

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 31 March 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Environment & Economy

**SUBJECT:** Applications for Twinning Grant

**WARDS:** Murdishaw, Grange, Brookvale and Hale

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to give details of an application being made to the Town Twinning Grant Fund.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That a grant of £1500 be awarded to Halton & District Junior Football League to visit Berlin Football Club in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Germany.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 In April 1996, Halton Borough Council set up a Grant Fund to assist in enabling all members of the community to access and gain benefit from the Council's International Links.

3.2 Since 1996, a number of groups have accessed the fund to undertake exchange visits to Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Germany; Leiria in Portugal; Usti-nad-Labem in the Czech Republic; and Tongling City in China, including the Halton Swimming Team; Halton Youth Service; Halton & District Junior Football League; PHAB; St. Chad's School, and Fairfield High School who have previously hosted teachers and pupils from Tongling. These links have resulted in a number of reciprocal visits from each town.

3.3 Participants in previous exchanges have found that the benefits of learning about another culture and language are immense. A wide range of activity in the Borough has been facilitated by the provision of grant aid and has given an opportunity to those who would not otherwise be able to participate.

3.4 The application received from Halton & District Junior Football League is requesting funding to visit Berlin Football Club in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Germany.

The group consists of fourteen players from the under thirteen's junior football team who will be accompanied on the trip by four supervising adults.

The group has been invited back to Germany in June 2011 to take part in the annual football tournament representing not only Halton but the

United Kingdom as they are the only British team taking part in the event.

Our records show that Halton & District Junior Football League have previously been granted money from the Town Twinning budget, the last time being in May 2007 when they were granted £3,000 to host visitors from Marzahn who were taking part in the tournament.

- 3.5 The visit will provide an opportunity to continue the educational and sporting activities that have been established over the past five years. During this time Halton & District Junior Football Club have both attended and hosted the tournament.

By encountering a new country, experiencing a different language and seeing historic sites, participants in the event get positive encouragement to aim higher in their achievements.

Attendance at the event also allows the participants to see and understand how different cultures understand sports requirements, environmental issues and their history etc which are then discussed, used and implemented when they return to school.

- 3.6 The applicant has identified a total cost of **£7,590**, this is broken down into:
- Travel costs of £2019.94 which includes flights, baggage check-in and booking fees for 18 people
  - Accommodation costs of £2,923.07 for 5 nights accommodation for 18 people
  - Meals for 18 people (lunch and dinner) as these are not provided by the hosts or the hotel; which totals £1,810
  - Insurance costs of £196.75 which includes cover for the participants for the period whilst away, along with 'player cover' for the matches
  - Entrance fees to local attractions of £195.92. One of the excursions planned is to take the team to visit the Olympic Stadium.
  - Other costs of £444.32 for payment of taxi transfer to and from the airport along with 18 travel passes to enable to the participants to get to and from the events during the week
- 3.7 The club will also be using their own funds which totals **£5,600**; which is broken down as follows:
- Club funds of £2,000
  - Sponsorship contributions of £1,000
  - At least £100 contributions from each participant which totals £1,800
  - So far, at least £800 from fundraising activities

Fundraising activities are still taking place with a view to raising an additional £2,000 to cover the current shortfall. Should this not be reached the team will apply for funds from the league or ask participants to increase their level of contribution to cover the deficit.

When notifying the club of their success the offer letter will stipulate that the club must provide proof that the additional funds have been secured and that failure to do this will result in them having to repay the Town Twinning Grant back to Halton Borough Council.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The application is in line with the Borough's European Strategy, in particular the promotion of international links, which seeks to offer the opportunity to participate to the whole population of Halton.
- 4.2 The application will also make a major contribution to Halton's Strategic Priorities of:
- Supporting Children and Young People in Halton
  - Healthy Halton

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In reaching a decision concerning the level of grant to be awarded, Members are requested to note that the twinning grant budget for 2010/11 has been undersubscribed, with a balance of £9,890 remaining.
- 5.2 After the reduction in European funding in 2006 the Council is placing emphasis on developing economic (transnational), as well as cultural and social twinning links, and as a result, there will be added pressure on the budget in the next financial year.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Participants who have taken part in previous town twinning exchanges have found that the benefit of learning about another culture and language are immense and encourages them to have a higher level of aspiration.

##### **6.2 Healthy Halton**

Participants who have taken part in previous town twinning exchanges have found that the benefits of taking part in physical activity has helped in the promotion of well being and created a basis for the development of a lifestyle with good health.

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 Measures are in place to minimise risks to the delivery of the project. For example, as part of the terms and conditions of grant, applicants are required to complete a risk assessment proforma

#### **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The project focuses on promoting the Council's priorities in Children & Young People in Halton.

**9.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

9.1 The trip will take place between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

**10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.