,300 with Regensburg City and Regensburg Jazz Club providing financial support to cover accommodation and band fees of £ 2,360, leaving the final award contribution request at £1,940.

5c. Application from the Sound festival to support the visit of Stavanger Vocalensemble to Aberdeen to participate at this year's festival from 10th-13th November 2011.

Following discussions with the organisers of the Sound festival in Aberdeen City and Shire, an application has been received from the Sound festival to support the participation of Stavanger Vocalensemble at the festival of new music in Aberdeen and also to take part in a workshop with participants from the city.

The proposed programme for Stavanger Vocalensemble will see the group working with choral groups, pupils from local secondary schools and Universities students in venues across Aberdeen including the Queen's Cross Church and Aberdeen Art Gallery.

By supporting the participation of Stavanger Vocalensemble at the Sound festival, participants from Aberdeen and Stavanger will be afforded the opportunity to perform in a festival developed and delivered by a twin city organisation, can meet local singers and choirs with a view to creating opportunities for joint future working and will also provide an excellent platform to showcase the work of Scottish composer Sally Beamish.

The total cost of bringing 26 members of Stavanger Vocalensemble to Aberdeen to participate in the Sound festival is £11,097 with £7,497 being raised through support from Stavanger Twin City Fund, fundraising activities and contributions from other sources.

The final award contribution requested is £3,600 to assist with accommodation costs whilst in Aberdeen.

5d. Application from GM Events to support galleries from Stavanger and Regensburg attendance at the inaugural Aberdeen Art Fair, Aberdeen Music Hall, 12-14th August 2011.

An application has been received from the organisers of the inaugural Aberdeen Art Fair, requesting financial assistance to support the participation of the Havard Holland Gallery, Stavanger and the Ostwestkunst Gallery, Regensburg at the event.

The inaugural Aberdeen Art Fair, which is being organised by GM Events, provides an excellent platform for buyers and sellers from the UK and Europe to network with a culturally aware audience from not only Aberdeen City and Shire but nationally and internationally.

The participation of galleries from Aberdeen, the UK and from our twin cities would demonstrate a confidence in Aberdeen's strong economy and would present an excellent opportunity for establishing links with future partners and serve to stimulate attendance at future art fairs in the city and in respective partner countries.

It is also proposed that an arts educational programme be established as part of the art fair to encourage all ages to learn and participate in activities and events related to the arts including a series of educational lectures and workshops that the Havard Holland Gallery has agreed to participate in which take place at the Music Hall during the fair highlighting the importance and influence of Norwegian art.

The cost for both galleries to participate at the Inaugural Aberdeen Art Fair is £4,350 with £2,400 of costs being met by the Havard Holland Gallery, Stavanger and Ostwestkunst Gallery, Regensburg to cover the cost of flights, transportation of the art and insurance.

This is a commercial event with GM Events taking the burden of the risk when it comes to the overall event cost. Aberdeen City Council has not requested this event be staged but would highlight that it does reflect the similar and very successful Art Fairs hosted and financially supported by the local authorities in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

This small contribution would only be awarded should the event proceed and will not only support our existing twinning relationships but also reciprocate the sponsorship and financial support our cultural performers receive from Stavanger during Offshore Northern Seas bi-annually.

This event will also broaden the event offering currently provided by Aberdeen and will be featured in the promotional material produced to support our attraction of visitor's priority within the Economic & Business Development Business Plan.

Financial assistance of £1,950 is required to assist with accommodation in Aberdeen and for the galleries to participate at the fair.

5e. Application from Aberdeen Sports Village to support the participation of Vardneset BK Stavanger at the inaugural Aberdeen International Festival of Football, 18th-22nd July 2011.

An application has been received from Aberdeen Sports Village to support the participation of 20 players from Vardneset BK Stavanger at the inaugural Aberdeen International Festival of Football 2011. This event will seek to replace the Aberdeen International Football Festival (AIFF) which will not be staged this year in Aberdeen due to the current economic climate.

Aberdeen Sports Village is keen to maintain an international competition in Aberdeen and planning for the new festival is well underway. The event aims to showcase the unique attractions of Aberdeen and Scotland by attracting football teams from across the globe to take part in the festival.

This year's festival is open to Under 16 Boys and there has already been interest from South Africa and Nigeria as well as local and top SPL teams in Scotland.

The football tournament will engage local community and businesses with a week long festival of football culminating in an elite tournament final.

The long term objective of the festival is to turn a traditional football tournament into an innovative, inclusive event that captures the imagination of the people of Aberdeen and attracts new visitors to the city.

By inviting our twin city of Stavanger to participate in the festival the team's players will have access to excellent sporting facilities in Aberdeen and also the opportunity to participate in coaching and training sessions aimed at building strength and conditioning in the future.

Similarly, the social events attached to the festival will allow the players and coaches to interact and develop a better understanding of different cultures and nationalities and help to reinforce the positive image of Aberdeen locally, nationally and internationally.

The costs associated with this application are as follows:

Expenditure	
20 x Flights	£3,400
20 x Full Board at Halls of Residence	£5,600
Tournament Registration Fee	£350
Travel Insurance	£400
Total	£9,750
Income	
Estimated Fund Raising	£1,300
Participants Contribution	£3,750
Total	£5,050
Expenditure-Income	£9,750-£5,050
Outstanding costs	£4,700

The now cancelled AIFF did not receive funding from the Common Good Fund only an award from Education, Culture and Sport.

Officers from Education, Culture and Sport have confirmed that no application requesting financial support from the sports fund has been received to date to assist with the delivery of this event. Aberdeen Sports Village have been advised that they will not receive double funding.

The final award contribution requested is £4,700 towards this application.

6. IMPACT

The use of the International Twinning Budget to support international activity links closely to several of the Community Plan Challenges, for example Learning; Arts, Heritage and Sport, Aberdeen's Image; Getting Involved; Being Informed and Leading the City.

In the policy statement "Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking", the Council sets out how it aims to make Aberdeen a better place to live and work. Promoting and supporting international exchanges, involving various communities of interest and, contributes to this aim and to the actions of the Single Outcome Agreement.

Aberdeen's twin city partnership initiatives:

- foster international understanding and friendship and appreciation of cultural diversity,
- provide Aberdeen's citizens with an awareness of, and insight into, international issues and perspectives and their impact on Aberdeen and Scotland,
- promote the image and raise the profile of the City overseas; and
- provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge, expertise, skills ,ideas and best practice in any given field.

Opportunities for City groups and organizations to access twin city projects and possible funding are advertised through the Council's website, press releases, school circulars where appropriate and the Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations e-bulletin.

Human Rights, Equalities and Diversity: Aberdeen City Council has in place a range of statutory and discretionary plans, schemes and policies to promote equality. Officers endeavour to target groups and communities which have not previously had experience of international visits or exchanges, or which have been under-represented in twin city activities. Applicants complete an equal opportunities monitoring form as part of the application process.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Dawn Schultz
City Promotion Manager
Tel 01224 522767
Email Dschultz@aberdeencity.gov.uk