

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	2 March 2016
DIRECTOR	Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	Twinning & International Partnerships
REPORT NUMBER	OCE/16/012
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to bring before Council application for financial assistance from the International Twinning Budget 2016-2017 and to make recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council approve the following grant from the International Twinning Budget 2016-17:

- i) Contribution of £7,000 towards an arts in healthcare project between organisations in Aberdeen and Bulawayo, March-October 2016

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full council approved the International Twinning Budget for 2016-2017 of £147,250. The approved budget from the Common Good Fund provides £102,000 of monies towards the support of twinning projects and/or visits with additional funds supporting associated costs with the programme, such as salaries. A total of £102,000 is available to support projects in 2016-17.

	Balance of budget available as at April 2016	£102,000
	Opening balance	£79,725
i)	Contribution towards an arts in healthcare project between organisations in Aberdeen and Bulawayo, March-October 2016	£7,000
	TOTAL	£7,000
	Closing Balance (if recommendation approved)	£70,725

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.

Grants provided through the twinning budget provide individuals and communities from throughout Aberdeen City with the opportunity to engage with international twinning activities. 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

These recommendations are made ahead of the Priority Based Budgeting and Common Good Fund Reviews and involve the allocation of funds made available from the 2016-17 budget:

i) Contribution of £7,000 towards an arts in healthcare project between organisations in Aberdeen and Bulawayo, March-October 2016

This project brings together partners from a variety of organisations involved with arts and healthcare in Aberdeen and Bulawayo. The aim of the project is to enhance the maternal healthcare environment within Bulawayo whilst also engaging local Aberdeen audiences with the city's international development work and providing local artists with the opportunity to become involved in international projects. This project will have several facets, including the travel of individuals from Aberdeen to Bulawayo to create workshops in the city and dissemination of information to Aberdeen audiences through public events.

This proposal has evolved from a previous project by the University of Aberdeen's Immpact Programme. Immpact have collaborated with healthcare professionals and creative practitioners from Bulawayo and Aberdeen throughout 2015 to create a series of engaging events and resources including: A play to highlight maternal healthcare issues in sub-Saharan Africa which was premiered at the May Festival and is now being used as part of the University's Global Humanities Lecture Series to fifth year medical students and has also been shown nationally at the Medical Students Conference; a platform for knowledge exchange with partners from Bulawayo visiting facilities and staff at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and continuing interactive sessions via the internet; and the development of student exchanges between medical students from University of Aberdeen to United Bulawayo Hospitals, with the first student exchange intended to take place in 2016. Immpact's project has laid the foundations for future arts in healthcare projects between Aberdeen and Bulawayo.

This new project is a collaborative effort from several partners in the city involved in arts, healthcare and international development. These partners include individuals from Gray's School of Art, Grampian Hospital Arts Trust and creative practitioners as well as ongoing input from Immpact. The aim of this proposal is to bring partners together, collate information for the development of future projects and disseminate information to local and national audiences through the development of events and resources. This will be achieved by professionals from Aberdeen travelling to Bulawayo to view facilities, meet colleagues and co-create workshops. Once back in Aberdeen, these experiences and findings will form a public engagement programme which will include the creation of public events and e-publications. These events and resources will be used for teaching purposes at students at Gray's School of Art and medical students at the University of Aberdeen. Resources will also be shared by both educational institutions and wider networks, including Twinning and Creative Learning, to highlight the relationships between Aberdeen and Bulawayo and make new audiences aware of the international arts and healthcare work currently being undertaken in the city.

This initial proposal is the first in a series of future plans which will include: The creation of an art presence in Bulawayo Maternity Hospitals through follow-up visits, with wider engagement and hands-on activities in and outwith the Maternal Health Spaces; complementary exchange visits involving established and emerging artists, possibly from an art institution in Bulawayo and Gray's School of Art; as well as healthcare professionals from United Bulawayo Hospitals and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary; and enhance working arrangements between partners that will strengthen the twinning relationship between Bulawayo and Aberdeen to achieve long term sustainable impact and exchange.

The project benefits the lives of women in childbirth in and around Bulawayo through the creation of safe healthcare environments. There are also several benefits to Aberdeen, including: Increasing Aberdeen's international development profile; aiding the professional development of arts and healthcare professionals in the city; enhancing the diversity of public programmes within Aberdeen; creating learning resources for at least two educational institutions in the city; supporting creative talent in the city; and demonstrating Aberdeen's continued support of the twinning agreement with Bulawayo.

This application seeks a total of £7,000 towards travel expenses incurred by partners in Aberdeen and Bulawayo during the project as well as contributing towards the creation of public engagement activities in Aberdeen. The remaining project costs, including salaries and venue hire, will be met by the project partners.

The impact to the project if the following percentage reductions were applied by Council to this application is outlined below;

25% (£5,250) the impact would be a reduced visit of 4 days instead of 6 days, which would reduce the amount of information that can be gathered and the degree of engagement possible with key partners in Bulawayo.

50% (£3,500) the impact would be to reduce to 2 project participants travelling to Bulawayo, depending on which two of the three participants were to travel, it would compromise the continuity of the relationship building aspects, compromise the activities key to establishing organisational aspects of Art and Health facility working together, remove the public engagement aspect and limit the information gathered on the surfaces/spaces opportunities available within the health environment.

75% (£1,750) the impact would make the project no longer feasible if funding limits to only one participant travel, and this limits the future viability of the project.

Expenditure	
Staff costs (relating to preparation, delivery and post event)	
• Project co-ordinator (12days)	£2,160
• Grampian Hospital Arts Trust (GHAT) Advisor on art	£1,400

and health care (10 days)	
• GHAT support staff (15 hours)	£150
• Creative writer (6 days)	£1,200
• Maternal Health Advisor (2 days)	£1,000
• Public Relations Advisor (4 days)	£1,000
Visas	£105
Consumables (inc. gifts, etc)	£455
Flights	£2,550
Accommodation & Subsistence	£2,340
Aberdeen public event	£2,350
Total	£14,710
Income	
Contribution from partners	
• GHAT staff costs	£1,550
• Sue Fairburn	£2,160
• Dr Julia Hussein	£1,000
• Shane Strachan	£1,200
• Shelagh Barr	£1,000
• Public event - Venue Hire provided by Gray's School of Art and GHAT	£700
• Public event - Workshop materials provided by Gray's School of Art	£100
Total	£7,710
Expenditure-Income	£14,710- £7,710
Total requested	£7,000

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

The International Twinning Grant is available to all residents and groups within Aberdeen.

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.

Improving Staff Experience –

The Twinning and International Partnerships Officer works closely with internal departments to create partnerships and projects between Aberdeen City Council and twin cities, regularly working with the Education, City Events and Civic Teams amongst others.

Improving our use of Resources –

The International Twinning Grant is funded through the Common Good Fund. Recommendations for grant allocations are presented to council committee and all reports detailing grant allocations are readily available through the council website.

Corporate -

Promoting and supporting international exchanges, involving various communities of interest, significantly contributes to Aberdeen City Council's Smarter City Vision 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.

Public –

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