

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2012
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Twinning and International Partnerships
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/12/153

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to bring before Committee applications for financial assistance from the International Twinning Budget 2012-2013 and to make recommendations.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee recommend the approval of the following grants from the International Twinning Budget 2012-2013:

- i) £2,500 towards the participation of four delegates from Aberdeen to go to Regensburg as part of their Photo Symposium 2012, 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
- ii) £2,200 maximum contribution towards the visit of four delegates from Clermont-Ferrand to Aberdeen with the purpose of extending and building on business, economic, educational and sport links, 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> October 2012.
- iii) £1,925 maximum towards the visit of a group of Head Teachers and the Head of Education at Aberdeen City to Stavanger Education Department to initiate discussion on twinning projects between the two cities, 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
- iv) £630 grant towards the visit of the International Partnerships Officer to Gomel to represent Aberdeen City Council, accompany 21<sup>st</sup> Aberdeen Scouts and to attend meetings at Gomel City Council, 8<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> October 2012.
- v) £1,500 towards the participation of Aberdeen Kilt Kickers in the Stavanger annual meeting of social dancers, 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
- vi) £5,200 towards the participation of the junior group of the HipHop School in Aberdeen, accompanied by the International Partnerships Officer, in

the 'Trans'Urbaines' Festival in Clermont-Ferrand, 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

- vii) £400 maximum contribution towards the visit of the International Partnerships Officer to Stavanger Council, October 2012.
- viii) £2,055 towards the visit of young people from the YMCA group in Aberdeen to Regensburg, 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full council approved the International Twinning Budget for 2012-2013 of £137,350. The approved budget from the Common Good Fund, provides £102,000 of monies towards the support of twinning projects and/or visits.

	<b>Balance of Budget Available</b>	<b>£82,270</b>
i)	Contribution towards the participation of four delegates from Aberdeen to go to Regensburg as part of their Photo Symposium 2012, 27 <sup>th</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2012.	£2,500
ii)	Maximum contribution towards the visit of four delegates from Clermont-Ferrand to Aberdeen with the purpose of extending and building on business, economic, educational and sport links, 22 <sup>nd</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> October 2012.	£2,200
iii)	Contribution towards the visit of a group of Head Teachers and the Head of Education at Aberdeen City to Stavanger Education Department to initiate discussion on twinning projects between the two cities, 26 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2012.	£1,925
iv)	Grant towards the visit of the International Partnerships Officer to represent Aberdeen City Council, accompany the 21 <sup>st</sup> Aberdeen Scouts and to attend meetings at Gomel City Council, 8 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup> October 2012	£630
v)	Contribution towards the participation of Aberdeen Kilt Kickers in the Stavanger annual meeting of social dancers, 28 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup> September 2012.	£1,500
vi)	Maximum contribution towards the participation of the junior group of the HipHop School in Aberdeen, accompanied by the International Partnerships Officer, in the 'Trans'Urbaines' Festival in Clermont-Ferrand, 5 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2012.	£5,200

vii)	Maximum contribution towards the visit of the International Officer to Stavanger in October 2012.	£400
viii)	Contribution towards the visit of young people from the YMCA group in Aberdeen to Regensburg, 18 <sup>th</sup> to 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2012.	£2,055
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£16,410</b>
	<b>Amount remaining in budget if recommendations approved:</b>	<b>£65,860</b>

#### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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

The International Partnerships Officer regularly reviews the travel advice provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and is in close contact with counterpart officers in the twin cities to ensure information provided to participants is accurate and up-to-date.

Where individuals/groups from Aberdeen are travelling overseas, comprehensive pre-visit briefings are offered by the International Partnerships Officer and all 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 instructed by the International Partnerships Officer to obtain comprehensive travel insurance.

Long established twinning links will not be maintained without regular reciprocal visits and ongoing projects being initiated by communities, groups and individuals and there is the potential for the city's international image to be damaged if we don't continue to support established relationships.

Without support from the twinning budget, exchanges and visits of this nature could not take place and people in Aberdeen would lose a wide range of opportunities to engage with the international community. In addition, incoming visitors to the city on twin city projects support the local economy through their participation at events and hospitality and retail expenditure while visiting the city.

The International Partnerships Officer will provide a strong link between Aberdeen and our twin cities who also provide organisational support, advice and guidance when required.

They will also make recommendations on funding available to the group and offer support to foster a relationship with the city so that it is long lasting and beneficial to the people of Aberdeen without requiring on-going financial support from the public purse.

