

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy & Resources
DATE	9 March 2017
DIRECTOR	Bernadette Marjoram
TITLE OF REPORT	Twinning & International Partnerships
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/17/043
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	YES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to bring before Committee applications for financial assistance from the International Twinning Budget 2017-18 and to make recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

a) That Finance, Policy & Resources Committee approve the following grants from the International Twinning Budget 2017-18:

- i) Contribution of £1,640 towards 4 teachers from Education & Children's Services travelling to Clermont – Ferrand, 21 – 24 May 2017.
- ii) Contribution of £2,000 towards representatives from the Look Again Festival and The Poundshop travelling to Stavanger, May/June 2017.
- iii) Contribution of £5,027 towards players and parents from Culter Youth Football Club travelling to Regensburg, 2-5 June 2017.
- iv) Contribution of £4,000 towards the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group travelling to Stavanger, 30 June – 13 July 2017.
- v) Contribution of £8,109 to Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) to support a group participating from Bulawayo, 27 July – 5 August 2017.
- vi) Contribution of £10,000 towards the Adventure Aberdeen Summer Camp, 31 July – 11 August 2017

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full council approved the International Twinning Budget for 2017-2018 of £137,250. The approved budget from the Common Good Fund provides £102,000 of monies towards the support of twinning projects and/or visits. Remaining funds support the infrastructure of the programme, such as salary and ICT costs. .

	Balance of budget available as at April 2017	£102,000
	Opening Balance	£102,000
i)	Contribution of £1,640 towards 4 teachers from Education & Children's Services travelling to Clermont – Ferrand, 21 – 24 May 2017.	£1,640
ii)	Contribution of £2,000 towards representatives from the Look Again Festival and The Poundshop travelling to Stavanger, May/June 2017.	£2,000
iii)	Contribution of £5,113 towards players and parents from Culter Youth Football Club travelling to Regensburg, 2-5 June 2017.	£5,027
iv)	Contribution of £4,000 towards the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group travelling to Stavanger, 30 June – 13 July 2017.	£4,000
v)	Contribution of £8,109 to Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) to support a group participating from Bulawayo, 27 July – 5 August 2017.	£8,109
vi)	Contribution of £10,000 towards the Adventure Aberdeen Summer Camp, 31 July – 11 August 2017	£10,000
	TOTAL	£30,776
	Closing Balance (if recommendations approved)	£71,224

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 receives automatic updates with regards to situations in countries from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and is in close contact with counterpart officers in the twin cities to ensure information provided to participants is accurate and up-to-date. All travel guidance issued by the Twinning & International Partnerships Officer is based upon the advice of the FCO and local intelligence, such as the police and local government authorities. All individuals/groups who have been supported by the Twinning Grant must follow the advice of these authorities when visiting the twin cities, including changing travel or programme arrangements if required. If any of these authorities advice against travel to an area, then travel and the project must be postponed with immediate effect until it is deemed safe to continue.

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.

A review of the financial systems used to administer the Twinning Grant was undertaken in July 2016. As per recommendations in the Local Code

for Practice (Approved FPR Committee September 2015), Following the Public Pound Tier 4 procedures are adhered to:

“Where annual funding is less than £15,000, an officer may still chose to follow the procedures laid down for Tier 4, as although the level of funding does not fall within the following the public pound guidance, the level of risk may be such that it would be prudent to follow these procedures.”

Following this review, existing measures were strengthened and new practices implemented to ensure that the Twinning Grant is fully accountable in its allocation of the public pound.

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

- a) These recommendations involve the allocation of funds made available from the 2017 -18 budget:
- i) **Contribution of £3,240 towards 4 teachers from Education & Children’s Services travelling to Clermont – Ferrand, 21 – 24 May 2017**

This is the return visit to Clermont-Ferrand following the one by French colleagues in November 2016 to Aberdeen that consisted of 2 Modern Languages Education Officers, one primary Head Teacher and one primary class teacher.

During their stay in Aberdeen, the delegation visited Quarryhill and Muirfield primary schools. Their emphasis was on the teaching of Modern Languages, observation of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence methodology and establishing new links for schools. They also discussed the Singing project between Aberdeen and Clermont-Ferrand primary schools to be held on 21st June 2017.

