

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

24 June 2009

Twinning Arrangements with St Sauveur Lendelin

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Phil Street

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report asks the Council to approve the establishment of twinning arrangements with St Sauveur Lendelin.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Council welcomes and approves the arrangements for Bromsgrove to twin with St Saveur Lendelin in France.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Bromsgrove & District Twinning Association was formed about 30 years ago and the District has been formally twinned with the town of Gronau in Westphalia, Germany for 29 years.
- 3.2 This link is extremely valuable and involves annual visits between citizens of both towns and occasional visit by sports and cultural organisations. Furthermore, exchanges between councils, councillors and officers have taken place.
- 3.3 Ever since the Twinning Association was formed, there has been some demand for a link with a town in France. Efforts began to establish links in 1996 when two Association members made contact with St Sauveur Lendelin, a village about 6 miles north of the city of Coutances in Normandy.
- 3.4 There was some early contact made between people working in the health service and in education with their counterparts in St Sauveur Lendelin and this led to talks being opening for more wider-ranging link between the districts.
- 3.5 The nature of contact between the two towns moved further ahead in 1998 when a group of members of the Twinning Association made their first visit to St Saveur Lendelin as residents of Bromsgrove District. They were joined by the then Chairman of the Council.
- 3.6 As a consequence of this visit, the residents of St Sauveur formed their own twinning association (association de jumelage) and a declaration of

friendship was signed by the chairs of the two associations in Bromsgrove on 16th July 1999.

- 3.7 As with Gronau, visits take place every year with frequent additional trips, especially between individuals owing to the ease of travel and the friendships that have built up during this time.
- 3.8 St Sauveur Lendelin is about 40 miles south of Cherbourg on the Cotentin peninsula in Normandy. As well as being a large village, St Sauveur Lendelin gives its name to the District Council area (Canton) that includes an additional 12 surrounding villages.
- 3.9 The area is predominantly rural with many of the residents of St Sauveur working in farming and agriculture. Many also commute to the larger towns of Coutances, St Lô and Villedieu-les Pôeles.
- 3.10 The Twinning Association considers St Sauveur to be ideally suited for a strong link with the rural parts of Bromsgrove district. In recent years the Twinning Association has held a reception for St Saveur guests in Wythall and for the visit in June, Alvechurch will be the setting for one evening event.
- 3.11 The Twinning Association believe the link with St Sauveur is strong and mature enough to formalise this agreement at Council level. There is keen and enthusiastic support from opposite numbers in St Sauveur.
- 3.12 A signing ceremony is planned to take place on Friday 26th June in Bromsgrove town centre, close to the Housman statue. The event will involve Waseley Hills High School in providing the music and the Twinning Association Vice-President will carry out the introductions. The Chairman of the District Council will make a formal address and the mayor of St Sauveur and the Présidente of the St Sauveur Association will respond. On conclusion of the speeches the charter will be officially signed.
- 3.13 There are expected to be about 40 visitors from Saint Sauveur that will include several mayors of the villages. All Bromsgrove District and County councillors will be invited along with the chairs of parish councils.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of a formal twinning link for the Council is often questioned but this is believed to be minimal.
- 4.2 For the signing ceremony on June 26th, hospitality costs will be met by the Twinning Association leaving the Council to provide suitable facilities in the town centre such as an awning and PA system. The Council has also agreed to produce the charters to be signed. It is hoped that two of these, one in English and one in French would be hung at the Council House.
- 4.3 Signposts for Bromsgrove around the edge of the District usually show the link with Gronau. Over a period of time, as and when these are replaced, St Sauveur will be added. The additional costs would be

minimal. We would not expect all signs to be replaced simply because the link had been formalised.

- 4.4 Gronau is mentioned in a number of Council documents. Again the addition of St Sauveur could be done over a period of time and it is unlikely any immediate action would be necessary.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Not applicable.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Not applicable

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Not applicable.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	None
Environmental	None

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
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Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (Partnerships and Projects)	Yes
Executive Director (Services)	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	No
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

14. APPENDICES

Not applicable

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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