

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure

DATE 6th November 2012

DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT International Partnerships & Twinning Applications

REPORT NUMBER: EPI/12/197

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) £1,790 towards the participation of two entertainers from Stavanger, Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg in Aberdeen City's Christmas Light Switch-On Parade 24th to 26th November 2012.
- ii) £3,410 maximum contribution towards the participation of traditional Norwegian singers from Stavanger to enhance the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony, Aberdeen, 29th November to 1st December 2012.
- iii) £2,400 contribution towards the visit of three Aberdeen City Council Officers to the Festival du Court Métrage, Clermont-Ferrand, 1st to 8th February 2013.
- iv) £3,960 towards the participation of an Aberdeen delegation in the Social Initiative Market in Regensburg, 4th to 11th December 2012.
- v) £6,800 contribution towards the inclusion of two musical elements from Regensburg and Stavanger twin cities in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2013, 15th to 17th March 2013.

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.

	Balance of Budget Available	£65,860
i)	Contribution towards the participation of two entertainers from Stavanger, Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg in Aberdeen City's Christmas Light Switch-On Parade 24 th to 26 th November 2012.	£1,790
ii)	Contribution towards the participation of traditional Norwegian singers from Stavanger to enhance the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony, Aberdeen, 29 th November to 1 st December 2012.	£3,410
iii)	Contribution towards the visit of three Aberdeen City Council Officers to the Festival du Court Métrage, Clermont-Ferrand, 1 st to 8 th February 2013.	£2,400
iv)	Contribution towards the participation of an Aberdeen Delegation in the Social Initiative Market in Regensburg, 4 th to 11 th December 2012.	£3,960
v)	Contribution towards the inclusion of two musical elements from Regensburg and Stavanger twin cities in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2013, 15 th to 17 th March 2013.	£6,800
	TOTAL	£18,360
	Amount remaining in budget if recommendations approved:	£47,500

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 two entertainers from Regensburg, Clermont-Ferrand and Stavanger to participate in the Aberdeen City's Christmas Light Switch-On Parade, 24th to 26th November 2012 .**

The annual Christmas Light Switch-On Parade is a popular and well-attended event within the Winter Festival programme. Last year, over 25,000 people came to Aberdeen city centre to see the festive lights

being switched-on. The event normally consists of local groups and entertainers from across the UK. This will be the first time an international element will be added to the festival.

The City Events & Twinning team is looking into ways to incorporate the unique offerings from our twin cities to enhance and value-add to Aberdeen's existing annual events programme. This involvement offers an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to Aberdeen's population and overseas visitors our twin city connections and that Aberdeen strives to include an international dimension in its events.

After discussions with organisers of the parade, it was decided two entertainers from Stavanger, Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg will participate in the parade. Each of the entertainers will wear the traditional costume of their country and perform traditional folk dances for the crowds. This addition to the parade will add a new dynamic to this family orientated event which is key fixture in the Winter Festival programme.

The twin cities participation in the parade will add a new element to this even changing event and will further promote the international links Aberdeen is proud of. . It will also highlight cultural differences between Aberdeen and its twin cities and the traditional ways in which we celebrate the festive season. Aberdeen is dedicated to demonstrating the importance of our twin cities by building and developing new projects which will benefit the local population and those of our overseas partners. It will further promote Aberdeen as a welcoming and open city which values its long standing relationships.. Our invitation to the twin cities has already initiated reciprocal invitations for Aberdeen performers to participate in events such as Stavanger's National Day in May 2013. This will continue to promote Aberdeen City as an exciting place to visit, full of tradition, culture and heritage.

The contribution asks for a maximum £1,790 contribution towards the participation of the six entertainers to cover the costs of accommodation, meals and transport. The twin cities would cover the cost of air flights for their participants to and from Aberdeen.

ii) Contribution towards the participation of traditional Norwegian singers from Stavanger at the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony, Aberdeen, 29th November to 1st December 2012.

Another key event during the Winter Festival programme is the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony. Each year the tree is generously gifted to Aberdeen from the City of Stavanger. This year, the dates of the ceremony have been changed in order to allow the Mayor of Stavanger to attend. Given the involvement of the Mayor of Stavanger and representatives from the Norwegian community in the tree ceremony, Stavanger Kommune has encouraged closer collaboration and suggested the inclusion of a cultural element traditional to Norway in the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony.

