



Links in Europe - Kreis Heinsberg, Germany and Komarom - Esztergom, Hungary

Report by Director, Resources

Background

The Festival of Friendship took place in Midlothian from 14 to 18 October 2015. The Festival involved Music and Dance Groups from Midlothian and the Partner areas, Kreis Heinsberg, Germany and Komarom - Esztergom, Hungary.

Meeting to discuss future activities

The Members of the Official delegations met in Lasswade High School on Wednesday 14 October 2015 to review progress and discuss proposals for the future. A Note of the Meeting is attached (See **Appendix**).

The various developments and proposals will be taken forward in consultation with the Partners and appropriate agencies.

3 Resource and other Implications

3.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

3.2 Risk

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☒ None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

There is no impact.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

There is no impact.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The Community and Stakeholders were involved in this activity.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

Equality of opportunity is inbuilt.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable.

3.9 IT Issues

None.

4 Recommendation

The Committee is invited to note the report.

21 October 2015

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Background Papers:	File CG 5.12	(RGA/CW)

Appendix

Note of Meeting held in the Conference Room, Lasswade High School, Eskvale Drive, Bonnyrigg on Wednesday 14 October 2015 at 6.30pm.

Present:- Provost Wallace, Councillors Rosie and Russell; and Messrs Blair and Atack; Messrs Ramsay and Bourne; and Mr Galloway, all Midlothian; Landrat Pusch, Deputy Landrats Paffen and Tholen, Councillors Dahlmanns and Moll ; Messrs Schneider and Kremers; and Mrs Souza, all Kreis Heinsberg; and President Popovics, Councillors Turi, Zoltai and Michl; Dr. Veres, Mrs. Nagy and Ms Varga, all Komarom – Esztergom.

Welcome and Introduction

Provost Wallace welcomed those present and introduced the various topics that were to be discussed.

These included the following:-

Festival of Friendship

The Festival in Midlothian from 14 - 18 October 2015 was the ninth to take place since start of the Trilateral agreement. There had been visits to places of interest on three days and two concerts and other performances involving the Music, Song and Dance Groups. The event had been successful.

Landrat Pusch said that, whilst elections were to take place in Kreis Heinsberg on 23 October and 4 November 2015, he anticipated that an invitation would be extended to the Partners to take part in the next Festival of Friendship in Kreis Heinsberg in October 2017. President Popovicz, similarly, confirmed the intention to promote the next again Festival in Komarom – Esztergom in 2019. Provost Wallace said that whether the next Festival could take place in 2021 depended on resource being provided; and Mr Blair said that that was too far into the future for any financial commitment to be given.

Sports, Music, participation in regular events, Schools, Colleges and Work Placements

The Midlothian side confirmed interest in relation to the various activities which were designed to encourage linking activity across all sectors of the community, especially in relation to the Festival of Friendship and other activities that had been identified hitherto. In 2014, there had been contact with the Colleges in Eskbank / Edinburgh and those in Kreis Heinsberg and it was suggested that that be further developed.

Landrat Pusch confirmed that a successful pilot work experience programme had been inaugurated between Kreis Heinsberg and Midlothian, involving social care and special schools; and the return leg was being arranged.

He described the bi-lateral activities that had taken place so far in 2015, and opined that things were in good shape, eg in respect of exchanges involving Midlothian, as follows:-

August

Trommler, Pfeifer and Fanfarenkorps, Hoengern - Borthwick Pipe Band

October

Oberbruch Table Tennis Club – Penicuik Table Tennis Club
Geilenkirchen FE College to Midlothian
Penicuik Pipe Band – Doveren Band.

There had also been links with Komarom – Esztergom.

It was reported that Head Teachers in Midlothian had been asked to consider involvement of their schools and an endeavour would be made encourage the involvement of pupils. It was explained that where there was no perceived benefit, school exchanges had tended to diminish. However, there was optimism that such links could be developed through email, skype and other forms of electronic contact which eventually may lead to exchanges taking place. Exchanges involving Special Schools also had potential and there were good opportunities for adult learners. In relation to Sports, there was potential for involvement. More exchanges of Music groups were planned and discussions were to take place later that evening involving Messrs Schneider and Krings; and Midlothian Council's Education Support Officer in the Expressive Arts.

President Popovics agreed that there had been a fair measure of activity between Komarom – Esztergom and Kreis Heinsberg but said that there had not been a lot of activity involving Midlothian. He said that he would welcome any offers of interest so as enable the development of contact and involvement of all sections of the community. He said that a new European funding stream had been introduced for trilateral and quadrilateral exchanges; and it may be possible to attract support from that source.

Landrat Pusch offered to host a meeting to set this in context.

Involvement in Youth Exchange

In relation to the success of future exchanges, the benefit of involvement by young people had to be reinforced. Mr Galloway mentioned good experiences in East Lothian for exchanges involving adult learners in Germany.

Mining Museums

As regards the common heritage of the Partner areas, namely, Coal;and the suggestion that a tri-lateral link between the Mining Museums be formed, it was reported that the new Director of the Scottish Mining Museum in Midlothian was keen to develop links and a meeting had been arranged with her on Friday 17 October 2015.

President Popovics emphasised the importance of maintaining mining traditions and suggested trilateral cooperation between Mining Museums in making a joint application for European funding.

Science and Technology

It was reported that, contacts in the Science / Technology Sector may be possible and whilst Midlothian's Bio Technology Sector did not appear to share a common thread, there were positive developments that perhaps could be investigated, eg in Komarom – Esztergom, in relation to automotive construction and Kreis Heinsberg, through joint working arrangements with the University of Aachen, though at this stage it was unclear how they would develop.

The Meeting terminated at 7.45pm