The returning ACC delegation will visit primary and secondary schools in Clermont-Ferrand with the aim of establishing new links. They will attend meetings with education partners: head teachers, teachers, education officers and school inspectors to familiarise themselves with the French school system.

This visit aligns to the following criteria:

- Promoting the Scottish Government 1+2 Modern Languages initiative in ACC primary schools
- Reinforcing existing schools' partnerships and establishing new ones.
- Evaluating the visit from Clermont-Ferrand delegation due in March 2017 including head teachers and school inspectors coming to look at Scottish educational developments including: Inclusion and Bridging the Gap
- Liaising with French colleagues to host the 2017 international summer camp
- Meeting with Modern Languages Education Officers to share methodology in learning and teaching modern languages
- Planning summer camp 2017 following successful first event in France in 2016: giving opportunities to ACC young people in secondary schools to take part in an international exchange

This will also support "Shaping Aberdeen" ACC strategy in promoting culture and improving staff experiences.

The educational links between the cities of Aberdeen and Clermont-Ferrand have strengthened since 2015 following a visit by French education officers.

Since then, visits have happened on a yearly basis leading to strong and durable school partnerships, projects which enhance ACC pupils' awareness of languages and cultures, cultural and practical exchanges and opportunities to ACC teachers to acquire a wider knowledge of education systems for the benefit of pupils in Aberdeen.

The French education authorities and Education Scotland wish to strengthen encourage working relationships and partnerships between Scottish local authorities and French regions. The main objectives are:

- Promote language learning and global citizenship
- Support CPD, peer learning and staff mobility
- Encourage creativity and awareness of other cultures

This is the third exchange visit from ACC Education and Children's Services reciprocal visit to Clermont-Ferrand.

Following the summer camps in August 2016 in France, 2017 in Scotland, we are hoping to offer opportunities for 12 young people from Aberdeen to travel to Germany in 2018 and ensure that the project becomes a triannual regular event, open to more young people from Aberdeen in the future.

Total applying for:

Expenditure	
Flights - 4 x £500	£2,000
Accommodation - 3 nights x 4 guests	£1,740
Subsistence	£1,200
Total	£4,940
Income	
Ville de Clermont	£3,300
Total	£3,300
Expenditure-Income	£4,940 - £3,300
Total Applying For	<u>£1,640</u>

ii) Contribution of £2000 towards a representative of the Look Again Festival and a representative from The Poundshop to visit Stavanger, May/June 2017

The Poundshop Commission for the Look Again Festival of Art and Design is Phase 1 of a design collective to produce a pop up design shop as part of Look Again 2018, creating new opportunities for designers in Aberdeen to twin with designers in Stavanger to produce affordable high quality products, broaden their networks and create potential for ongoing collaborative working such as residencies, reciprocal pop up and makers events in both cities.

The Look Again Festival showcases the very best contemporary art and design in Aberdeen, inviting public and visitors alike to become a tourist in your own city. The festival works to develop the creative sector in the

North East across the year through partnerships, programming, professional and skills development.

In year 1 (2015) Look Again attracted 14,683 audience members, increasing in 2016 to 17,709 across the commissions. Key to our mission is to encourage the public to see the city through fresh eyes, and 'become a tourist in your own city', thereby contributing to a changed perception of Aberdeen locally and further afield.

The aim of **The Poundshop** is to spread design to a wider audience by making it accessible through price and engagement. Products are sold within the affordable price bands £1, £3, £5 and £10. Working with a wide range of designers, this project allows for experimentation and testing within a professional brief. The Poundshop has worked prominent institutions and retailers such as, [Somerset House](#), [The Architecture Foundation](#), [Selfridges](#), [British Council](#), [Wasps Studios - Glasgow](#), [ICA – The Institute of Contemporary Arts](#).

The research visit to Stavanger in May/June 2017 will establish contact with a potential 8 Stavanger design practitioners with 8 Aberdeen designers. This engagement will then create a developed plan to support a range of affordable new design products for the Aberdeen pop up shop. From September-October The Poundshop will select designers from Aberdeen and Stavanger, and support them to develop and prototype work to The Poundshop brief. Work will also be undertaken to secure funds to support future activities with the Exhibition/Pop Up Shop open at the Look Again Festival in 2018 for 5 days during last weekend of April.