Stavanger Kommune have proposed a group of traditional Norwegian singers perform at the Christmas Tree Light Switch-On Ceremony to promote the Aberdeen and Stavanger connection and demonstrate the strong links between the two cities. Some of the younger singers will be dressed in traditional costume of Norway, and the singers will perform a mixture of Norwegian and Scottish songs. Their performances will reflect the traditional customs of Norway and fulfill the request from Stavanger Kommune. The citizens of Aberdeen will be invited to attend the ceremony to enjoy the choir as they sing popular Scottish songs.

During the day of Thursday 29th November, various business meetings will be undertaken. The link between Stavanger and Aberdeen has in the past mainly focused on the business and economic links. Stavanger's participation in the Christmas Tree Ceremony will promote both cities abilities to combine business, culture and tradition. It will also demonstrate to Stavanger that Aberdeen is able to effectively respond to requests and continue to have successful working relationships which are sustainable and provide mutual benefit.

Also on the 29th November,, the singers will perform in various city centre locations in Aberdeen to highlight the Christmas Tree Switch-On Event, thus encouraging a larger audience to attend the event. After the ceremony they will return to the city centre malls to perform again. The evening of Thursday 29th November has been designated by the BID as a 'Shopping Extravaganza' so the Norwegian performances will add to the whole retail experience.

The Norwegian choir will also perform at the Nativity Scene and the Winter Gardens in Duthie Park on Friday 30th November to enhance the Winter Festival programme and increase the entertainment available to the local communities. The choir will then perform in Aberdeen Art Gallery on Saturday 1st December as the Gallery is holding a special event for the children. Their performance will be an excellent opportunity to showcase to the children and their families Aberdeen's connections with Stavanger, increase their understanding of different cultures and the number of family orientated events in Aberdeen.

Stavanger's participation in the Winter Festival is aimed at enhancing the city events programme and providing the public with international, high quality performances from our twin city. For both the Light Switch-On Parade and the Christmas Tree Ceremony, feedback will be sought from the event organisers and the twin cities in order to determine the success and value added to the events. The feedback will be used to determine to pursue twin cities participation in forthcoming years.

Most of the singers have stated that when their performances finish in Aberdeen that they will be staying on in Aberdeen in order to see more

of the city and enjoy the retail opportunities available. Any of the singers who remain in Aberdeen for their own leisure purposes will pay their own hotel costs etc.

The application requests a total of £3,410 to contribute towards the cost of accommodation, subsistence, travel and a contingency to meet any unanticipated costs. The participants will be covering some of the cost of accommodation and Stavanger Kommune is paying the cost of the flights for the singers and for the total cost of the visit of the Mayor of Stavanger.

iii) Contribution towards the visit of three Officers to the Festival du Court Métrage, 1st to 8th February 2013.

The Court du Métrage in Clermont-Ferrand is an international short film festival and in 2013 it will be the 35th annual festival to be held. The Festival provides an annual meeting place and exhibition space for various international and national organisations, agencies, individuals, societies and industries to showcase their activities, present their work, network and prepare for their next film or video productions.

It is proposed that three Aberdeen City Council Officers attend the Clermont-Ferrand Festival du Court Métrage during the 2013 exhibition in order to determine how artists can submit a film to the Festival and what requirements there are to the film production. The visit will also establish the appropriate partners in Clermont-Ferrand and other industry professionals with whom Aberdeen should work with in order to successfully submit any short films. The links that would be forged during attendance will ensure that Aberdeen will have the opportunity to showcase short films filmed and produced in Aberdeen at the 2014 Court Métrage. The year 2014 is particularly important to have work produced in Aberdeen shown at this Festival since it will be Homecoming year and Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. With much of the international focus on Glasgow, the International Festival in Clermont-Ferrand allows Aberdeen to promote its local film-making talent and cultural vibrancy.

