

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Twinning & International Partnerships
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13/195

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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 2013-2014 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 2013-2014:

- i) £6,600 towards the educational exchange visit of pupils and staff from Manor Park School to Nestor Perret/Jean Jaures Ecoles, Clermont-Ferrand, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2014.
- ii) £8,000 towards the inward visit of speakers and school pupils from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg to participate in a two day conference on 'The Impact of the Great War on Aberdeen & its Twin Cities', Aberdeen, 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- iii) £1,600 towards the visit of a Bavarian Marching Band in the Christmas Parade, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013.
- iv) £4,380 towards the participation of a jazz quartet from Clermont-Ferrand to participate in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival, Aberdeen, 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- v) £900 towards the visit of four Head Teachers from Clermont-Ferrand to meet with potential Aberdeen partner schools, 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2013.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full council approved the International Twinning Budget for 2013-2014 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 at April 2013</b>	<b>£60,831</b>
i)	Contribution towards the educational exchange visit of pupils and staff from Manor Park School to Nestor Perret/Jean Jaures Ecoles, Clermont-Ferrand, 23 <sup>rd</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> June 2014.	£6,600
ii)	Contribution towards the inward visit of speakers and school pupils from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg to participate in a two day conference on 'The Impact of the Great War on Aberdeen & its Twin Cities', Aberdeen, 26 <sup>th</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2014.	£8,000
iii)	Contribution towards the visit of a Bavarian Marching Band in the Christmas Parade, 23 <sup>rd</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2013.	£1,600
iv)	Contribution towards the participation of a jazz quartet from Clermont-Ferrand to participate in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival, Aberdeen, 14 <sup>th</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2014.	£4,380
v)	Contribution towards the visit of four Head Teachers from Clermont-Ferrand to meet with potential Aberdeen partner schools, 20 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2013.	£900
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£21,480</b>
	<b>Amount remaining in budget if recommendations approved:</b>	<b>£39,351</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 educational exchange visit of pupils and staff from Manor Park School to Nestor Perret/Jean Jaures Ecoles, Clermont-Ferrand, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2014.**

Following the successful exchange of school pupils and teachers of Nestor Perret/Jean Jaures to Aberdeen during June 2013, a reciprocal invite has been issued to Manor Park School to visit Clermont-Ferrand.

During the exchange in June 2013 the French children were very receptive to all the new experience included within the programme and the Manor Park children proved to be very warm and welcoming hosts. The French staff and children were keen to host a reciprocal visit and The Mission des Relations Internationales have sent an invitation which Manor Park School are eager to accept. There will be 12 children and 2 adults travelling to Clermont-Ferrand from Manor Park School.

By the reciprocal visit to Clermont-Ferrand the links between staff and pupils will be reinforced and build on links established through the correspondence and visit to Aberdeen in 2013. The activities the Aberdeen children will undertake would depend on the programme organised by the hosts, but it is envisaged joint activities with the French children will be central to the visit with some sessions taking part in school activities. This will provide the children of Manor Park to experience a different school system and share another culture as the Aberdeen children generally have little opportunity to travel abroad.

It is anticipated there will be increased interest from Manor Park pupils in learning about language and culture of France. Meeting with the French children in 2013 sparked an awareness and interest which will be further stimulated by the prospect of a trip to Clermont-Ferrand. The exchange visit supports the aims of the Curriculum for Excellence '*to enhance understanding and enjoyment of other cultures...and gain insights into other ways of thinking and views of the world; to develop skills to use and enjoy in work and leisure throughout life*'.

Manor Park is already an international school, having received and welcomed many children from across Europe, Africa and Asia over the last few years. Manor Park School wishes to continue developing their international reputation to allow the pupils to experience and adapt to the language and customs of one of our closest European neighbours.

In preparation for the visit in June 2014 the children and teachers will continue their written correspondence to further promote a favourable impression of Aberdeen. As only a small group will be able to travel due to costs, they will have the opportunity to share their planning with the rest of their classmates and afterwards share their experiences at the end of term assembly, to which parents are invited.