All groups participating in twin city activities are encouraged to develop sustainable relationships with their partner groups. Links between most of the twin cities of Aberdeen are active, and links which have not recently been engaged have been contacted to re-establish communications. It is important that all visits and projects through twinning are long-standing and fruitful to ensure their benefit to the local people of Aberdeen, to establish and promote positively the overseas image of Aberdeen and for best practice to be shared between cities.

## 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

### i) **Contribution towards the participation of four delegates from Aberdeen to go to Regensburg as part of their Photo Symposium 2012, 27<sup>th</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**

Two Aberdeen City Council Officers and two artists from Aberdeen will be working with Regensburg Council, Regensburg University, Kunstverein Gratz and Regensburg Multi Generational House in order to present work, share best practice and support the development of existing and new partnerships.

An Aberdeen City Council Community Arts Officer has been working closely with partners in Regensburg for six years and this relationship has provided opportunities for the citizens of Aberdeen and Regensburg to visit with and learn from each other. The other Officer will be the International Partnerships Officer. The visit to Regensburg will allow the Officer to meet with her working colleagues in Regensburg, establish face-to-face contact, undertake meetings and to explore and develop new projects between the two cities.

The other two delegates will be the Head of Departments at the Gray School of Art, Robert Gordon University and Alicia Bruce who is an award winning artist and educator who specialises in the field of photography. Her work has been featured in several public and private collections including the National Galleries of Scotland photography collection.

The Cultural Department of Regensburg City Council is hosting a photography exhibition and symposium and has invited Aberdeen City to participate in the Photo Symposium. This exhibition and conference will explore Photography as a Fine Art. Two of the delegates from

Aberdeen will present speeches at the symposium exploring their own professional photography practice within a rural and collaborative context. The two artists from Aberdeen selected to participate are very highly respected within Aberdeen and Scotland, and their knowledge and expertise has enabled support from Regensburg to fund accommodation for the group. Regensburg Stadt has agreed to cover the costs of the accommodation for the four delegates during their stay in Regensburg for the Photo Symposium, 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

Last year a member from Regensburg Kunstverien Gratz visited Aberdeen and worked alongside the Aberdeen City Council Arts Development Team. She visited the Grays School of Art Degree and is now interested in developing partnerships with her arts organisation, Regensburg and Grays School of Art. There exists great potential to develop a large piece of work and new activities across all these organisations and this will be discussed during the twinning visit.

The City Council Officers will attend meetings with organisations in Regensburg and Regensburg City Council to allow for partners to discuss future projects which will strengthen the twinning relationship between Regensburg and Aberdeen. Examples of future projects which will be discussed are the 'Mini Regensburg' event where young people take charge of the city. Regensburg wishes to develop the involvement of Aberdeen by developing a 'Scottish Embassy' for this event. The Officers would develop this whilst in Regensburg and find achievable ways of ensuring Aberdeen's young people are able to attend this event. Mini cities happen across Europe providing young people with an insight into city administration, business and citizenship. A further objective in Regensburg is to secure a stall to promote Aberdeen City Council, Arts Development and community social enterprise during the Regensburg Social Initiatives Market. By visiting and meeting organisations face to face a greater understanding of everybody's aims and objectives can be achieved.

Aberdeen City Council's Arts Development Team has been developing work with Regensburg for over six years. The Arts Development work with our twin city Regensburg has enabled them to deliver on Vibrant Aberdeen priorities on an international platform. The development work the team delivers in Aberdeen was given six months of free promotion in the Bavarian Big Issue magazine which has led to new ways in which creativity is now funded and delivered to communities in Bavaria. The partnerships the team has formed are now ready to be strengthened and diversified to ensure sustainability for cultural and creative exchanges between the two cities. The project will open new opportunities for the development of local creative talent to visit and showcase Aberdeen as a culturally rich city, encouraging more visits and exchanges between the two cities.

The contribution requests £2,500 towards the visit of the four delegates to Regensburg to cover the cost of flights, some transport while in Regensburg and subsistence allowance.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights	£1,600
Subsistence	£600
Transport to and in Regensburg	£300
Accommodation	£2,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,100</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Other sources of income	£2,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,600</b>
Expenditure-Income	£5,100-£2,600
<b>Total Applying For:</b>	<b>£2,500</b>

**ii) Contribution towards the visit of four delegates from Clermont-Ferrand to Aberdeen with the purpose of extending and building on business, economic, educational and sport links, 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> October 2012.**

Following a visit to Aberdeen during March 2012, Clermont-Ferrand City Council asked for a follow-up visit to Aberdeen between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> October to further links and connections in Aberdeen with local businesses, organisations and universities.

