

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 1st March 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise

SUBJECT: Three Applications to the Twinning Grant Programme

PORTFOLIO: Leader's

WARDS: Mersey, Appleton and Grange

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) **the following applications are approved:**
 - **Application by Power In Partnership £250 per head**
 - **Application by Wade Deacon £167 per pupil**
 - **Application by St Chad's Catholic and Church of England High School £166.66 per head**
- 2) **Power in Partnership receives £1,000 in line with the Town Twinning Grant criteria to award a maximum of £1,000 towards European Twinning projects;**
- 3) **Wade Deacon High School receives the £2,000 requested towards their trip to Tongling, in line with the Town Twinning Grant criteria to award a maximum of £2,000 towards Chinese Twinning projects; and**
- 4) **St Chad's Catholic and Church of England High School receives the £2,000 requested towards their trip to Tongling, in line with the Town Twinning Grant criteria to award a maximum of £2,000 towards Chinese Twinning projects.**

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 The applications received from:

Power in Partnership requests 50 % towards Travel costs, Costs of visitors' accommodation/meals incurred (not in host's homes), Insurance, and Entrance fees to local attractions.

'Power in Partnership' aims to provide support and training by working closely with other providers and local companies; in order to strengthen services that can be offered to the communities across Halton. The aim of the Town Twinning visit to Portugal is to strengthen links with a similar project in Leiria and to work collaboratively on a larger European bid to bring a party from Leiria to Halton during 2012.

Two young people, with 2 adult escorts, will visit Leiria in Portugal to experience life in another European town. The visit will include learning about new cultures, working life in Portugal and social experiences with other young people. The young people will film the experience, editing it in Leiria and then feed back to other young people in Halton, who will then plan the return visit.

The two staff members will begin the collaborative work for a larger European bid to bring a party from Leiria to Halton during 2012, utilising the visit to gather facts for future bids.

The trip includes:

- 5- 7 days visit to Leiria in March 2012
- Four people - 2 staff and 2 young people.
- The wider community will be invited to see a short video, celebrate the experience and plan for future return visits.

Wade Deacon High School requests 6% contribution to support pupils in their continued fundraising for a trip to Tongling.

The application received from Wade Deacon High School requests funding to support the ongoing Exchange Programme with No.12 Middle School in Tongling. Wade Deacon School have received a visit

approval letter from Tongling with approx. 12 pupils in March/April 2012. Previous Town Twinning Awards: 2008 Tongling river project; 2010 Shakespeare Project.

The visit will provide an opportunity to build on a number of exchanges that have already taken place between Wade Deacon High School and No.12 Middle School as part of the ongoing scheme which started in October 2009 for pupils, staff and students. As with all visits, the school would like to ensure that pupils who would normally be financially excluded from undertaking this type of visit can participate. As part of the overall fundraising the potential grant from HBC would provide a significant contribution to achieving this aim.

The school values the strong links that it and HBC have with Tongling, and participants in previous exchanges have found that the benefits of learning about another culture and language are immense. During this visit to Tongling there will be a Drama Workshop and pupils will create a performance. There will also be a music project in which Wade Deacon pupils compose and original piece of music written for Chinese Instruments. Pupils in No 12 Middle school will then play it and record a video of the music, using the traditional instruments and send it back to Halton.

The Business and Communication students will get the chance to visit different institutions both in large areas and small local areas. They will gain an insight into how businesses operate in China and discuss with their peers what they know about businesses in and around Tongling. Upon their return the students will disseminate what they have learnt to other students in school and those on the business course.

The trip includes:

- 29th March 2012 to 6th April 2012
- Total Project Cost: £32,000
- Grant requested: £2,000

St Chad's Catholic and Church of England High School requests 10% contribution to support pupils in their continued fundraising for a trip to Tongling.

The application received from St Chad's High School requests funding to support the ongoing Exchange Programme with No. 3 High School in Tongling.

The visit will provide an opportunity to build on a number of exchanges that have already taken place between St Chad's High School and No.3 High School as part of the ongoing scheme which started in 2004 for pupils, staff and students. Each year St Chad's High School employ a teacher from Tongling No. 3 School to deliver the Mandarin Chinese curriculum. Pupils and staff from the School have visited Tongling on five occasions and held reciprocal visits on four occasions.

As part of St Chad's scholarship programme, eleven students from Tongling have spent a month studying at the school.

The school values the strong links that it and HBC have with Tongling, and participants in previous exchanges have found that the benefits of learning about another culture and language are immense.

The visit will include 10 pupils from years 10 and 11 along with two supervising staff. Pupils will work with the Chinese students on comparing the two education systems, presenting their findings to peers. Upon their return this presentation along with presentations on their experiences will be included in the planned China evening.

The trip includes:

- 10 day visit; 16th March 2012 to 23rd March 2012
- Total Project Cost: £19,000
- Grant requested: £2,000

3.5 As with all visits, the groups would like to ensure that participants who would normally be financially excluded from undertaking this type of visit can participate. As part of the overall fundraising the potential grant from HBC would provide a significant contribution to achieving this aim.

3.6 All schemes offer value for money and there are currently sufficient funds in the 2011/2012 Town Twinning budget to support the applications in providing the amount requested.

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 should be advised that the guidance supports applications from any group or organisation and all schools within the Borough as long as the applicant meets the grant criteria. It**

should also be noted that grants given to applicants will be awarded dependant upon the location visited. Grants normally support up to a maximum 50% of the total costs of the project.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Pupils and students 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, the 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(s)

- 9.1 The trips will take place between 1st March and 6th April 2012. Please note Wade Deacon's visit to Tongling crosses the end of the financial year 2011/2012.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.