

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – K.JONES

19 FEBRUARY 2015

SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

TWINNING ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Purpose of Report

To seek the Cabinet Board's approval to secede from the 1996 Twinning Partnership agreement and activities due to significant reductions in the Civic budget.

Background

In 1996 the former Borough of Port Talbot, Neath and northern Lliw Valley ceased to exist and under a new local government structure Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council was established, with the new Council taking over the twinning arrangements of each former Borough. In its essence the twinning of villages, towns and cities across Europe served as a post 2nd World War initiative to reconcile citizens of Countries who had previously been engaged in a state of warfare.

In October 1996 during the Conference of Twin Cities and Partnership Cities in Velenge, a 'Document of Friendship' was signed by Albacte, Esslingen, Schiedham, Udine, Vienne, Velenge and Neath Port Talbot. Pietrorow signed the Partnership at a later date.

Between 1996 and 2015 there have been many twinning exchanges, some of which have included School and Youth Exchanges. These activities have encouraged international understanding through educational, social and civic exchanges, and also shared experiences in the economic development of areas.

As time has passed, the twinning initiatives have been gradually diminishing in significance as the European Union has grown in importance. Consequently, given that this year marks the 70th anniversary of the 2nd World War it is considered appropriate to bring the Council's twinning activities to a formal end.

Members are advised that the small budget that have supported these activities have been removed in recent budgets as part of the Council's response to austerity measures.

Equality Impact Assessment

A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the Screening Assessment. It has been determined that this Policy does not require a Full Equality Impact Assessment and is considered unlikely to have any significant equality impact.

Financial Implications

The Twinning budgets have already been removed consequently this proposal has a neutral financial impact, aside from the modest cost of erecting a suitable commemorative plaque in the Council Chamber.

Recommendations

It is recommended as follows:-

- (a) that the proposal to formally secede from the 1996 Partnership arrangement be approved.

- (b) that a commemorative plaque be commissioned to recognise the Partnership and links of friendship which have developed between the twinned towns over the past two decades.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To bring the Council's involvement in the Twinning Partnership formally to an end.

List of Background Papers

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form

Letter of Secession from the Twinning Partnership

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TWINNING ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision will be implemented after the three day call-in period.

(b) Sustainability Appraisal	..	No Impact
Community Plan Impacts	..	No Impact
Economic Prosperity	..	No Impact
Education & Lifelong Learning	..	No Impact
Better Health & Wellbeing	..	No Impact
Environment & Transport	..	No Impact
Crime & Disorder	..	No Impact

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	..	No Impact
Sustainable Development	..	No Impact
Equalities	..	No Impact
Social Inclusion	..	No Impact

(c) **Consultation**

This item has been subject to informal consultation and discussions with relevant officers and stakeholders.