

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub Committee
DATE: 9th September 2010
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Environment & Economy
SUBJECT: Applications for Twinning Grant
WARDS: Norton South & Halton View

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to give details of two applications being made to the Town Twinning Grant Fund.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

(1) That a grant of £1000 be awarded to St Martin's Catholic Primary School to visit the school of the Anhui Province in Tongling.

(2) That a grant of £1000 be awarded to Warrington Road Nursery School to visit the school of the Anhui Province in Tongling.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In April 1996, Halton Borough Council set up a Grant Fund to assist in enabling all members of the community to access and gain benefit from the Council's International Links.

3.2 Since 1996, a number of groups have accessed the fund to undertake exchange visits to Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Germany; Leiria in Portugal; Usti-nad-Labem in the Czech Republic; and Tongling City in China, including the Halton Swimming Team; Halton Youth Service; PHAB; St. Chad's School, and Fairfield High School who have previously hosted teachers and pupils from Tongling. These links have resulted in a number of reciprocal visits from each town.

3.3 Participants in previous exchanges have found that the benefits of learning about another culture and language are immense. A wide range of activity in the Borough has been facilitated by the provision of grant aid and has given an opportunity to those who would not otherwise be able to participate.

3.4 Two applications for the Town Twinning Grant scheme have been received; one from St Martin's Catholic Primary School on behalf of their school, St Bede's Junior School and St John Fishers Primary

School; the other from Warrington Road Nursery School on behalf of their school, Lunt's Heath Primary School and Simms Cross Primary School. Each group consist of three head teachers who wish to visit the school of the Anhui Province in Tongling.

- 3.5 The visit will provide an opportunity to continue the educational twinning project which began five years ago. The groups has been invited to Tongling to continue the primary education twinning programme, including sharing of practice in the support services particularly in primary years.
- 3.6 Each application has identified a total cost of £4,920 to allow 3 head teachers to participate in the visit. This total is broken down as follows:
- Travel costs of £890 per person x 3 which totals £2,670
 - Travel costs and subsistence en route of £200 per person x 3 which totals £600
 - Accommodation costs of £400 per person x 3 which totals £1,200
 - Insurance costs of £40 per person x 3 which totals £120
 - Entrance fees to local attractions of £80 per person x 3 which totals £240
 - Other costs (cost of taxi) of £30 per person x 3 which totals £90
- 3.7 The head teachers will also be using their own funds to contribute to the trip.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The application is in line with the Borough's European Strategy, in particular the promotion of international links, which seeks to offer the opportunity to participate to the whole population of Halton.
- 4.2 The application will also make a major contribution to Halton's Strategic Priority of supporting Children and Young People in Halton.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In reaching a decision concerning the level of grant to be awarded, Members are requested to note that the twinning grant budget is usually oversubscribed. Also, after the reduction in European funding in 2006 the Council is placing emphasis on developing economic (transnational), as well as cultural and social twinning links, and as a result, there will be added pressure on the budget in this financial year.
- 5.2 Members are also advised that the guidance given to applicants is that any grant awarded will be dependant upon the location visited. Grants normally support up to a maximum 50% of the total costs of the project.
- 5.3 Warrington Road Nursery School has previously had grants in 2003, 2005 and 2008; however, St Martin's Primary School has not previously submitted an application form.

- 5.4 The maximum grant that a group can be awarded each financial year is dependant upon the location visited.
- 5.5 The financial implications on the grant budget so far for the 2010/2011 budget is:

Total Budget for 2010/2011	£11,890
Spent to date	£2,000
Total of this application request	£2,000
Remaining Balance	£7,890

Our advice is that these applications be approved as they can be accommodated within the current budget.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Teachers who have taken part in previous town twinning exchanges have found that the benefits to pupils of learning about another culture and language are immense.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 Measures are in place to minimise risks to the delivery of the project. For example, as part of the terms and conditions of grant, applicants are required to complete a risk assessment proforma

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 The project focuses on promoting the Council's priorities in Children & Young People in Halton.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

- 9.1 The trip will take place between 9th and 20th October 2010.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.