The delegation visited Aberdeen during March 2012 and were impressed with the hospitality and positive developments Aberdeen has taken in making the city a more vibrant place for its local people. They expressed in March they wanted a follow-up visit to Aberdeen in order to learn more about the organisations they briefly visited in March, and to open or continue discussions with other businesses and organisations within Aberdeen City.

The International Partnerships Officer will arrange a programme to accommodate the needs and interests of the delegation and to ensure it will be of maximum benefit to both Aberdeen City and to Clermont-Ferrand. The programme will be arranged in co-ordination with the International Trade and Investment team. The Consul General Pierre-Alain Coffinier and French Honorary Consul in Aberdeen will be invited to meet with the French delegation.

Recent research undertaken by Scottish Development International (SDI) found that Scotland attracts its highest source of inward investment from France after the USA, especially in the food and drink sector. The 2010 Aberdeen City and Shire Export Survey (non-Energy Sectors) placed France as the joint 3<sup>rd</sup> most important current export market and the 2010 Aberdeen City and Shire Export Survey (Energy

Sector) placed France as the joint 4<sup>th</sup> most important current export market. The research and surveys demonstrate that France is an important market for Scottish products which should be invested in by Aberdeen.

To maximise the visit of the delegation, the businesses and organisations which will be included in the itinerary are:

- Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Grampian Food Forum
- Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group
- Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum
- Rowett Institute (James Hutton)/INRA
- French School of Aberdeen
- Total
- Technip
- Aberdeen University
- Robert Gordon University
- Aberdeen Sports Village
- Aberdeen College

The delegates expressed particular interest in the New Library at the University of Aberdeen. Clermont-Ferrand is building a new library in their city and wants the opportunity to speak to University Library staff and the people behind the development in order to share best practice and their experience of the project. The delegation is further interested in the energy sustainability and carbon management of the New Library as they are currently investing in ways to incorporate sustainable local energy into their new development projects. The delegation would incorporate any learning's from Aberdeen into future city projects.

Sustainable energy is of particular interest to Clermont-Ferrand as it is host to a Sustainable Development Forum which is open to both national and international towns and cities to provide a base for the discussion of investment into developing sustainable energy systems. The Forum permits discussion into initiatives to change citizens behaviour, daily habits, production and consumption. Clermont-Ferrand aims to be a pilot city for sustainable development.

Clermont-Ferrand has an Erasmus link with the Gray School of Art and will use the visit to meet with staff at the Robert Gordon University to discuss ways of expanding the link into other areas of research and study. Clermont-Ferrand has a student population of 35,000 students and is ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in France for higher education due to its two principal universities and six engineering or management schools.

Clermont-Ferrand is looking to increase its size of foreign exchange students.

Engineering students from Aberdeen College and Lycée Lafayette created a partnership on mechanical and electrical engineering for the study exchange of students between both colleges. The last twinning project took place in 2008 which marked the 25<sup>th</sup> Twinning Anniversary of two cities. Aberdeen College is looking to incorporate an exchange with Clermont-Ferrand again within the engineering course where the students can undertake placements in Clermont-Ferrand, where the global headquarters for Michelin are based. This will benefit and enhance the learning experience for the young people, and offer opportunities for future work placements between Aberdeen College and Clermont-Ferrand.

The Clermont-Ferrand delegation visit to Aberdeen allows the opportunity for face-to-face contact with organisations and for the partners to discuss their objectives and future collaborations more firmly. The visit would stimulate new projects between the University of Aberdeen and more sport exchanges and projects with Aberdeen Sports Village, which was expressed as one of their objectives in March. The visit will provide a platform on which to discuss projects to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2013 of the twinning agreement between the two cities.

The delegation from Clermont-Ferrand is to be made-up of the Head of Mission of International Relations of Clermont-Ferrand, the Deputy Mayor of Clermont-Ferrand as well as two other delegates from the twin city. This will be an excellent opportunity to demonstrate Aberdeen as a leading city with exciting developments that other international cities would like to learn from. The Mission of International Relations of Clermont-Ferrand is responsible for maximising twin city and international projects. Once the visit has taken place, feedback will be sought from Clermont-Ferrand to determine how useful and beneficial the programme was and how they plan to follow-up on any links made with organisations within Aberdeen.

A maximum of £2,200 is requested to cover the cost of accommodation, food and transport while the delegation are in Aberdeen. Clermont-Ferrand will cover the cost of the air travel and have invited delegates from Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to Clermont-Ferrand during 2013 on a reciprocal visit where they will pay the costs of accommodation, food and transport.



<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights	£2,200
Accommodation	£1,490
Transport in Aberdeen	£160
Food	£550
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,400</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Other sources of income	£2,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,200</b>
Expenditure-Income	£4,400-£2,200
<b>Maximum Total Applying For:</b>	<b><u>£2,200</u></b>

**iii) Contribution towards the visit of a group of Head Teachers and the Head of Education in Aberdeen City to Stavanger Education Department to initiate discussion on twinning projects between the two cities, 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**

An initial visit to Stavanger by the North Sea Commission Education and Innovation Working Group identified the potential for educational projects between Aberdeen and Stavanger. The Head of Education will return to Stavanger with six selected Head Teachers of local Aberdeen Secondary Schools to meet with the Education Department and Head Teachers of Rogaland District Council during two days in September. The meeting will discuss and agree twinning projects between the two cities.

In the initial discussions and a meeting between Head Teachers in Aberdeen, a number of potential twinning projects were identified. This included a partnership between the Music School in Stavanger and Dyce Academy and the Social Enterprise shop run by secondary school pupils in Stavanger and Bucksburn Academy. The visit will discuss and explore how projects can be developed focusing on the energy sector and sustainable energy so that future skills shortage in these sectors can be filled. The meeting in Stavanger will also look at the how projects can be achieved successfully between schools in Aberdeen and Stavanger by virtual technology, such as e-Twinning, to enhance the learning experience for senior pupils.

Educational projects will be sustained by schools through electronic communication and where possible staff and student exchanges so that the projects continue to develop and be fruitful, are beneficial to parties involved and run year to year.

The initial meetings will set-up the agreed projects which will be sustained through the schools and by the education authorities. The

legacy will be sustained through contact between students and staff within the involved schools. The initial funding will enable the set-up of the projects to ensure it is built into schools' planning. Thereafter, the projects, depending on the type, will either maintain themselves or through curricular work build upon the foundations already set. The projects will also be part of the city campus and schools' development plans.

The projects involving Stavanger will extend and enhance Aberdeen City Council's city campus project to develop pupil choice and opportunity in the senior phase of education. By providing the pupils with an international experience they will benefit from increased understanding of different cultures, leadership and citizenship skills, as well as develop their confidence levels. This will contribute to fulfilling the global citizen dimension of Curriculum for Excellence and pupils will develop skills which will enable them to compete in an increasingly competitive global market place. Pupils will be encouraged to broaden their horizons which in turn will have potential economic benefit to Aberdeen.

Staff from the local Aberdeen schools will also benefit from working closely with professional colleagues from other countries. This is part of continuing professional development and staff will learn collaboratively from this approach. Staff from each country will also be able to share best practice and knowledge, creating mutual benefit to both cities and improve teaching practices for the next generation of pupils coming through schools.

Some of the projects, such as a twinning partnership between the music school in Stavanger and Dyce Academy, will include opportunities to involve the local community and schools will be encouraged to follow through on the community aspect of twinning and international projects.

This project will develop and strengthen the educational links between Aberdeen and Stavanger and seeks to enhance sustainable educational partnerships for students and staff that are long lasting. The educational partnerships will continue to contribute to the positive image of Aberdeen encouraging the staff and pupils to participate on a global dimension.

Once initial discussions have taken place and objectives set for the educational partnerships, European funding will be sought to help further the developments and schools will undertake their own fund-raising.

A contribution of £1,925 is requested to cover some of the cost of air travel and accommodation in Stavanger for two days. Other funding has been sought to cover the remaining total cost of the twinning activity. A break-down of costs is given below.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights	£2,340
Accommodation	£810.00
Subsistence	£700.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,850</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Other sources of income	£1,925
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,925</b>
Expenditure-Income	£3,850-£1,925
<b>Maximum Total Applying For:</b>	<b>£1,925</b>

**iv) Contribution towards the visit of the International Partnerships Officer to Gomel to represent Aberdeen City Council, accompany 21<sup>st</sup> Aberdeen Scouts and to attend meetings at Gomel City Council, 8<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> October 2012.**

The International Partnerships Officer has been invited by Gomel City Council, the Head of International Relations and the Director of Museums in Gomel to represent Aberdeen and Aberdeen City Council at the launch of the loan exhibition from the Gordon Highlanders Museum to the Gomel Museum of Military Glory on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012. During the visit the International Partnerships Officer will also accompany the 21<sup>st</sup> Aberdeen Scouts and undertake meetings with organisations with whom Aberdeen City share a twinning relationship.

