



Coventry City Council

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Public report

REPORT BACK ON CONFERENCE/SEMINAR

REPORT TO: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

30th August, 2006

REPORT OF: Lord Mayor, Cllr Shabbir Ahmed

TITLE: International City Forum "Culture and Economy"

DATE: 16th - 18th June 2006

VENUE: Kiel, Germany

1 Recommendation

1.1 The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to note the report on the Lord Mayor's civic visit to Kiel and the outcomes of the visit.

2 Background

2.1 The purpose of the visit to Kiel was to raise the profile of the City Council and the City of Coventry at an international level in the field of culture and economy by attending the International City Forum, which was part of a programme of events for Kiel Week.

2.2 Each year the City Council is invited to attend Kiel Week, the largest sailing/sports event in Europe. This year there were over 1,000 events scheduled with over 3.5 million visitors estimated to visit the area from all over the world. This included over 70 nationalities participating throughout the week.

2.3 In addition to the sailing and sporting activities Kiel also plays host to numerous other events including the International City Forum. The Forum invites twin cities of Kiel to participate in an exchange of information on a topical subject. This year the topic was culture and economy.

2.4 The Lord Mayor, Cllr Ahmed, was accompanied on the visit by Phil McGrahan, International Assistant.

3 Cost of attending

3.1 Costs for attending were as follows:

Return flights Birmingham to Kiel:	£414.20
City Council's Travel Insurance:	£32.68
Car parking at Birmingham Airport:	£19.99

Total £ 466.87

3.2 The flights and insurance for the Lord Mayor were covered by the Lord Mayor's Hospitality Budget while the flights, parking and insurance for Phil McGrahan were covered by the International Policy Budget. The costs of accommodation and meals were covered by the City of Kiel.

4 Benefits

4.1 The International City Forum was attended by practitioners in the fields of culture and business from approximately 10 cities throughout Europe. The conference opened with keynote speeches on the issue of culture and its role in the local economy. The conference then allowed time for discussion on the experience of each city.

4.2 Attendance at the opening of Kiel Week 2006, allowed the Lord Mayor to raise the profile of Coventry in Kiel at a very high profile national event, which was opened by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

4.3 The visit also provided Phil McGrahan with the opportunity to discuss potential projects to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the twinning between Coventry and Kiel in 2007. Potential projects include a possible EU funded twinning project focussing on social inclusion and the role of the EU.

4.4 During the visit a meeting with Karen Thomsen a teacher from the Ludwig-Erhard Schule in Kiel took place. She is currently exploring a relationship with Cardinal Wiseman School in Coventry. The meeting allowed Phil McGrahan to highlight the different funding available from the EU and also the British Council for such projects. Ms Thomsen has indicated that her school would be keen in contributing to the 60th Anniversary plans.

4.5 Dr. Lisa Homrich, Senior Teacher from the German-British Society expressed an interest in arranging events along with the Coventry Association for International Friendship to mark the 60 years of Twinning with Kiel in 2007.

4.6 The above mentioned contacts will prove essential when planning events for 2007.

List of background papers

Proper Officer: Roger Hughes, Head of Corporate Policy

Author: Phil McGrahan

Tel Number: 024 7683 3060

(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:

Cllr Shabbir Ahmed, Lord Mayor

Papers open to public inspection

Description of paper:

Location