It is anticipated that this project will provide a range of outcomes including valuable international relationships established between designers in twinned cities, to support ongoing professional development and market growth opportunities for the sector in Aberdeen. Assist Look Again in developing stronger international partnerships with key organisations, building profile and reputation nationally and internationally. Support Aberdeen-based artists feel more confident and connected both by working with and being mentored by Poundshop and through working with international practitioners, ensuring the professional legacy develops through the project, with Aberdeen growing a reputation for excellent design by creating opportunities for local people to enjoy and acquire and be inspired by innovative new design products are increased.

This funding will be the first part of a three phase project that will result in a new design collection for Aberdeen, that we hope will go on to be stocked by Aberdeen Art Gallery, on an ongoing basis. We would also hope that reciprocal arrangements can be made for Aberdeen designers work to be stocked in Stavanger.

This will also, more broadly allow Look Again to establish links with a 'Northern Arc' neighbour, as outlined in the Creating a New North report that has informed the conceptualisation of the festival aims and objectives to do with :-

- How to attract and retain talent
- How to change perceptions of the city
- How to create places and spaces that are vibrant, attractive, meaningful
- How to better value the distinctive culture and heritage of the region

Look Again will encourage a deeper, more active level of participation for interested individuals across the festival, and there will be workshops, talks tours and events to encourage creative and critical engagement with the festival. Opportunities will be created for individuals to express themselves, work together and be creative impacting cumulatively on public perceptions of Aberdeen, adding cultural value to the city.

Total applying for:

Expenditure	
Flights	£550
Airport transfers	£200
Accommodation - 3 nights x 2 guests	£1800
Food Costs	£480
R&D Fee for The Poundshop	£500
Venue hire/costs	£470
Total	£4,000
Income	
Creative Scotland Contribution	£2000
Total	£2000
Expenditure-Income	£4,000 - £2,000
Total Applying For	<u>£2,000</u>

iii) **Contribution of £5,113 towards players and parents from Culter Youth Football Club travelling to Regensburg, 2-5 June 2017.**

Following the visit of FC Walhalla to Aberdeen in 2015, Culter Youth Football Club are working to organise a reciprocal visit to Regensburg for the Under 13 team. The group travelling will consist of 15 players and 15 parents.

This is a sporting and cultural exchange where participants will play a number of football matches against FC Walhalla and teams in the district while encouraging international relationships and promotion of the strong twinning links between Aberdeen and Regensburg.

Aberdeen City Council previously supported FC Walhalla financially to travel to Aberdeen, so Culter Youth Football Club will seek similar support from the Civic authorities in Regensburg to deliver this exchange.

Culter Youth Football Club will seek to enhance its reputation as a youth sports organisation, attracting and retaining young people in Aberdeen to pursue healthy and active lifestyle choices.

FC Walhalla also has intentions to visit Aberdeen on a biennial basis to participate in football matches and cultural experiences that further enhance Aberdeen as a visitor destination.

Total Applying for:

Expenditure	
Flights x 30	£6,177
Accommodation – Youth Hostel	£2,700
Internal transport	£1,350
Total	£10,227
Income	
Fundraising and participants	£5,200
Total	£5,200
Expenditure-Income	£10,227 - £5,200
Total Applying For	£5,027

iv) Contribution of £4,000 towards the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group travelling to Stavanger, 30 June – 13 July 2017.

Scouts and Leaders from the Norwegian Sea Scout Group visited Aberdeen in July 2016 on an exchange visit hosted by the 21st Aberdeen (Cults) Scout Group, which included home hospitality and a joint camp at the National Scout Activity Centre, Fordell Firs.

Scouts and Leaders from the group have been invited to visit Norway to camp with the Norwegian Sea Scout Group at the International Scout Jamboree followed by a week's home hospitality in Stavanger.

This exchange will see 40 children and 7 adults commemorate the 40th anniversary of the twinning link between the 21st Group and the Norwegian Scouts, with whom they have been twinned since 1977.

The anticipated outcome of this exchange is:

- to promote and develop the twinning link between Aberdeen and Stavanger
- to promote the international dimension of The Scout Association's training programme
- to give Scouts in Stavanger an opportunity to meet and develop friendships with Scouts from Aberdeen
- to learn about different cultures and experience Norwegian home hospitality
- to attend Norway's Scout Jamboree where 10,000 Scouts from worldwide will attend

The community in Aberdeen will hopefully encourage others to become involved with the participants reporting back to their schools, providing

photos and articles for local and national Scout websites and publications, as well as a number of special events organised by local Scout Groups.

