

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	3 rd June 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Twinning & International Partnerships
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/14/112
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to bring before Committee applications for financial assistance from the International Twinning Budget 2014-2015 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 2014-2015:

- i) £4,910 contribution towards the participation of Simunye, Simunye from Bulawayo at the Aberdeen International Youth Festival, July 24th - August 4th 2014
- ii) £2,200 contribution towards the participation of a group from Clermont-Ferrand performing at Celebrate Aberdeen Weekend, 29th August - 1st September 2014
- iii) £1,600 contribution towards the costs of sending three representatives from Aberdeen to conduct an exploratory visit of Mini-Regensburg, 4th - 8th August 2014
- iv) £1,500 contribution towards a reciprocal partnership between the Baker Hughes 10k and Regensburg Marathon (with option to participate in either the 10k, half-marathon or full marathon) which rewards the first city resident to complete the race with free entry, accommodation and travel to partnered event the following year

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full council approved the International Twinning Budget for 2014-2015 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 as at April 2014	£102, 000
	Opening Balance	£101, 400
i)	Contribution towards the participation of Simunye, Simunye from Bulawayo at the Aberdeen International Youth Festival, July 24 th - August 4 th 2014	£4,910
ii)	Contribution towards the participation of a group from Clermont-Ferrand performing at Celebrate Aberdeen Weekend, 29 th August - 1 st September 2014	£2,200
iii)	Contribution towards the costs of sending three representatives from Aberdeen to conduct an exploratory visit of Mini-Regensburg, 4 th - 8 th August 2014	£1,600
iv)	Contribution towards a reciprocal partnership between the Baker Hughes 10k and Regensburg Marathon (with option to participate in either the 10k, half-marathon or full marathon) which rewards the first city resident to complete the race with free entry, accommodation and travel to partnered event the following year	£1, 500
	TOTAL	£10, 210
	Closing Balance (if recommendations approved)	£91, 190

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 Twinning & 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 Twinning & 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 Twinning & 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 Twinning & 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 Simunye, Simunye from Bulawayo at the Aberdeen International Youth Festival, 24th July - 4th August 2014

Simunye, Simunye are a traditional story, dance and music group from Bulawayo. They are a group of 15 performers – 13 of whom are aged under 26. Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) are seeking funds to support the group's participation at the 2014 festival.

This project will:

1. Support the young people of Simunye, Simunye to attend the festival and present their multi layered performance of music, dance, song and storytelling to as wide an audience in the city as possible
2. Deliver a programme of performances, workshops and social activity that makes the most of the visit and allows meaningful learning and social opportunities for the group, other participants and general public in the city
3. Work in partnership with the city venues to present the group in the most positive light to festival audiences

4. Collaborate with the Creative Learning Team at ACC and their community partners to deliver a programme of performances and workshops as part of the AIYF Community touring programme
5. Provide social opportunities for groups attending the festival from the general public to meet Simunye, Simunye to share knowledge and cultural experiences

This will be achieved through the delivery of 3 main city performances, 3 community venue performances/workshops and 2 outdoor free access events. As well as supporting the main AIYF programme, these events will allow the group to tour to venues within regeneration areas of the city and target groups who have difficulty accessing live performance. This will provide cultural opportunities for audiences in the city who would otherwise not engage with AIYF.

AIYF showcases a variety of youth arts from across Aberdeen, Scotland, UK and the world. As an annual event that is celebrating its 41st year, AIYF constantly aims to develop a diverse programme of activity and performance for participants and audiences. The opportunity to engage audiences with work from the African continent, especially Aberdeen's twin city of Bulawayo, adds diversity of music and performance styles as well as geographical spread to the AIYF programme.

The successful application of this project will strengthen cultural connections between Aberdeen and Bulawayo. Last year was the first time in several years that a group from Bulawayo had participated in AIYF. Supporting a group for the second consecutive year will cultivate this relationship and further strengthen it. It will also promote Aberdeen's link with Bulawayo – allowing international participants and local audiences to discover cultural traditions and engage in new experiences.

The application requests a total of £4,910 to support festival participation and travel to and around the festival. A full break-down of costs has been provided below:

Expenditure	
Flights Zimbabwe-UK	£18,000
Visa Costs	£9,000
Accommodation/Participation Fee	£4,620
Festival Travel Costs	£1,000
Festival Courier, production & technical support	£1,640
Venue Hire Fees	£500
Promotion & Publicity	£750
Total	£35,510
Income	
Contribution by Participants	£25,000
Other Sources of Income	£5,600

Total	£30,600
Expenditure-Income	£35,510-£30,600
Total Applying For	£4,910

ii) Contribution towards a music group from Clermont-Ferrand to perform at Celebrate Aberdeen Weekend, 29th August - 1st September

Celebrate Aberdeen Weekend is a new event in the city's Summer Festival 2014 programme. The organisers of the event have asked for the presence of a professional music group from the twin city of Clermont-Ferrand to enhance and add an international element to the event.

The group will perform at this event at various points throughout the weekend. As well as performing on the main stage, they will also perform at locations throughout the city to highlight the Celebrate Aberdeen programme, such as the Belmont Street Country Fair. Having an international group attend the event introduces audiences to new music, which strengthens the promotion of cultural activities within the city.

Providing the opportunity for a group from Clermont-Ferrand to participate in a large city event demonstrates Aberdeen's commitment to maintaining international partnerships. The attendance of the group at the event also promotes opportunities for Aberdeen citizens to create and establish projects and partnerships with twin cities. The group's participation will be highlighted within publicity materials and in public announcements to ensure the twinning link and profile of the twin cities is raised. The attendance of the group at the event will also be highlighted to Aberdeen's French Community through organisations such as Aberdeen Accueil.