The application requests a total of £6,600 to contribute towards the cost of air flights and transfer to Aberdeen Airport. Accommodation and food will be covered by Clermont-Ferrand as per the normal twinning arrangement. Other funding will be sought from the Franco-Scottish Society, fund-raising events at the School and sponsorship is being sought from the Total and other companies with business interests in France. A full break-down of costs has been given below.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights	£6,420
Mini Bus Aberdeen Airport	£180
Accommodation	£3,500
Food Costs	£2,530
Transport in Clermont-Ferrand	£600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£13,230</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Other sources of income	£6,630
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,630</b>
Expenditure-Income	13,230-6,630
<b>Total Applying For</b>	<b>£6,600</b>

**ii) Contribution towards the inward visit of speakers and school pupils from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg to participate in a two day conference on 'The Impact of the Great War on Aberdeen & its Twin Cities', Aberdeen, 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014.**

A recent funding application to 'Europe for Citizens' Town Twinning', European Commission submitted jointly by the International Partnerships Officer and External Funding team was successful. This is a great achievement as it is the first time European Funding has been obtained for a town twinning meeting. Only two cities in the UK were awarded funding from the 'Europe for Citizens' Town Twinning'.

The maximum of 5,000 Euros (around £4,200) was granted to Aberdeen City Council to hold a conference on the project title 'The Impact of the Great War on Aberdeen & its Twin Cities'. As the funding is for European cities, it means only Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg can participate and this was confirmed by discussions with the European Commission.

The visitors from our two European twin cities will arrive on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and there will be a Conference on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March and Young Peoples' Discussion and Scottish Night on the Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March. The visitors would depart Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March. The visitors would be a mixture of school pupils, accompanied by teachers and 2-3 speakers from each city.

The Conference will entail speakers from Aberdeen, Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg. The speakers from each city will be there to present about how the impact of the Great War affected their particular city and country. We are still awaiting confirmation on the speakers from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg but speakers from Aberdeen have already been confirmed and will include The Gordon Highlanders Museum, University of Aberdeen and hopefully a prominent author on The Great War in Scotland. The afternoon conference will be aimed at

schools and an evening conference will be held for the general public and interest groups on the Thursday night.

On the Friday, in collaboration with Europe Direct, a Young Peoples' Discussion will take place where the young people from Clermont-Ferrand, Regensburg and Aberdeen will discuss The Great War, their cities and the future of Europe. Their discussion and questions will be lead by the speakers from the Conference. On the Friday night, in order to celebrate life, an entertainment evening will be organised with ceilidh music, dancing and poetry reading to create a lasting favourable image of Aberdeen and show us as a welcoming city proud of our heritage but also forward looking and vibrant.

During the Thursday and Friday a walking tour of Aberdeen throughout the Great War will be organised as well as appropriate museum tours such as The Gordon Highlanders or Aberdeen Maritime Museum.

From initial enquiries, there has been great support and interest from all three cities involved. This is a one-off Council Event to mark the centenary of The Great War which will reap benefits for everyone involved, prove an interesting learning experience and bring individual and organisations together and create new collaborations. The event will be heavily publicised, such as from The Great War supplement in the Press and Journal in order to make the event a success and attract as many people possible.

The application requests a total of £8,000 to contribute towards the cost of accommodation, food and transport for the visitors during their stay in Aberdeen. A contingency fund has been applied for in case of any unexpected costs which could be detrimental to the conference taking place, but it is not expected all the funding will be required. The twin cities will cover the cost of air flights to Aberdeen and the European Funding the venue costs and hospitality.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Flights Clermont-Ferrand	£5,000
Flights Regensburg	£5,000
Food Costs	£3,175
Accommodation	£3,500
Conference Venues	£525
Hospitality	£700
Transport	£1,000
Scottish Entertainment	£1,800
Contingency	£1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£22,200</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£10,000
Europe for Citizens	£4,200

<b>Total</b>	<b>£14,200</b>
Expenditure-Income	22,200-14,200
<b>Total Applying For</b>	<b><u>£8,000</u></b>

**iii) Contribution towards the visit of a Bavarian Marching Band in the Christmas Parade, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013.**

In the Summer Festival 2013, a traditional Bavarian music band participated in the Tartan Day celebrations and was well received by spectators. They performed in the Tartan Day Parade, throughout the day, the Lord Provost civic reception and also in the evening at venues across the city.

As the City Events organisers were impressed with the standard of playing and the twinning links with Regensburg were able to be promoted so publicly, another Bavarian marching band have been invited to participate in the annual Christmas Light Switch-On Parade which takes place Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November. Depending on weather conditions, an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 spectators are expected to watch the Parade which provides an excellent platform for promoting the twinning links.

