



**COUNCIL EXECUTIVE**

**ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL TWINNING UPDATE**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Council Executive for the financial assistance to be provided by the council to support the range of international activity planned between West Lothian and twinning partners in financial year April 2015 to March 2016.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

The Council Executive is asked to approve the financial assistance to be provided by the council in 2015/16, as follows:

1. West Lothian / Grapevine, USA : £8,046
2. West Lothian / Hochsauerlandkreis, Germany : £8,046
3. Linlithgow / Guyancourt, France : £4,023
4. Bathgate / Cran Gevrier, France : £4,023

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership.
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	The international partnership work reflected within this report contributes to the Education, Planning and Area Services International Partnerships Strategy.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None.
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Not applicable.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	SOA 2: We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities. SOA 3: Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business. SOA 4: We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	The twinning association programmes are supported through £24,138 grant aid from

West Lothian Council.

## **VII Consideration at PDSP**

The Culture and Leisure PDSP which met on 5 February 2015 agreed to forward the report to the Council Executive with a recommendation that the funding proposals be approved.

## **VIII Other consultations**

All West Lothian Twinning Committees and Council Financial Management Unit.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

West Lothian Council supports the West Lothian/Grapevine, Texas, USA, West Lothian/ Hochsauerlandkreis, Germany, Linlithgow/Guyancourt, France and Bathgate/Cran Gevrier, France Twinning Associations.

The Grapevine and Hochsauerlandkreis Twinning Associations are the official West Lothian twinned associations and are West Lothian wide organisations. The Linlithgow and Bathgate Associations predominantly address organisations in their geographical area.

The aim of twinning is to promote mutual understanding through educational, cultural, sporting and recreational exchanges. West Lothian Council supports the above Twinning Associations and encourages these organisations to promote opportunities for individuals and community groups to participate in reciprocal exchange programmes with their twinning partners.

There have been many exciting projects aimed at young people involving sports, arts, schools and voluntary organisations. One of the key objectives throughout has been the development of exchanges particularly targeting young people and a variety of inclusive programmes involving schools, youth and voluntary groups continue to be supported and developed.

Appendix 1 to this report details the funding recommended for financial year 2015/16.

The report was considered by the Culture and Leisure PDSP at its meeting on 5 February 2015. The PDSP agreed to pass the report to the Council Executive with a recommendation that the funding proposed be agreed.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Twinning Partnerships have proved to be very successful and continue to provide excellent learning opportunities, particularly for young people from communities in West Lothian and abroad to develop mutual understanding and friendship.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None.

Appendices/Attachments: one

Appendix 1: Financial Assistance for Twinning Associations 2015/16

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