

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
**10 FEBRUARY 2004**

**EMPLOYEE EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES IN TOWN TWINNING**

**Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to approve in principle the participation of East Ayrshire Council employees in any work exchange programmes mutually agreed with one of the five towns the Council currently twins with.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1** East Ayrshire is currently twinned with five European towns:

- (1) Ales in the Gard region of France (1974);
- (2) Kulmbach in Bavaria, Germany (1974);
- (3) Herstal, near Liege in Belgium (1977);
- (4) Joue-les-tours in the Touraine region of France (1990); and
- (5) Santa Coloma de Gramenet, near Barcelona, Spain (1994).

- 2.2** The twinning of local authorities and towns with counterparts in other countries is a well-established and proven practice.

- 2.3** The Provost has been approached by the Mayor of Joue-les-tours to introduce an employee exchange programme in the course of 2004. It is therefore appropriate to introduce a mechanism to facilitate any such arrangements when they arise.

**3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EXCHANGE**

- 3.1** Exchange Programmes will be considered and managed according to their individual circumstances, however, Appendix 1 to this report outlines general principles for participation.

#### **4. IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT**

- 4.1 Due to the short duration of exchanges there will be no impact on the employment conditions of those East Ayrshire Employees participating in the exchange.

#### **5. TRADE UNIONS**

- 5.1 The proposal is subject to consultation with Trade Unions.

#### **6. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The introduction of an Employee Exchange Programme will strengthen the Council's employment policies with particular references to employee development.

The proposed policy statement (Appendix 1) complies with employment legislation and addresses the legal responsibilities of both employer and employee.

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 It will be the responsibility of the respective Councils to meet the expense of their employee's travel costs, salary and incidental expenses.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (a) approve the exchange programme and otherwise;
- (b) note the content of this report.

**Fiona Lees**  
**Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**  
**22 January 2004**  
**GH/LMcK/EG**

Any person wishing further information should contact Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel (extension 6092).

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### EMPLOYEE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME IN TWIN TOWNS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

East Ayrshire Council is committed to the development of policies that introduce flexibility into working arrangements to the benefit of the Council, its employees and the community that it serves.

#### 2. WHAT IS TOWN TWINNING?

East Ayrshire is twinned with five European towns:

1. Ales in the Gard region of France (1974);
2. Kulmbach in Bavaria, Germany (1974);
3. Herstal, near Liege in Belgium (1977);
4. Joue-les-tours in the Touraine region of France (1990); and
5. Santa Coloma de Gramenet, near Barcelona, Spain (1994).

The twinning of local authorities and towns with counterparts in other countries is a well-established and proven practice.

#### 3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Each exchange will be managed according to its specific and unique circumstances. However, the following points outline the general principles and standard procedures for arranging and managing an exchange:

- Any exchange must be mutually agreed between the participating authorities.
- Whilst the employee exchange programme is considered to be a positive for of employee recognition participation by employees will be on a voluntary basis.
- Selection for service areas and individuals to participate in an exchange will be the responsibility of the relevant Director or Head of Service.
- Exchanges will normally be for a maximum of two weeks duration.

- There will be no detriment to the employees' conditions of employment. Similarly, employees expenditure in participating in the work-related elements of the exchange programme will be met by the Council.

#### **4. IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT**

- Due to the short duration of exchanges there will be no impact on the employment conditions of those employees participating in the exchange.
- Participants will remain on the payroll of their employing authority throughout and will return to their substantive post upon conclusion of the exchange.

#### **5. ADMINISTRATION**

- It will be the responsibility of the host authority to ensure that accommodation and local transportation arrangements for the employee are made prior to their arrival. This should be done in consultation with the employee's substantive authority.
- Arrangements for travel to and from the host authority will be the responsibility of the employee's substantive authority.
- It will be the responsibility of the host to ensure that an appropriate programme of work and general hospitality is arranged prior to the arrival of the visiting employee.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- It will be the responsibility of the respective Councils to meet the expense of their employee's travel costs, salary and incidental expenses arising from the work related elements of the exchange.
- East Ayrshire Council employees may claim for additional travel and meal expenses as outlined in Personnel Circular 4/02 - Travel and Subsistence Expenses.

#### **7. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

Heads of Service considering the participation of their service area or employee in an exchange programme should seek additional guidance from the Head of Personnel prior to making any formal agreement with a twinned town authority.