

<b>Decision maker:</b>	Cabinet member for Resources 24 March 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Twinning
<b>Report by:</b>	Head of customer, community and democratic services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	Potentially All
<b>Key decision (over £250k):</b>	No

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## 1. Purpose of report

To provide sufficient information to enable the Cabinet Member for Resources to consider the way forward for Twinning following the Scrutiny Review carried out in 2009 and the cut in funding in the 2011/12 to 2015/16 Revenue budget and to enable the Cabinet Member for Resources to decide on the preferred option.

## 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Resources decides

- (1) to remind the Chairs of the Duisburg and Haifa Twinning Committees of the role the Resources portfolio has with regard to twinning and associated arrangements and to specifically include the responsibilities listed in 4.3 of the report.
- (2) that with more limited resources, the Cabinet Member for Resources will consider applications for funding via the attached application form, supported by and based on the committees' plans for the year; a Resources Portfolio meeting will then consider in June/July 2011, applications received by a deadline to be determined.
- (3) whether or not unspent balances from the Duisburg and Haifa Twinning Committees should continue to be carried forward or be returned to the corporate balance at the end of each year.
- (4) that option 1 outlined in 5.1 be adopted pending an improved financial position when funding can be provided to consider option 2.
- (5) that for the time being the Resources Portfolio continue to perform the overarching Committee role for the twinning function and that the effectiveness of this arrangement be reviewed in due course at which time the need for developing the decision making supporting structure, (for example the possible establishment of sub committees), having regard to

the future level of involvement in twinning and friendship associations, will be assessed with a recommendation to Cabinet and Council if required.

### **3. Background**

3.1 Twinning was the subject of a scrutiny review which reported its findings in November 2009. Due to changes within the service responsible for overseeing key elements of twinning at that time, the officer's response in February 2010 recommended that a further report be written concerning twinning arrangements generally once the service had been reviewed. This is the report referred to and is before the Cabinet Member for Resources for decision today.

3.2 Key findings from the scrutiny review included:

- Twinning has considerable value in terms of promoting friendships and links with other countries and generating considerable interest, tourism and business in the city.
- If twinning is to be successful and flourish it must have clear political support
- Ownership of twinning arrangements is essential to its success, there is currently no clear responsibility for them
- There are no clear working guidelines in place and consequently the approach seems reactive and piecemeal.
- There is a need for a focussed twinning programme with clear aims and objectives.
- The benefits of twinning links are not being adequately promoted to the public.
- If additional expenditure is recommended, it must be justified in terms of benefits.
- The effectiveness of the Caen Foundation needs to be monitored.
- The impact of the closure of Portsmouth Visitor Information Centre (VIC) to attend Caen Fair every year is detrimental to Portsmouth.

3.3 Since the original report, the two services (Cultural Services and Customer, Community & Democratic Services) responsible for over-seeing twinning activity have made or are making significant reductions to staff. In addition Portsmouth VIC have stopped attending the Caen Fair.

3.4 Contrary to bullet point three of 3.2 above, there is already clear responsibility within the City Council for twinning arrangements which form one of the terms of reference of the Resources Portfolio established in May 2008, as set out below:-

“Twinning and other forms of friendship or association with other cities and communities”

3.5 The Revenue Budget agreed by Council on 8 February 2011, reduced funding directly associated with twinning from approximately £18k per

annum ( with an additional circa £5k per annum in staff time paid by the service towards printing and administration) to £8k per annum.

Of the three twinning committees, only Caen return any unspent balance to corporate balances at the end of each year. Duisburg and Haifa currently retain any unspent balances and are able to carry them forward into future years.

- 3.6 At present the two committees in place for Duisburg and Haifa manage their budget, allocate grants and are responsible for promoting economic, educational and cultural links. The cabinet member for resources is invited to their committee meetings.

Caen does not have an actual committee nor does it receive administrative support from PCC.

#### **4. The Way Forward**

- 4.1 Clearly there has been some confusion over responsibility and ownership of twinning arrangements within PCC and this needs to be addressed.

- 4.2 The current terms of reference for Resources portfolio includes comprehensively drafted wording to deal with all aspects of twinning and associated arrangements and this portfolio can therefore be used to manage all three twinning committees with immediate effect.

- 4.3 The Cabinet Member for Resources could remind the Chairs of the two Twinning Committees of the role the Resources portfolio has with regard to twinning and associated arrangements and could specifically include the following responsibilities:

- Financial control of twinning resources. (twinning committees will be invited to bid for project finance from the twinning/international budget held by the Cabinet Member for Resources).
- Strategic planning and management of the City Council's twinning/international relations
- Appointment of City Council representatives on the twinning committees.
- Sister links – management of sister links with Maizuru, Sydney, Zha Lai Te Qi, Portsmouth Virginia, Portsmouth New Hampshire and Lakewood Colorado.
- Evaluation and recommendation of existing and new twinning and link arrangements.

#### **5. Options for Consideration**

##### **5.1 Option 1 – review funding and cease officer support**

Under this option funding would be managed and monitored by the Cabinet Member for Resources in accordance with its existing powers but each individual twinning committee would manage its own administration from the start of the new Municipal Year.

Case For	Case Against
<p>Ensures remaining resource within services deal with core business rather than administrative support of the individual committees and associated saving of circa £5k per annum.</p> <p>Would provide consistency in terms of support to committees as Caen does not receive admin support.</p> <p>Would ensure any funding is allocated on case by case basis and is therefore more accountable.</p>	<p>Individual committees would have to provide own administrative support and associated costs with effect from the new Municipal Year.</p>

## 5.2 Option 2 – Strengthen and resource accordingly

Under this option many of the scrutiny panel’s suggestions would be implemented . Additional dedicated resource would be required with a key role to seek and secure funding opportunities in this field.

Case For	Case Against
<p>Options for external funding and partnership working fully investigated and utilised.</p> <p>Lord Mayor’s role potentially key</p> <p>Would be able to achieve recommendations from scrutiny review</p>	<p>Circa £50k initial funding required for additional dedicated resource.</p> <p>Distraction from core business for democratic, events and finance staff still required to administer individual committees and cost of circa £5k per annum associated with this work</p>

## 6. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is not felt to be necessary at this stage.

## 7. Head of Legal Services’ Comments

Under Portsmouth City Council’s Constitution, the terms of reference for the Resources portfolio appear under Part 2 and include” twinning and other forms of friendship or association with other cities and communities”

Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has Social well-being powers to promote economic, social and well being of residents and the City.

**8. Head of Finance's comments –**

A sum of £8000 is included for Twinning activities within this portfolio's 2011/12 approved revenue budget.

Signed: .....

**Louise Wilders**  
**Head of customer community & democratic services**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed by: