

Report to: Regeneration Panel

Date: 18 March 2009

Subject: Update of Twinning Activities

Report of: Executive Director of Environmental Services

Contact officer: Aline Domeau 01942 828950

Purpose / summary: To provide updated information regarding the twinning activities with Angers, France.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: N/A

Recommendation / decision: Members note the contents of the report.

The decision will be made as a result of this report and will be published within 48 hours

Risks / Implications:

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Policy: N/A

Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted? N/A

Wards affected: N/A

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A full diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached as an appendix to this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached as an appendix to this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution? **No**

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget? **No**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No**

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x		x
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
Regeneration 18 March 2009			

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 6 March 2009

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Wigan has been twinned with Angers since 1988.
- 1.2 Every year Wigan and Angers exchange their ambassadors. Wigan sends an envoy / ambassador to Angers to represent the town and to provide support to the twinning needs of the population and the town in order to develop new links between Anger and Wigan. The job of ambassador is to encourage the twinning by promoting his/her hometown and his culture.
- 1.3 Each year when the new ambassador arrives (at the beginning of October) they follow up on existing projects, develop new projects and respond directly to requests for assistance within the community.
- 1.4 There are 6 main areas of activity undertaken through the Twinning Programme. These activities fall under the broad headings of education, twinning promotion, exchanges, support for local groups, the official delegations and individual requests.

2.0 Education

- 2.1 One of the core activities in the Twinning role is the work carried out in local schools and in particular providing presentations on French life and culture. In the last quarter of 2008 the following schools benefited from such a presentation;

Fred Longworth High School – Tyldesley
St Catharine's CE Primary – Wigan
Parklee Community –Atherton
Woodfield Primary School –Wigan
Standish St Wilfred's CE – Wigan
Garrett Hall Primary – Tyldesley
Worsley Mesnes Primary School – Wigan
St John Fisher Catholic High School – Wigan
Cansfield Community High School – Wigan
Shevington High School – Shevington

- 2.2 In addition to this regular feature of the activity programme, work has been ongoing in supporting the twinning activities of St Philips CE Primary School / Ecole Notre-Dame de la Miséricorde. This role has included assistance in putting the 2 schools in contact and providing support and assistance in translating emails as required. This twinning arrangement has been in place since October 2008 and is being supported and monitored on an ongoing basis.

3.0 Twinning Promotion

- 3.1 Angers, with its twin towns across Europe, is attempting to establish an internet based platform that would link all its twin towns including Wigan. The original intention was to have the platform operating from May 2009 however some delays have been experienced and further work is ongoing. No date is currently fixed for the new web site to start operating.
- 3.2 A twinning column is to be created to appear in local press to inform people in Wigan about the twinning activities and look for support in areas such as work

placements, host families, accommodations, pen pals etc. The column will be updated and feature on a regular cycle.

- 3.3 As an example of the type of interesting one off initiatives that emerge through the twinning programme a 'postal art' competition launched in Angers by the justices library has recently been featured on the twinning web pages. This competition has also been promoted through libraries, schools, the Angers Twining Association and Leigh French circle.

4.0 Exchanges and Support for Local Groups

- 4.1 A number of exchange visits are being arranged and supported through the twinning service involving sporting clubs in Wigan and Angers, these include football, American football, swimming, water polo and table tennis.

- 4.2 In August 2009 around 40 members from Office De Cooperation Internationale D'Angers will visit and stay in Wigan for a 5 day exchange. The Office De Cooperation Internationale D'Angers is the Angers Twining Association counterpart. The role of the ambassadress in this exchange will be to support the Angers Twining Association in assisting in the identification of activities relating to the theme 'food and drink'.

5.0 Delegation

- 5.1 The 2009 Twining Delegation exchange between Angers and Wigan whilst in the current work programme it is not yet at the stage where detailed information is available.

6.0 Individual Requests

- 6.1 The twinning service continues to respond to individual requests for assistance across a range of activities from translations through to the identification of potential pen pals, host families and work placements.

7.0 Future Activities

- 7.1 Future ideas under consideration through the twinning programme include;
- Music exchanges – to find music bands in Angers that would be willing to come to Wigan and exchange with a band from Wigan;
 - Stitching exchanges – in October 2008, a stitching group from Worsley Mesnes neighbourhood created 2 twinning tapestries which have been displayed in Grand Arcade. A potential twinning opportunity with a similar group in Angers is being investigated.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The twinning relationship between Wigan and Angers remains strong and the levels of activity appear to have grown in both level and scope since the anniversary celebrations in 2008.
- 8.2 The next few months will be focused on the promotion to support people in finding work placements, a particularly challenging task in the current economic climate. Work will also commence on the delegation exchange for 2009.

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section: Environmental Services Department

Policy/Service Area: Economic Regeneration Office

Person Completing Form: Aline Domeau

Date: 23/02/09

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race		X	Disability		X
Ethnicity		X	Gender		X
Age		X	Religion		X
Class		X	Sexual Orientation		X

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

N/A

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

N/A

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

N/A

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

N/A

Timescale

N/A

Responsibility

N/A

Comments

N/A

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan

Yes

Section/Team Plan

Other (Specify)

Date for further review