The International Officer is invited to represent Aberdeen and the City Council at the launch of the Gordon Highlanders Museum loan exhibition in Gomel, which marks the successful and long-standing twinning partnership between the two museums. The curators of the Museum were invited to attend, but are no longer able to travel to Gomel due to other commitments. It will also be the first visit to Gomel by the International Partnerships Officer, therefore allowing an opportunity for the individual to establish themselves and their role.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Scouts Aberdeen (Cults), who were approved funding towards their visit to Gomel in Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure May 2012, will be in Gomel between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October so there will be an overlap of the dates of the visit. The International Partnerships Officer will accompany the Scouts during their programme and undertake meetings with the organisations and groups with whom the Scouts share a working relationship.

The International Partnerships Officer will also meet with the Director of Gomel Museums who has been in contact with Aberdeen City Council to discuss developing potential twinning projects with

Aberdeen's museums and libraries. During the meeting the Officer will collect feedback on the work with the Gordon Highlanders Museum and scope the opportunities for development.

The International Partnerships Officer arranged a programme on behalf of Aberdeen Gomel Trust for a delegation from Gomel who visited Aberdeen in June 2012 and is part of a working group for the continued drive of communication and projects within the field of war veterans and public health. The purpose of the delegation visit to Aberdeen was to extend co-operation in the field of public health. During this visit, the delegation visited Horseback UK, Robert Gordon University, various charities and organisations who assist war veterans and provide services for their rehabilitation and to Erskine Hospital. The visit to Gomel will permit an opportunity to follow-up on the visit to Aberdeen and to scope if links can be made between the Gomel Military Hospital and Robert Gordon University. The International Partnerships Officer will then feed-back to Robert Gordon University, as well as any other involved organisations such as Aberdeen Gomel Trust and the Friends of Gomel.

The International Partnerships Officer will undertake meetings with the schools and universities with whom Aberdeen City shares a twinning relationship with, as well as Gomel City Council. This will allow face-to-face contact to discuss how the relationships could be developed to provide maximum benefit to the people of Aberdeen and Gomel.

The estimated cost of the visit is £630 to cover the cost of return air travel, some subsistence while in Gomel and the visa cost. Gomel City Council has stated they will cover the cost of accommodation, food and transport of the International Partnerships Officer whilst in Gomel.

**v) Contribution towards the participation of Aberdeen Kilt Kickers in the Stavanger annual meeting of social dancers, 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**

Aberdeen Kilt Kickers was established in 1986 and was the first American Square Dance Club to be formed in Scotland. Their aim is to have 'Fun and Friendship set to music'. The objectives of Aberdeen Kilt Kickers are to:

- Promote and foster an interest in American Square Dancing
- Provide facilities for the participation in American Square Dancing
- Hold regular American Square Dance sessions
- Welcome any UK or International member or caller to join and participate in local club nights

The Aberdeen Kilt Kickers Club has well established links with two of Aberdeen City's twin cities, Stavanger and Regensburg. During April 2012, the Aberdeen club successfully organised an International Square Dance Festival which takes place every two years. This year saw the 6<sup>th</sup> International Square Dance Festival, the 3<sup>rd</sup> time to be held in Aberdeen. This event attracts approximately three hundred visitors to Aberdeen. Visitors to the event come from Russia, Liechtenstein, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Austrian, America and New Zealand. The visitors generally extend their stay after participating in the International Square Dance Festival to visit Aberdeen and travel throughout Scotland.

The Aberdeen Kilt Kickers club have well-established links with similar clubs in Stavanger and Regensburg, and continue to visit these two cities with the objective of promoting Aberdeen and their International Square Dance Festival to attract a larger audience, in turn creating opportunities for economic generation in Aberdeen City through accommodation, shopping, food and drink and tourism. Aberdeen acts as a gateway to overseas visitors to the rest of Scotland.

