

Title of meeting: Resources Committee

Date of meeting: 27th January 2020

Subject: International Relationship Strategy 2020 - 2025

Report by: Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To outline to the Cabinet Member the proposed International Relationship Strategy 2020 - 2025 in order to enable effective planning and use of staffing resources on this important growth area for the Council.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Resources adopts this proposed International Relationship Strategy 2020 - 2025.**
- 2.2 **That the Twinning Advisory Group is re-activated to provide effective oversight on the delivery of twinning with a meeting to be held before 31st March 2020.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Following a review in 2017/18 an Internal Audit report highlighted the lack of overall strategy to support the varied and diverse nature of city's twinning relationships and as a result, it has been felt appropriate to bring a suggested initial five-year strategy to this committee for consideration.
- 3.2 The initial findings of the audit report were brought to Resources Committee for consideration in October 2018 at which time officers were recommended to develop a comprehensive strategy exploring the aims and objectives of the PCC twinning relationships. The unknowns in regard to the Brexit position has delayed officers returning with the report until there was a fuller understanding of the position as these circumstances will have a direct impact on the relationship with two of our oldest twin relationships, Caen and Duisburg.
- 3.3 The proposed International Relationship Strategy outlines how the historical and diverse relationships Portsmouth currently has with a number of significant

international cities can be focused and supported to enable them to deliver more effectively with the limited resources available. Key to this is the identification of five priorities which the activities should be working to deliver which in turn link to the city's five corporate priorities.

- 3.4 The strategy also highlights a proposed process for consideration of any future new city to city relationships in order to ensure appropriateness of the potential relationship and clarity on what the benefits will be to Portsmouth specifically.
- 3.5 There is no legal requirement for the Council to have an International Relationship Strategy however in order to help prioritise work and deliver it with an appropriate timescale the Strategy will be invaluable.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The Audit review found that officers were keeping very diligent records of all twinning related activity however the lack of strategic overview was resulting in a reactive as opposed to pro-active series of activities occurring with the other cities. Portsmouth will now seek to ensure that all twinning and international activities support the delivery of the priorities which will in turn also support longer term planning. This is important as it is understood that co-ordination of activities with our other linked cities can take longer to organise.
- 4.2 The adoption of a new International Relationship Strategy will enable us to work more efficiently both with UK partners but also with the international offices of the twin cities. It is very much hoped that this strategy will provide the basis for more strategic discussions with each of the cities Portsmouth has a relationship with which will be especially welcomed with the current changing circumstances of a post Brexit country. The reactivation of the Twinning Advisory Group will also support further strategic oversight of the wide range of twinning and international activities.
- 4.3 The planning of work will also enable officers to seek new tranches of funding to support work going in to the future as well as ensuring that all activities have a tangible positive legacy for the city. Additionally jointly agreed policy objectives for each of the linked cities and specific operational results identified will help deliver strategically for all the cities involved.
- 4.4 If adopted a detailed series of actions will be devised and scheduled for each city relationship and will form an on-going Action Plan for delivery. This will also enable activities devised and programmed by any of the community groups to also be included so there is a comprehensive list of activities with each of the linked cities regardless of how they are being funded.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1 A preliminary Integrated Impact Assessment is attached.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The promotion and pursuit of town twinning arrangements and other forms of international links as described in the report are not underpinned by any specific statutory scheme or requirements and are discretionary for the Council.
- 6.2 Accordingly there are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1 There is currently no dedicated ongoing budget to support the proposed International Relationship Strategy 2020 - 2025 and the re-activation of the Twinning Advisory Group.
- 7.2 Funding to support twinning activities has previously been identified on an ad hoc basis, this practice is expected to continue.

.....
Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix A: Portsmouth City Council International Relationship Strategy 2020 - 2025

Appendix B: Portsmouth's Twinning, Sister & Friendship Links

Appendix C: Integrated Impact Assessment

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

.....
Signed by: