

10 October 2012

TWINNING LINKS.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the Council's policy on town twinning and provides Members with information regarding an approach has been made to form a new twinning for the Oban Lorn and the Isles area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the current policy position of the Council and to consider pro active use of existing budgets to build on and maintain existing twinning links.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 Earlier this year an approach was made to the Council to consider setting up a twinning link between Oban and a town called White River in South Africa. The town is in the Highlands area of South Africa, and has many similar characteristics to the Oban area.
- 3.2 The Council's policy on twinning was last reviewed by the Economy Policy and Performance Group on 13th March 2008, when it was agreed that the current formal links remain the same. The Group also resolved that if an Area Committee wished to establish any additional informal twinning link they should do so without any staff or financial resource from the Council.
- 3.3. The current formal links are Helensburgh Lomond with Thouars, Bute and Cowal with Korcula, Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands with Amberg Sulzbach (Kummersbrook with Campbeltown), and Oban Lorn and the Isles with Gorey and with Laurinburg.
- 3.4 In terms of the policy there is a small budget to support twinning activities which was put in place to support visits rather than for travel by individual groups. The budget is £5,000, which is split £2,500 held

centrally and accessible by MAKI on the basis that the most active twinning link is with Amberg Sulzbach, and £2,500 split equally between the other three areas.

3.5 A very small amount of the existing budget was utilised in Oban in 2009 in regards providing hospitality, but there has been no spending in the OLI area since that time.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS.

4.1 Members should note the Council's currently policy on twinning in relation to responding to the request which has been received for a new twinning link with White River, South Africa. In addition, in working to maintain positive links with the Area's formal twinning partners of Gorey and Laurinburg, Members may wish to consider supporting future visits to the Area by accessing the agreed available funding to provide support for core costs associated with those visits.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy:	None
5.2 Financial:	There is budget provision to support twinning visits by agreed twinning partners.
5.3 Legal	None
5.4 HR	None
5.5 Equalities	None
5.6 Risk	None
5.7 Customer Service	None

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