The link between Aberdeen and Stavanger square dancing clubs was created in 1988 and the clubs have successfully developed and sustained their twinning relationship. The Aberdeen club will be participating in the Stavanger Squares Square Dance Club's 40<sup>th</sup> Jamboree and fifteen of their members will be attending. Their large representation is a means of promoting Aberdeen, the city and their festival therefore attracting future visitors to Aberdeen. At the Stavanger Square Dance Jamboree, there will be participants from Denmark, Germany and other Scandinavian countries, opening the opportunity to attract new visitors to Aberdeen.

Aberdeen Kilt Kickers have an excellent reputation and have been sought out by tour group companies to perform for visitors from Germany. Their participation will promote further their club and Aberdeen as a tourist destination.

The Aberdeen Kilt Kickers Club link with Stavanger is predominantly self-financed, but they submit applications for funding support for special anniversary events. The Aberdeen Kilt Kickers last submitted a request for funding in 2009. A contribution of £1,500 is requested to help cover the cost of air travel for the fifteen members to Stavanger. The members of the dance club will stay in accommodation in the homes of the Stavanger hosts, limiting the cost, and will undertake their own fund-raising to cover the remaining costs of the visit. A break-down of costs is provided below.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
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Flights	£2,700
Food	£150
Dance costs	£397.50
Gift for host family	£375
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,622.50</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£2122.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,197.50</b>
Expenditure-Income	£3622.50-£2,122.50
<b>Maximum Total Applying For:</b>	<b><u>£1,500</u></b>

**vi) Contribution towards the participation of the junior group of the HipHop School in Aberdeen, accompanied by the International Partnerships Officer, in the 'Trans'Urbaines' Festival in Clermont-Ferrand, 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012.**

The HipHop School in Aberdeen has been invited to attend and participate in the 'Trans'Urbaines' Festival in Clermont-Ferrand between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012. The HipHop School in Aberdeen have previously undertaken youth exchange projects between the two cities during 2007 and 2008, but the exchange has not taken place during recent years due to changes in staffing causing a communication break-down. This issue has now been addressed. In 2007 a group of young people from Clermont-Ferrand came to Aberdeen to participate in the HipHop School summer school and provide workshops. In 2008 the visit was reciprocated by Clermont-Ferrand where young people from Aberdeen went to Clermont-Ferrand to participate in a series of joint music and dance workshops, culminating in a final public performance of music and choreography created jointly through the visit.

The invitation by Clermont-Ferrand to the Aberdeen HipHop School is a reactivation of the dance and music link between the two cities. The young people of Aberdeen who previously undertook the hiphop exchanges still remain in contact with the dancers from Clermont-Ferrand. Twelve junior group members, two senior members and the dance instructor of the HipHop School in Aberdeen will be attending the Trans'Urbaines Festival. The International Partnerships Officer has been requested to accompany the group to assist with translation in French, therefore making travel, communication and the itinerary management easier for the group. The junior members have not previously been on an exchange with Clermont-Ferrand. Whilst the International Partnerships Officer is in Clermont-Ferrand they will

meet with Council representatives and undertake meetings to discuss how to develop twinning links in order to maximise the purpose of the visit and provide best value. In total there will be sixteen people from Aberdeen travelling to Clermont-Ferrand.

The application requests twelve of the junior members participate in the Trans'Urbaines Festival as they are from low income households and would not otherwise readily have the opportunity to participate in an international event. It is also to give maximum benefit to the young people of Aberdeen and maximise the presence of Aberdeen City talent and creativity in Clermont-Ferrand. The local people of Clermont-Ferrand and surrounding areas will have the opportunity to watch and forge an understanding of Scottish HipHop from the junior members. The two senior members and dance instructor will be chaperones for the junior members. They will have the opportunity to network with the other dance instructors and share new information and techniques.

If less funding were awarded to the HipHop School more fund-raising would be required and young people from a low household income would not be able to participate.

The junior group will participate in a series of workshops, dance performances and dance 'battles' throughout the Trans'Urbaines Festival. The Festival's purpose is to allow a place of experimentation and creation for the young dancers who have been brought together in one place from different countries. They will have the opportunity to learn new techniques, training and to challenge each other and themselves through the dance battles. Professional hiphop dancers will be present to take the workshops and perform to the young people. During the 'Trans'Urbaines' Festival in Clermont-Ferrand, it will be the first time private companies will be present to witness the richness of the choreography and urban dance. At the end of the Festival, a final concert will take place to showcase the young peoples' talent.

