

REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL - 24 AUGUST 2026

REPORT ON: TWINNING

REPORT BY: HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES

REPORT NO: 173-2026

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this Report is to make proposals regarding Twinning with the City of Dundee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Dundee City Council: -

- (i) reaffirms its support for and commitment to its current relationships with Alexandria, Nablus, Orleans, Wurzburg and Zadar;
- (ii) agrees that the City of Dundee's primary focus will be on economic development with Alexandria, Nablus, Orleans, Wurzburg and Zadar;
- (iii) continues a rolling programme of invitations to Alexandria, Nablus, Orleans, Wurzburg and Zadar to coincide with cultural and social events in Dundee; and
- (iv) agrees that a grant of up to £1000 annually will continue to be available to established Twinning associations.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Executive Director of Corporate Services has confirmed the agreement of these recommendations will result in expenditure up to a maximum of £5,000 (i.e. £1,000 per twinning organisation) for Democratic & Legal Services Division within Corporate Services. These costs are already assumed within the approved Revenue Budget 2026/27.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

- 4.1 After the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940, three submarines of the Free French Navy were based in Dundee for the duration of the Second World War and fought on behalf of the Allies. Dundonians set up a club in the Nethergate for the Free French submariners and thus Dundee had a particular connection with the French in wartime so that when, after D-Day, it was proposed that Scottish cities and towns should "adopt" newly liberated French cities and towns Dundee "adopted" Orleans.
- 4.2 Dundee's Lord Provost, Sir Garnet Wilson, was invited to Orleans in 1946 to be officially thanked for Dundee's help.
- 4.3 This was followed in 1947 by a return visit to Dundee by members of Orleans Council led by the Mayor, Doctor Pierre Chevalier.
- 4.4 The first school exchange between secondary school pupils took place in 1947.
- 4.5 This was the first Twinning link involving Dundee.
- 4.6 Links were subsequently also formed with Alexandria, Nablus, Wurzburg and Zadar.
- 4.7 These links were reaffirmed in 1996 when Dundee City Council came into being. (Article V of the Minute of Meeting of Dundee City Council of 28 March 1996 refers) and a grant has been

made available to established Twinning Associations to assist them with their activities since 1997 (Article III of the Minute of Meeting of Dundee City Council of 28 August 1997 refers).

4.8 Since 1996, the Lord Provost and their counterparts in Alexandria, Nablus, Orleans, Wurzburg and Zadar have exchanged visits, primarily to facilitate attendance at cultural and social events in the relevant cities and towns.

4.9 Twinning as originally conceived was designed to: -

- signify the post Second World War spirit of reconciliation.
- heal the divisions caused by conflict.
- seek support for the process of rebuilding the world.

Some of these purposes have been progressed or fulfilled in the intervening years.

It might also be argued that Twinning does not have as much relevance in today's Society since cheap intercontinental travel has become much more widely available and the advent of better communications technology, including the Internet, means that physical visits to other countries are no longer necessary in many cases.

Finally, the current and projected pressure on public finances means that all public sector activities have to be justified to Council Taxpayers. (In this connection, and for context, the Twinning budget is now £6,000 per annum).

4.10 However, it is submitted that Twinning still has relevance and continues to be worthy of support:

- to promote the fostering of friendship and understanding in the world.
- to encourage visits by individuals and groups between the cities and towns, developing personal contacts and developing cultural, educational and recreational activities.
- to promote and encourage twinning projects tending to the promotion of economic development of the cities and towns.

Out of all these purposes, commercial activities and the promotion of economic development have a particular importance.

4.11 Discussions regarding Twinning matters have hitherto been held on an informal basis with individual Twinning Associations as appropriate or necessary. In future, formal meetings will be held twice yearly with all Twinning Associations invited to discuss matters of mutual interest.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.