The main aim of the visit is to showcase homegrown talent on an international platform, but the Court du Métrage is also an excellent way of promoting Aberdeen City as a destination due to the wide, international audience and could provide incentives for film-makers to film their productions in Aberdeen or in the surrounding areas.

Citymoves Aberdeen has already expressed interest in submitting a video to the Court du Métrage to portray the local dance talent and culture in Aberdeen. The visit will allow for the knowledge and expertise to be learnt in order to explain how local groups in Aberdeen can submit a video or film to demonstrate Aberdeen is a community based, talented and full of culture and artistic talent. Additionally, Aberdeen

College provides a course in 'Film School'. Local Aberdeen students would have the opportunity to include their work within the Festival du Court Métrage. Arts Development would also work with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens of Aberdeen. If the funding is approved the links will help the team to work with these groups to develop, produce and showcase their work.

Aberdeen City Council has strong arts and cultural links with Regensburg, but has in the past struggled to find suitable cultural partners in Clermont-Ferrand in which to engage in this internationally recognised Festival. The International Partnerships Officer, through contacts in Clermont-Ferrand, has successfully managed to establish contact with the organisers of the Festival who want to welcome Aberdeen to their event and undertake meetings to discuss deeper involvement and participation for 2014.

The application requests a maximum of £2,400 to cover the costs of flights and some subsistence for the Officers whilst in Clermont-Ferrand. Clermont-Ferrand will cover the cost of accommodation for the delegates as part of the normal twinning agreement for visiting groups. Following the visit, applications will be made to Creative Scotland to secure future funding to support ongoing development.

iv) Contribution towards the participation of Aberdeen Delegation in the Social Initiative Market, Regensburg between the 4th and 11th December 2012.

The Arts Development team at Aberdeen City Council was invited to populate a stall at the Regensburg Social Initiative Market, during their recent visit to Regensburg for the Photo Symposium. It is anticipated between four to six adults will travel to Regensburg in order to participate in the Market. The delegation from Aberdeen will compose of the Aberdeen artists selling their products at the Market, as well as Aberdeen City Council Officers who will provide support and assistance to the artists and can promote the Aberdeen city as vibrant place to visit, work and live whilst in Regensburg. A delegation of between four to six people is also required as the Market in Regensburg operates between 1000 and 2100 therefore the delegation will take it in rota shifts to operate their stall, ensure that the appropriate working breaks can be taken as identified in the risk assessment and also to provide training sessions.

The group will offer training sessions to groups involved with the Social Initiatives Market to help promote the arts as a tool for improving social inclusion. The work made for this project with Regensburg will be made available to local outlets in Aberdeen to promote the work of the Arts Development team and raise awareness of the strong twinning links with Regensburg.

For 2012, a stall will be held in Regensburg aided by Aberdeen City Council Art's Development team promoting the social enterprise project currently being undertaken by the Arts Development team. This year the team and artists will work with the Art Development team volunteers, the 100 Word Project and the adult justice service to create small works to take to the market and sell to raise funds to sustain projects in Aberdeen.

Aberdeen continues to be invited by Regensburg to participate in their Christmas Markets which is a credit to Aberdeen City Council for their innovative projects being undertaken in the local community and being used as a model of forward thinking.

The people involved in designing, producing and packaging the artwork will be provided with an international platform for the sale of their work. The quality of the work shown at the market in Regensburg will promote the creative talents of the makers and the work Aberdeen City Council delivers to enable social inclusion. It will further promote Aberdeen as a city who actively engages its citizens in creativity and a supports a culturally rich environment in which to live, visit, and learn.

The application requests a total of £3,960 towards the cost of air travel, local transport and some subsistence. A break-down of costs is given below.

Expenditure	
Flights	£2,400
Transport	£300
Subsistence	£1,260
Hire of Stall	£400
Accommodation	£4,200
Staff costs, materials	£8,000
Total	£16,560
Income	
Estimated Fund-Raising	£400
Contribution by participants	£12,200
Total	£12,200
Expenditure-Income	£16,560-£12,200
Total Applying For:	£3,960

v) **Contribution towards the inclusion of two musical elements from Regensburg and Stavanger twin cities in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2013, 15th to 17th March 2013. .**

Jazz Aberdeen is a not for profit organisation which was started by the Aberdeen Jazz Group. Since its first annual Jazz Festival in 2003, the festival has helped Aberdeen in promoting jazz as it involves both local

and international artists, therefore attracting a large crowd of jazz fans to Aberdeen. The Festival also hosts various workshops for amateur jazz players and schools, ensuring that local people can benefit from the event.

