

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

MEMBERS' SERVICES AND CIVIC CEREMONIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 7 SEPTEMBER 2005

TOWN TWINNING UPDATE

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to (i) update the Sub-Committee on the status of the Council's various twinning links; (ii) consider a request from the twin town of Santa Coloma to receive a delegation in order to celebrate 21 years of the twinning link; and (iii) note that a twin town committee has been reformed for Herstal and to give consideration to strengthening this newly structured link.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 East Ayrshire Council is twinned with five European towns namely:

Ales, France;
Kulmbach, Germany;
Herstal, Belgium;
Joué-les-tours, France; and
Santa Coloma De Gramenet, Spain.

The former Kilmarnock and Loudoun District Council was also twinned with Sukhum, Abkazia. Following a review of links this link is now considered as a friendship link.

- 2.2 Paragraph 3 of this report gives the Sub-Committee, by way of an update, the current position on recent links with all the twin towns.
- 2.3 There has been recent communication with Herstal and Santa Coloma de Gramenet which now requires further consideration.

3. UPDATE OF CURRENT LINKS WITH THE TWIN TOWNS

3.1 Ales, France

There has been limited correspondence with Ales over the past few years.

3.2 Kulmbach, Germany

The twinning link with Kulmbach remains strong. The most recent activity was a visit to Kulmbach by Provost Darnbrough and her husband, Councillor Robert McDill and his wife, the Chief Executive, Mr George Barclay from the Twinning Association and the Council Officer in June 2004.

This was a very successful visit and has further strengthened the link which East Ayrshire has with Kulmbach.

3.3 Herstal, Belgium

There has been limited communication with Herstal over the last few years.

However, a recent communication has been received from Herstal confirming that a Town Twinning Committee has been reformed. Herstal is now writing to the Council in the hope that renewed contact can be made to strengthen the twinning link.

3.4 Joué-les-tours, France

There continues to be very strong links with Joué.

The most recent was a civic visit and officer exchange in May/June 2004. Mayor Le Breton visited and was accompanied by the Depute for Sport, General Business and Twinning, Director of Cultural Development and the Highways Engineer.

A reciprocal officer exchange with appropriate officers from East Ayrshire Council visiting Joué is being investigated at present.

Appropriate Officers from the Department of Neighbourhood Services and Educational and Social Services are to be identified.

3.5 Santa Coloma De Gramenet, Spain

There has been some correspondence with Santa Coloma over the past few years. Recently, a communication has been received requesting that the Council receive a delegation from Santa Coloma, hopefully in October 2005, to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the twinning link.

This is an initial request from Santa Coloma and no details of numbers etc have been proposed. Due to the proposed timing of this request, it is doubtful whether sufficient time exists to make arrangements to accommodate the delegation. It is proposed that a response be sent inviting a delegation to visit, but that the visit be accommodated sometime next year.

4. FINANCIAL/POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** None arising directly from this report. Arrangements for the officer exchange will be implemented in accordance with the Council's Policy Statement on Employee Exchange Programme – PER/5/04.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1** The Sub-Committee is asked:-

- (i) to remit to the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to contact Herstal to discuss ways to further strengthen the twinning link and report back to a future Sub-Committee meeting;
- (ii) to remit to the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to contact Santa Coloma de Gramenet to further discuss the possibility of receiving a delegation sometime in the future;
- (iii) to note that arrangements for the reciprocal officer exchange to Joué are pending; and
- (iv) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

JA/KM
3 August 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Various correspondence from the twin towns.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers should contact Julie Armstrong, Assistant Administration Manager on Tel No (01563) 576147. Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on Tel No (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Julie Armstrong, Assistant Administration Manager