

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

**Provost's Sub-Committee of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
4 September 2012****TWINNING VISIT TO COGNAC, FRANCE – OCTOBER 2012****Report by Head of Democratic Services****ABSTRACT**

This report refers to an invitation extended to the Council for the Provost to visit Cognac, France from 9 to 12 October 2012.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Provost's Sub-Committee agree that the invitation to the Provost to visit Cognac, France from Tuesday 9 to Friday 12 October 2012 be accepted; and the Council is represented by the Provost, supported by the Council Officer, on the visit.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Perth & Kinross Council's twinning link with Cognac dates back to 26 October 1991, when the Twinning Agreement was signed in Perth.
- 2.2 In October 1992, Provost Alex Murray visited Cognac and signed a second agreement, reinforcing the commitment to the original twinning partnership.
- 2.3 The twinning link has been very successful with numerous reciprocal visits taking place each year between the Friends Organisations in Perth and Kinross and Cognac.
- 2.4 In 2010, the Mayor of Cognac, at the Council's invitation, visited Perth to participate in the Perth800 celebrations.

In 2011, the Mayor of Cognac and a delegation of around 30 visitors from Cognac visited Perth to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the original Twinning Agreement.

In 2012, the Mayor of Cognac, at the Council's invitation, visited Perth to participate in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

- 2.5 The last official visit to Cognac by the Provost of Perth and Kinross was in September 2003, to celebrate the Festival of the Grape Harvest.
- 2.6 The Mayor of Cognac has invited the Provost to visit Cognac from Tuesday 9 to Friday 12 October 2012, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Twinning Agreement in Cognac in 1992.
- 2.7 Twenty four members of the Friends of Cognac Association will be visiting Cognac to participate in the celebrations from 9 to 12 October 2012.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Provost's Sub-Committee agree to accept the invitation and approve the visit to Cognac, France from 9 to 12 October 2012, with the Council being represented by the Provost, supported by the Council Officer.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Ville de Cognac will meet the costs of accommodation during the twinning visit for the Council delegation.

- 4.2 The costs associated with the visit are anticipated to be :

Flights for Provost and Council Officer	£ 600
Airport transfers for Provost and Council Officer	£ 120
Civic Gifts	<u>£ 250</u>
Total	<u>£ 970</u>

- 4.3 This sum will be met from the 2012/2013 civic hospitality budget.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Provost and the Chief Executive have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009 – 2012

- 6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation.

- 6.2 The proposals in this report support the following objectives.

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy

7. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

- 7.1 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Assessment process (EqIA) and was assessed as not relevant for the purposes of the EqIA.

8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

- 8.2 The matter presented in this report was considered under the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Perth – Cognac twinning link continues to be very active, with reciprocal visits taking place each year. Accepting the invitation from the Mayor of Cognac demonstrates the depth of the twinning relationship that has developed over the last 20 years.

GILLIAN TAYLOR
Head of Democratic Services

Background papers: Invitation from Michel Gourinchas, the Mayor of Cognac, France.

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