During the Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2012 two of Aberdeen's twin cities, Regensburg and Stavanger participated and were highly successful during the event and received excellent media coverage with the band from Regensburg described as '*punchy and dynamic*'. As a result of the performance of the band from Regensburg, a new band formed consisting of jazz musicians from both Aberdeen and Regensburg. Both twin cities participation encouraged a younger audience to attend the Festival, particularly to witness the young jazz band Skadne Krek from Stavanger.

The twin city links with Stavanger were strengthened by inviting a jazz club promoter from Stavanger who has since invited jazz musicians from Aberdeen to perform in Stavanger. Information on the Aberdeen Jazz Festival is sent to jazz bookers in Stavanger and it was found that people travelled from Stavanger to Aberdeen to attend the Festival and enjoyed retail and other leisure pursuits during their stay. It is evidence that the Aberdeen Jazz Festival, through the twin city links, is successful in attracting an international audience and internationally promoting the Aberdeen city, its culture and music.

The Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2013 organisers wish to continue to promote the jazz musician exchanges between the twin cities, develop and enhance their twin city project work to the maximum benefit of the local communities and attract a larger audience to the Festival. The organisers of the Festival are applying for funding towards two elements of twin city inclusion in the 2013 Festival.

The first element is applying for funding to help towards commissioning a new project of collaboration featuring the Aberdeen and Regensburg musicians. Regensburg will send a professional jazz band to Aberdeen, including the international player Walter Lang, in order to compose and rehearse new material with Aberdeen musicians. This new project will then be premiered at the Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2013. The joint Aberdeen and Regensburg band will also perform at the Regensburg Jazz Festival in 2013 on a reciprocal visit.

The second request for support contributes towards bringing a new dimension to the Aberdeen Jazz Festival by including the Scottish National Youth Jazz Orchestra workshop in Aberdeen. Music students who are currently at University from either Stavanger or Clermont-Ferrand will provide music tuition at this workshop, offering the opportunity for youth jazz musicians to meet with their twin city partners, learn from the partners, share techniques and gain insight to a different approach to jazz music and culture. By involving the younger people into the Aberdeen Jazz Festival, and adding an

international dimension from the twin cities will contribute towards sustaining the legacy of the long-standing jazz links Aberdeen has with Regensburg and Stavanger.

Aberdeen Jazz Festival has already proved that it is successful with the promotion of the Aberdeen jazz scene internationally as fans from both Regensburg and Stavanger alike flew to Aberdeen in order to attend to the Festival and Aberdeen musicians have been invited to their jazz events. In order for the Festival to maintain its continued success, it is important to maintain and develop new projects with the twin cities, to attract and promote the music and culture in Aberdeen and highlighting that the city continues to provide high quality entertainment for the local population and its visitors. The Festival will be enhanced from last year by providing development and educational opportunities for the youth audience in Aberdeen.

The application requests a maximum of £6,800 towards accommodation, transport and additional fess. The musicians have accepted a lower fee in order to reduce the total amount applied for. The twin cities will cover the cost of air travel for the musicians travelling to Aberdeen. A break-down of the costs has been given.

Element One Expenditure	
Flights	£1,400
Hotels	£1,260
Transport	£380
Subsistence	£480
Artist Fees	£3,600
Jazz Aberdeen	£450
Marketing	£450
Office & Promotion Expenses	£1,200
Total	£9,220
Element Two Expenditure	
Flights	£1,500
Accommodation	£600
Subsistence	£400
Fees	£1,000
Transport	£180
Office & Promotion Expenses	£900
Total	£4,580
Element One + Element Two	£13,800
Income	
Contribution from participants	£6,100
Other sources of income	£900
Total	£7,000
Expenditure-Income	£13,800-£7,000
Total Applying For:	<u>£6,800</u>

6. IMPACT

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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