The majority of the junior group have never travelled outwith Aberdeen before, therefore this opportunity will allow them to experience travel, visiting a different country as well as experiencing another language, culture and way of life. Their participation in the Trans'Urbaines Festival will widen their international horizons and give them a better understanding of what it is to be a global citizen. The junior members will be Cultural Ambassadors for Aberdeen and they will demonstrate Aberdeen's dance and music creativity scene.

The dance festival is a learning experience to inspire and connect the young people from the different cities and allow them to express themselves. Many of the children from Aberdeen come from disadvantaged backgrounds and low income households. They are committed to the twinning project and have given their own time to

perform shows in order to fund-raise for their participation in the 'Trans'Urbaines' Festival.

The visit will be reciprocated by a visit by a hiphop group from Clermont-Ferrand to perform in 'Survival' at the Beach Ballroom in June 2013, organised by the HipHop School Aberdeen. The show attracts an audience of up to 1500 people. When the group from Clermont-Ferrand is in Aberdeen they will tour the city and undertake workshops to the benefit of the Aberdeen community.

Throughout the Trans'Urbaines Festival the Aberdeen group will create a DVD of the project which will be made available to all participants and will also be put on the HipHop School website. After the initial exchange visit to France the HipHop School will encourage the young people to continue virtual communications with Clermont-Ferrand, as well as other international links made. The HipHop School will exchange monthly videos of their classes to Clermont-Ferrand through a social media site to continue the learning process.

A maximum contribution of £5,200 is requested to cover the cost of air travel to Clermont-Ferrand. Clermont-Ferrand will pay the cost of accommodation, food and transport of the group during their stay. The young people from Aberdeen will fund-raise by undertaking performing various shows and charity work. These funds will be used towards going to Clermont-Ferrand and sustaining future twinning dance links between the cities.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights	£7,200
Food	£480
Accommodation	£2,120
Transport	£300
Publicity and Posters	£150
T-Shirts for Participants	£150
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,400</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£3,200
Estimated Fund-Raising	£2,000
Total	<b>£5,200</b>
Expenditure-Income	£10,400-£5,200
<b>Maximum Total Applying For:</b>	<b>£5,200</b>



**vii) Maximum contribution towards the visit of the International Partnerships Officer to Stavanger Council, October 2012.**

During February 2012 delegates from Stavanger came to Aberdeen City Council Headquarters to meet with the International Partnerships Officer and the International Trade and Investment team in order to discuss the changes in Stavanger Council as well as projects and developments between Stavanger and Aberdeen.

The International Partnerships Officer has been invited to visit Stavanger with International Trade and Investment to follow-up on the February meeting and to meet with staff in the Council. The International Partnerships Officer will use the meeting as an opportunity to discuss the Winter Festival 2012 and the involvement of Stavanger in the Christmas Light Switch-On Parade and in the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony. The involvement of Stavanger in these events will promote Stavanger and its connections with Aberdeen and attract an audience from Stavanger therefore creating a greater footfall to the Winter Festival events. Stavanger's involvement in Aberdeen City Council's Summer Festival 2013 will be discussed to enhance Aberdeen's city events. The visit will also discuss Stavanger's bid for European City of Culture 2008 and opportunities for Aberdeen City Council Officers to meet with key figures involved in Stavanger's bid to strengthen Aberdeen's bid for UK City of Culture.

Links with Stavanger have mainly focused on economic development, but cultural, sport and educational links need to be developed and strengthened. The visit will be used to discuss how these other links can be developed and how business events could be intertwined with culture. Aberdeen Performing Arts and the North East Photography Artists Network (NEPAN) have expressed interest in a twinning project with Stavanger and the visit by the International Partnerships Officer will scope the opportunities for possible joint projects and networking.

Delegates from Stavanger came to Aberdeen during April 2012 to undertake training with Aberdeen City Council Customer Service Centre. The International Partnerships Officer will meet with the delegates to determine the success of the training with Aberdeen City Council and if they have implemented any of the learnings or if Aberdeen City Council can offer any more of their training services.

The International Partnerships Officer started in post October 2011 and has not yet had the opportunity to visit Aberdeen's twin cities. It is important for the Officer to visit the twin cities in order to establish their role and to discuss future collaboration and development of twin city partnerships. The International Partnerships must have good knowledge and awareness of the twin cities in order to better advise those who wish to undertake a twinning project and Elected Members

of any developments and plans that the twin city has in order to better plan future events.

