

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Provost's Sub Committee – 10 February 2010****PROPOSED TWINNING VISIT TO PSKOV, RUSSIA – MAY 2010****Report by Head of Democratic Services****ABSTRACT**

This report refers to an invitation extended to the Council for the Provost and a delegation to visit Pskov, Russia in May 2010.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) The invitation to Pskov in May 2010 be accepted, and
- (ii) The Council be represented by the Provost and one other Councillor, supported by a Council Officer on the visit to Pskov in May 2010.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Perth & Kinross Council's twinning with Pskov dates back to 1990 when former Provost Alex Murray signed a twinning agreement on behalf of Perth & Kinross District Council.
- 2.2 The last visit to Pskov by a delegation from the Council was in 2005. Since then the Friends of Pskov group has undergone a number of changes and there is renewed enthusiasm to develop and promote the link.
- 2.3 The Mayor of Pskov paid a return visit late in 2005 when it was agreed that efforts would be made to further exchanges in the fields of arts and culture.
- 2.4 Prior to this a young artist from Perth had travelled to Pskov to take part in an international festival as winner of a competition organised by the Provost and the Head of Arts & Heritage.
- 2.5 The Friends of Pskov represented the Council in 2003 at the 1100 Jubilee of the City. A stained glass window was presented on behalf of the people of Perth & Kinross.

3. INVITATION TO THE PROVOST TO VISIT PSKOV IN MAY 2010.

- 3.1 The future of the twinning between Perth and Pskov depends on the commitment of Perth & Kinross Council. The new Head of City in Pskov, Mr Ivan Tsetsersky has indicated that he is keen to promote the link as it is particularly important in terms of international goodwill, cultural exchanges and the support for emerging economies.

- 3.2 The Chairman of Friends of Pskov, Councillor Sandy Miller, has already visited Pskov in a personal capacity and has reported back that the Council there is eagerly awaiting the visit of the Provost and delegation to discuss the way forward for the twinning.
- 3.3 At its inaugural meeting on 5 November 2009, the International Outreach Member/Officer Working Group (IOMOWG) considered a number of issues in relation to the development of the twinning with Pskov, including a report by the secretary to the Friends of Pskov, Emily Justice, on her visit to Pskov to ascertain what opportunities there might be for joint Pskov/Perth projects.
- 3.4 At the meeting of the IOMOWG in November, it was noted that the Provost and the Lady Provost had been invited to visit Pskov in 2010. It is proposed that the Provost visits Pskov in May of this year. This would provide the opportunity to demonstrate the Council's commitment to the link and to support the local twinning association.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Chief Executive has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The costs involved in the Provost, one other councillor and the Council Officer travelling to Pskov amount to £1,440. The Lady Provost would travel at her own expense.
- 5.2 In addition to travel costs, an allowance of £250 would be made for civic gifts and sundry expenses.
- 5.3 Subject to the availability of resources, the total cost of the visit would be met from the twinning budget 2010 – 2011.

6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009 – 2012

The Council's Corporate Plan 2009 – 2012 lays out five objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation.

The proposals in this report support the following objectives.

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process and the determination was made that the items summarised in this report do not

require further assessment as they do not have an impact on people's wellbeing.

8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies.
- 8.2 The proposals presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the determination was made that the items summarised in this report do not require further action as they do not qualify as a plan, programme or strategy as defined by the Act.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Perth & Kinross – Pskov twinning offers opportunities for exchanges and new initiatives to take place in the future. The visit will demonstrate commitment to the link in the years ahead.

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