The application requests a total of £2,200 to cover the cost of accommodation, food and transport for the group during their stay in Aberdeen. Ville de Clermont-Ferrand will cover the cost of flights.

Expenditure	
Flights	£2,500
Accommodation	£1,500
Food Costs	£500
Transport	£200
Total	£4,700
Income	
Other sources of income	£2,500
Total	£2,500
Expenditure-Income	£4,700-£2,500
Total Applying For	£2,200

iii) Contribution towards the cost of sending three representatives from Aberdeen to conduct an exploratory visit of 'Mini Regensburg', Regensburg, 4th - 8th August 2014

Ongoing discussions have taken place between Aberdeen City Council and Stadt Regensburg about developing Aberdeen's involvement with Regensburg's biennial 'Mini-Regensburg' event. An invitation has been extended to three representatives from Aberdeen to undertake an exploratory visit to Regensburg from 4th - 8th August 2014, with the ambition of enabling a group of young people from Aberdeen to participate in the next Mini Regensburg in August 2015.

Mini-Regensburg is a 'game' for children where they can actively experience how life is organised within society. Other twin cities of Regensburg take part in the event, such as Clermont-Ferrand who regularly attend the event. Each country or group taking part has their own 'Embassy' where the children are able to shape and determine lives in their own city. This allows the children to participate and understand how democracy and social contexts work, as well as the economic cycle and effect of policies. Each group also directly experiences the consequences of their decisions.

A group of three representatives from Aberdeen will travel to Regensburg to conduct an exploratory and learning visit. The representatives proposed to conduct the visit include officers from ACC's Education Department and APA's Development Team, forming a multi-organisation project. The party also includes the Twinning and International Partnerships Officer. The Twinning and International Partnerships Officer is new in post and this will be the first visit by the officer to one of Aberdeen's twin cities. During the visit the officer will also meet with representatives from other cultural and educational institutions to discuss projects which celebrate the 60th anniversary of the twinning relationship between Aberdeen and Regensburg. Visiting Regensburg to make these contacts will ensure a vibrant cultural programme is developed for 60th anniversary celebrations in 2015.

This visit will enable the representatives to form a group running a 'Scottish Embassy' during Mini Regensburg in August 2015. It is further envisaged that this learning process would activate a similar event in Aberdeen where local school children can have the opportunity to participate, widening the benefits for the greater Aberdeen community.

The application requests a total of £1,600 to contribute towards the cost of air flights for the three officers to conduct the visit and a contingency fund for emergencies. Stadt Regensburg will cover the cost of accommodation and food for the Aberdeen delegation.

Expenditure	
Flights	£1,200

Contingency	£400
Accommodation	£1,000
Food Costs	£600
Transport	£200
Total	£3,400
Income	
Other sources of income	£1,800
Total	£1,800
Expenditure-Income	3,400-1,800
Total Applying For	<u>£1,600</u>

iv) Contribution towards a reciprocal partnership between the Baker Hughes 10k and Regensburg Marathon (with option to participate in either the 10k, half-marathon or full marathon) which rewards the first city resident to complete the race with free entry, accommodation and travel to partnered event the following year.

The Baker Hughes 10k is one of the key sporting events within Aberdeen. This application seeks to develop the event by linking with the Regensburg Marathon to provide citizens of the respective cities with the opportunity to participate in the partner city's sporting event: The first Aberdeen citizen to finish the 2015 Baker Hughes 10k will receive flights, accommodation and free entry to the Regensburg Marathon for themselves and a partner in 2016; and, likewise, the first Regensburg citizen to finish the 2015 Regensburg Marathon will receive flights, accommodation and free entry for themselves and a partner to the Aberdeen Baker Hughes 10k 2016.

Launched in 1986, the Aberdeen Baker Hughes 10k attracts nearly 6000 participants – from serious runners to people raising money for local charities. The 2015 Baker Hughes 10k is launched on May 19th 2014 – the day after the 2014 running festival. This application has been submitted as the Baker Hughes 10k 2014 draws to a close to allow for a full year to promote the event and the opportunity provided through the Aberdeen Twinning Grant.

This application will develop the event to make entry more attractive to Aberdeen citizens and raise awareness of the event outside of the city. One of the key priorities for Sport Aberdeen is to increase the profile of the city's sports events and venues to participants and organisations outwith the city. At present, only 6% of participants in the running festival come from outside of Aberdeen. Partnering with the Regensburg Marathon will promote the Baker Hughes 10k to international athletes.

This opportunity also offers a new incentive to existing and new local audiences. Encouraging more people to take part in the event raises more money for local charities as many participants fundraise when taking part. It also provides sports development opportunities to athletes

within the city. The winner of the Aberdeen Baker Hughes 10k will have the opportunity to participate in either the 10k, half-marathon or full marathon in Regensburg the following year and so can choose whether to maintain their current sport programme or build up to a half or full marathon.

Aberdeen and Regensburg celebrate their 60th twinning anniversary next year. Supporting this application celebrates Aberdeen's strong cultural links with Regensburg. It also demonstrates Aberdeen City Council's commitment to promoting a sports legacy following the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

This application requests a total of £1500 to cover the costs of flights to Regensburg for the Aberdeen winner and partner and costs of accommodation and subsistence of Regensburg participants whilst in Aberdeen.

Expenditure	
Air Flights	£1600
Food Costs	£600
Accommodation	£600
Local Transport	£200
Entry in race	£200
Total	£3200
Income	
Other sources of income	£1700
Total	£1700
Expenditure-Income	£3200 – 1700
Total Applying For	£1500

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.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None used

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Laura Paterson

Twinning & International Partnerships Officer

LaPaterson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

01224 523749