Total applying for:

Expenditure	
Flights	£8,930
Airport transfers	£164.50
Travel and Medical Insurance	£658
Sea freight of camp gear	£346
Total	£10,098.50
Income	
Fundraising	£1,000.50
Participants contribution	£5,098
Total	£6,098.50
Expenditure-Income	£10,098.50- 6,098.50
Total Applying For	<u>£4,000</u>

v) Contribution of £8,109 to Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) to support a group participating from Bulawayo, 27 July – 5 August 2017.

This project is to work with AIYF's twinning partner Umkhathi Theatre in Bulawayo to deliver a wide range of activity including workshops and performances showcasing the music and song of their region. AIYF want to promote a better understanding of the twin city and country through this project and create some links to future activity and connection for some of the partners in the city

The group, who have a long term relationship with AIYF, will be bringing a number of workshop programmes and a performances repertoire. Throughout the project they will work with local groups and organisations and as part of the main AIYF programme to deliver workshops in a wide variety of settings. The project aims to connect as main local people and most specifically young people with the groups thorough this range of opportunities.

The project is to work with both experienced and non-experienced young people as well as have performances in community and main performance venues giving an opportunity for engagement and sharing to a wide range of Aberdeen citizens and our visitors to the AIYF.

AIYF propose to create a schedule of activity that delivers the ambition of the project that encompasses the aims of the project to share social, artistic and cultural experiences with local young people and audiences.

The schedule will include:

- a series of half-day workshops with community groups that don't have as much opportunity to engage in artistic activity as others – summer clubs in regeneration areas, residential homes and groups with specific needs such as the North East Sensory Services & Befriend a Child who we have built relationships with over the past few years.
- workshops with groups that take part in regular artistic music and song at different levels of experience to enable not only the teaching by the Umkhathi group but opportunities to share local repertoire with them and with one of the groups create a collaboration for one of the performance evenings.
- performance opportunities as part of the community and main city programme. Most of these will be shared evenings of music and song and will provide a showcase for any collaborative work.
- social activities and chances to meet with the AIYF team, other visiting group leaders and leaders of the community groups

There are number of project outcomes:

- To give a better understanding of the social, cultural and artistic history and activity from Zimbabwe for local young people, audiences, festival participants and the different community groups across the city through discussion, performance and workshops.
- Create links directly with local youth arts groups which they can carry on afterwards – including ACE Voices, North-east folk collective and local music groups.
- Develop collaboration performances pieces to be part of the main festival programme
- Share skills with the traditional music school run by AIYF which can be incorporated into their work.
- Help promote a more positive image of life in Bulawayo, our twin city, with Aberdeen residents.

It will benefit the local community through:

- Exposure to Umkhathi's range of performances and workshops, providing a greater understanding of the culture & life in Bulawayo our twin city
- watching and participating in high quality performances and workshops at community centre, residential homes and youth summer projects venues. Being able to meet and discuss and find out more about our international partners
- Aberdeen audiences hearing the work of the Umkhathi group at main performances and see the results of their collaborations and adding to the enjoyment of the youth festival events.
- Longer term connections and twinning opportunities with the company in the future for AIYF and one or two local organisations.

Total Applying for:

Expenditure	
Flights x 8	£7,760
Visa applications	£1,200
Accommodation – 10 nights at The	£1,560

University of Aberdeen Halls of Residence	
Transport – van hire and First Bus	£1,000
Subsistence	£1,248
Venue Hire – rehearsal/% of performance costs	£2,500
Staff members working with group	£450
Administration & promotion	£500
Total	£16,218
Income	
Fund raising	£1,050
Ticket Sales	£3,000
Other sources	£4,059
Total	£8,109
Expenditure-Income	£16,109 – £8,109
Total Applying For	<u>£8,109</u>

Return flights to Zimbabwe are approximately \$1,200 (£970)

Visa application is \$180 (approx. £150)

Residence is £19.50 per night and we propose the 8 members of the group are with us for 10 nights.

Meals at university are £7.20 lunch, dinner or packed meal.

vi) Contribution of £10,000 towards the Adventure Aberdeen Summer Camp, 31 July – 11 August 2017.

