

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Provost's Sub-Committee of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee

14 August 2019

PROPOSED TWINNING VISIT TO BYDGOSZCZ, POLAND – SEPTEMBER 2019

Report by Head of Legal and Governance Services (Report No. 19/215)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report advises of an invitation extended to the Provost to visit Bydgoszcz, Poland during September 2019, to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the twinning link.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 There is a strong historical link with the people of Poland and Perth, and the legacy left by the Polish service personnel who were based in this area during WW2 including those who have their final resting place here at the Polish War Graves at Westhill Cemetery, Perth.
- 1.2 In 1996, Perth & Kinross Council was approached regarding the formation of an official twinning link with Bydgoszcz. The feasibility of establishing this link was explored and the twinning agreement was signed by the Mayor and the Provost of the cities during official visits to and from Poland in 1998.
- 1.3 The establishment of a local twinning association, the 'Friends of Bydgoszcz' followed in 1999 with an aim to promote the link and encourage social, educational and cultural exchanges.
- 1.4 In Bydgoszcz the official 'Friends of Perth' twinning association was finally established in 2005/06.
- 1.5 The last visit to Bydgoszcz took place in 2008, by Provost Hulbert, with the last visit by the Mayor of Bydgoszcz being made in 2010.

2. PROGRESS OF THE LINK

- 2.1 In 2009, the Council agreed to accept an invitation by the Deputy Mayor of Bydgoszcz to send two writers from Perth and Kinross to the Bydgoszcz Literacy Triangle in May 2009.
- 2.2 In 2010, a delegation from Bydgoszcz attended the Perth800 celebrations held in Perth.
- 2.3 A delegation led by the Deputy Mayor of Bydgoszcz attended Perth in June 2012, to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee and the granting of city status to Perth.

- 2.4 Perthshire Brass made a tour of Bydgoszcz in the summer of 2014 and again last summer. They were supported on these occasions by both the Friends of Bydgoszcz and the Friends of Perth.
- 2.5 In September 2018, the Friends of Bydgoszcz sponsored a photographic competition in Bydgoszcz, the two young winners came to Perth accompanied by the Friends of Perth. The winners had an exhibition of their work displayed in the Museum and the Northern Campus at St John's Academy. The young people took photographs of Perth and Kinross to exhibit back in Poland.
- 2.6 During 2018, Friends of Bydgoszcz organised a recital of Polish Music held in St John's Kirk to commemorate both 20 years of twinning and to celebrate the centenary of the founding of modern Poland.
- 2.7 The networks and events that have been created through working with community groups such as the Friends of Bydgoszcz; the Polish Link Association; the Perth Polish Support Group and the 2 Polish Saturday schools that have been established by community members to ensure their young people have the opportunity to retain links to their own traditions and culture.
- 2.8 Over the last 10 years, the Provosts have received numerous invitations to visit Bydgoszcz, however the Council was unable to accept as the dates for a visit conflicted with Council business

3. POLISH LIFE IN PERTH

- 3.1 There is a significant economic and social impact made by members of the Polish community who have chosen to live, work and learn in Perth and Kinross.
- 3.2 There is a strong bond between Scottish and Polish people, and between the people of Perth and Bydgoszcz. Many lifelong friendships have been made from twinning visits.
- 3.3 The Provost is keen to demonstrate the Council's commitment to the twinning link and continue to work with the Mayor to establish both economic and cultural links.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Mayor of Bydgoszcz, Rafal Bruski has invited the Provost to visit Bydgoszcz during September 2019 to celebrate over 21 years of twinning; a visit from the Friends of Bydgoszcz is also scheduled to take place at this time.
- 4.2 The time proposed for the visit allows the Provost to accept the invitation to visit Bydgoszcz and for the Council to be represented by the Provost, Councillor W Robertson in his role as the Councillor appointed to the Friends of Bydgoszcz twinning organisation and supported by the Council Officer.

4.3 The Friends of Bydgoszcz will be visiting at the same time and it is hoped that they accompany the Council's delegation whilst in Bydgoszcz.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Perth – Bydgoszcz twinning link continues to be active, with reciprocal visits taking place each year. Accepting the invitation to visit Bydgoszcz demonstrates the depth of the twinning relationship that has developed over the last 21 years and our commitment to continuing to explore more opportunities for cultural and economic exchanges.

5.2 It is recommended that the Provost's Sub-Committee:

- (i) agrees that the invitation to visit Bydgoszcz, Poland from 27 September to 1 October 2019 be accepted;
- (ii) agrees that the Council is represented by the Provost, Councillor W Robertson and is supported by the Council Officer.

Author

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Lisa Simpson	Head of Legal and Governance Services	29 July 2019

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	No
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Legal and Governance	No
Risk	No
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	No
Communication	
Communications Plan	No

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The draft Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2017-2027 sets out five strategic objectives. The proposals in this report support the achievement of these objectives.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2018-2022 sets out five strategic objectives. The proposals in this report support the achievement of these objectives.

2. Resource Implications – Financial

- 2.1 The Mayor of Bydgoszcz has indicated that his office will meet the costs of accommodation during the twinning visit for the official Council delegation.

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

Flights for Provost, Councillor W Robertson and Council Officer	£1260
Transfers (fuel only)	50
Overnight accommodation	285
Civic Gifts	100
Sundries (including petty cash)	<u>200</u>
Total Civic costs	<u>£1895</u>

- 2.3 This sum will be met from the 2019/2020 twinning budget.
- 2.4 The Head of Finance has been consulted on the financial implications for the proposals and has indicated his agreement.

3. Consultation

Internal

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

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 4.1 Letter of invitation from Bydgoszcz, Poland.