A maximum of 5 people from Regensburg have been invited to Aberdeen Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The application requests a total of £1,600 to cover the cost of food, accommodation and some transport whilst they're in Aberdeen. Regensburg will cover the cost of their air flights as per the normal twinning arrangement.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Air Flights	£2,000
Food Costs	£500
Accommodation	£900
Local Transport	£200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,600</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,000</b>
Expenditure-Income	3,600-2,000
<b>Total Applying For</b>	<b><u>£1,600</u></b>

**iv) Contribution towards the participation of a jazz group from Clermont-Ferrand to participate in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival, Aberdeen, 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2014.**

A professional seven piece jazz ensemble from Clermont-Ferrand has been invited to perform at the Aberdeen Jazz Festival from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2014. This will be the first visiting jazz musicians from Clermont-Ferrand to Aberdeen since 2005 and its part of the reactivation of the jazz links following the visit of an Aberdeen Jazz Quartet to perform at 'Jazz en Tête' in October 2013.

The group from Clermont-Ferrand, 'PG Project', will perform a mixture of popular jazz at the Aberdeen Jazz Festival 2014. They will perform both at The Blue Lamp and at Jazz on the Green. This project will develop lasting links between musicians in both cities and encourage others to become involved in the twinning programme. Aberdeen jazz fans appreciate the international cooperation within twin city partnerships and will expose the public to a more diverse programme. During their visit to Aberdeen the organisers will also discuss future cooperation between this band and Aberdeen musicians.

In 2013 there was a commissioned joint project between Aberdeen jazz musicians and Trio Elf from Regensburg, who played at both twin cities. Furthermore Stavanger students were brought to Aberdeen to perform at the Festival. Through the participation of PG Project the jazz organisers will have reached out to collaborate with many of the twin cities to promote the strong partnerships and develop Aberdeen's vibrant music and culture scene.

The application requests a total of £4,380 to help support the cost of accommodation, food and transport for the Clermont-Ferrand group. Clermont-Ferrand will cover the cost of air flights and Jazz Scotland will contribute towards the cost of marketing.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Air Travel	£2,450
Accommodation	£1,120
Musician Expenses	£760
Band Fee	£1,750
Fee Jazz Scotland	£450
Marketing & Promotion	£600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,130</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£2,450
Other sources of income	£300
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,750</b>
Expenditure-Income	7,130-2,750
<b>Total Applying For</b>	<b>£4,380</b>



v) **Contribution towards the visit of four Head Teachers from Clermont-Ferrand to meet with potential Aberdeen partner schools, 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2013.**

A request was received by Aberdeen City Council to help support the visit of four Head Teachers from Academie Clermont to Aberdeen. The Head Teachers will visit Aberdeen to further continue developing the on-going building of educational and schools links with local Aberdeen schools, both primary and secondary. This particular visit is aimed at Primary Schools.

The visiting Head Teachers are from the following schools:

- George Sand
- Albert Bayet
- Charles Perrault
- Jules Ferry

The International Partnerships Officer has been working with these Head Teachers to seek a partner school in Aberdeen. During their visit to Aberdeen the French Head Teachers will undertake meetings with the interested potential partner schools the International Partnerships Officer has found after making enquiries.

The Education Department is supportive of encouraging the uptake of potential French links, given the excellent learning experience for children currently learning French within Primary schools and the 1+2 Language Strategy which would see French being taught in P6 & P7.

The French visitors have been awarded a subsidy to help them visit Aberdeen, but the subsidy is not enough to cover the cost of their accommodation which is why they have asked Aberdeen City Council to assist. They have asked for a host teacher stay in which the Aberdeen City Council Officers are trying to accommodate, but in the case this cannot be provided for hotel accommodation has to be looked into as a back-up.

The application requests a total of £900 to assist towards the cost of accommodation by the French delegation in the case a host teacher stay cannot be found. The French delegation are meeting all other costs involved in the visit.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Air Flights	£4,000
Food Costs	£360
Accommodation	£900
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,260</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Contribution by Participants	£4,360

<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,360</b>
Expenditure-Income	5,260-4,360
<b>Total Applying For</b>	<b>£900</b>

## 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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