The summer camp project is a collaboration between Clermont-Ferrand, Regensburg and Aberdeen which was set up in 2016. In 2016 the City of Clermont-Ferrand hosted the first event with 10 students from Aberdeen selected to attend and represent the city. The pupils were from St Machar Academy, Northfield Academy, Hazlehead Academy, Bucksburn Academy and Aberdeen Grammar.

Following the success of the camp the decision was taken to run the camp annually with each country hosting on a 3 year cycle, with Aberdeen chosen to host in 2017.

2017 is the second camp and Aberdeen's first time hosting the event which gives us the opportunity to Showcase Aberdeen and Scotland. During the project ACC staff will work in close collaboration with their counterparts from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg to develop the long term strategy and educational aims of the project which will be shared with the Head Teachers and divisional leadership team within ECS.

The camp enables young people from the twin Cities to directly engage with their peers in different languages and from different cultural perspectives. Access to native or fluent speakers is essential to stimulate interest in learning languages and engaging in new cultural experiences.

The young people all collaborate and work together on a variety of activities which include language based, culture based and sport based with the main emphasis on tolerance, understanding and becoming 'global citizens' who are able to communicate in more than one language.

The camp will be hosted by Aberdeen City Council's Education and Children's Services using their base at Adventure Aberdeen, Kingswells and at the Council's Outdoor Education Centre in Cromdale, Speyside.

Transport will be provided using ACC minibuses.

The aims of this twinning project include introducing the young people from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg to the City of Aberdeen and its people. There will be a historical tour of the City where they will learn about the history of the city and how important it is to the economy of the country, this will be done by the young people from Aberdeen.

The group will engage in a variety of Scottish Cultural activities both in Aberdeen and at Cromdale with historical visits, outdoor activities and language classes where they work together on team building and engaging with each other throughout. The young people from each country have to plan and deliver a cultural day for their own country. The groups will also be sharing tents and group accommodation with others from each country.

The benefits of this project are:

- To foster international understanding and friendship and an appreciation of cultural diversity.
- Provide Aberdeen's pupils 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 of Aberdeen overseas;
- Provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge, skills, ideas and language amongst the young people..
- To enable the Modern Languages Development Officer, and Educational Visits Co-Ordinator to develop partnerships and projects between Aberdeen City and its twin cities by working in collaboration with their counterparts from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg.

The applications for the summer camp will go out to every secondary school in the city, thus giving every pupil from the age of 12 – 16 the opportunity to take part in the summer camp.

Participants will make new friends and be able to learn about different cultures and spend two weeks with their peers from Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg practicing their language skills learned in school. They

will also be able to learn from the Aberdeen students who were selected in 2016 and went to France, who will be volunteering as assistants and mentors in 2017.

The 2017 students may also be given the opportunity to attend the camp in Germany in 2018. The camp is also an opportunity to promote the City of Aberdeen to young people from across Europe who may wish to return in the future to study, work or as tourists.

Total Applying for:

Expenditure	
Flights	£10,800
Accommodation – Kingswells & Cromdale Outdoor Centre	£6,319
Internal transport	£975
Catering/Food	£4,050
Equipment, Activities & Instructors	£7,524
Cultural visits	£720
Total	£30,388
Income	
Fund raising	£3,588
Participants	£10,800
Income - Nexen	£6,000
Total	£20,388
Expenditure-Income	£30,388 – £20,388
Total Applying For	£10,000

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

Twinning & International Partnerships supports the principles of the Common Good Fund:

- Upholding the dignity of the City: The expense of civic ceremonies; and of the provision of suitable hospitality on appropriate occasions and for appropriate persons, and guests would fall under this purpose;
- Any other purpose which, in the bona fide and reasonable judgement of the Council, is for the good of the community as a whole, or in which the inhabitants at large may share: to be distinguished from the separate interest or benefit of any particular individual or group of people, however deserving or needy.

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. Twinning & International Partnerships will be reviewed in 2016-17.

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.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Twinning & International Partnerships upholds the principles of the Common Good Fund. The cessation of the programme could result in failure to 'uphold the dignity of the city' and a breakdown in projects 'which are good for the community as a whole'.

Should this diverse and engaging programme not continue, then Aberdeen could potentially cease to be an attractive destination for visitors and local residents with economic spend being distributed elsewhere in Scotland and international partnerships could be at risk.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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