The estimated cost for the visit is maximum £400 to cover the cost of air travel and any incurred costs while in Stavanger such as transport and food. The visit will be for the day only to limit costs. The date of the visit has not yet been confirmed, but will be in early October in order to be in good time to discuss the Winter Festival.

**viii) Contribution towards the visit of young people from the YMCA group in Aberdeen to Regensburg, 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012.**

The YMCA in Aberdeen has long-standing links with the CVJM group in Regensburg and together they have been successful in exchanges between the two cities. The YMCA and CVJM groups have sustained a twinning partnership with the support of Aberdeen City Council and the International Partnerships Officer since 1994 when the first face-to-face youth exchange visit to Regensburg took place. The YMCA partnership with Regensburg is the longest ongoing supported twinning partnership.

Five adults from the Aberdeen YMCA group will be going out to Regensburg between the 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012 as part of a planning visit to ensure the ongoing viability of the partnership between Aberdeen YMCA and CVJM Regensburg. The visit will secure the partnership for the foreseeable future and build on partnerships which will cement the organizational relationships. Anticipated outcomes for the twinning project are:

- Reassess the objectives and actions of the partnership to ensure the groups remain committed to the same priorities for the twinning partnership between the organisations.
- Define clear objectives, themes, activities and timetable for activities to strengthen active European citizenship and promote European unity with young people and volunteers in Aberdeen and Regensburg for 2013-2015.
- Agree a strategy for communicating the impact and benefits of twinning between partner YMCAs to the wider public and the media to create an accurate image of the twinning partnership.
- Strengthen the support structure between partner YMCAs to maintain connections, develop the partnership through new projects.
- Strengthen the association and accreditation of Aberdeen City Council and Stadt Regensburg for the YMCA partnership.

The YMCA and CVJM will be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inaugural visit to Regensburg in 2014 and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reciprocal visit made to Aberdeen by youth by CVJM Regensburg in 2015. The outcome of the meetings during October 2012 will be to ensure a detailed agreement and commitment for the next four years

of the partnership to include the following projects for the forthcoming future:

- 2013: Aberdeen YMCA volunteers to visit CVJM Regensburg for volunteer training programme and cultural exchange programme.
- 2014: 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Youth Event in Regensburg to participate in UK/German cultural exchange programme. This would include an arts based project to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of twinning between both cities.
- 2015: 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Twinning Tandem Cycle which is a repeat of the 2005 Anniversary Tandem Cycle but in reverse route so the cyclists will travel from Aberdeen to Regensburg.

The application requests a total of £2,055 to help cover the costs of flights, travel and accommodation in Regensburg. The individuals participating in this project will finance the remaining costs incurred. A break-down of the costs is given below.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights	£1,500
Travel	£420
Accommodation	£1500
Meals	£450
Insurance	£90
Programme Costs	£150
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,110</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£2,055
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,055</b>
Expenditure-Income	£4,110-£2,055
<b>Maximum Total Applying For:</b>	<b>£2,055</b>

## 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. Many of the recommendations for projects in this report create a positive image of Aberdeen internationally and provide local communities an opportunity to learn from others, to participate in various, exciting events and to increase local pride in our city.

Aberdeen City Council's Vision is the following:

*Aberdeen – the Smarter City*

- We will promote Aberdeen as a great place to live, bring up a family, do business and visit.
- We will ensure that Union Street regains its position as the heart of the city and move cultural activity centre-stage through re-invigorated cultural leadership.

#### *Smarter Living ( Quality of Life)*

- We aspire to be recognised as a City of Culture, a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting high quality diverse cultural events for the whole community and beyond.

#### *Smarter Economy (Competitiveness)*

- We will work with partners to promote the city as a place to invest, live, work and export from.

#### *Community Plan*

- Work with other organisations, agencies and groups, including Visit Scotland and Visit Aberdeen, to encourage tourism and the provision of facilities for tourists.

Promoting and supporting international exchanges, involving various communities of interest, significantly contributes to Aberdeen City Council Vision as outlined above and to the actions of the Single Outcome Agreement. The outlined twinning projects also align with the cultural strategy vision as it allows for improved communication of cultural opportunities, helps with changing the perception of the city, to develop a stronger cultural identity and to have increased levels of effective partnership working.

Aberdeen's twin city partnership initiatives:

- Foster international understanding and friendship and an 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 groups, communities and organisations to access twin city projects and exchanges and for possible sources of 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 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 used.

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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