

Leicester  
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARD

**DECISION TIMETABLE:**  
**CABINET**  
**STRATEGIC PLANNING & REGENERATION**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

**5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

---

**A NEW STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

---

**Report of the Service Director, Regeneration  
Environment, Regeneration & Development**

**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 This report provides a new strategic framework for the Council's international activities. It has been informed by a recent audit of overseas links activities.
- 1.2 The paper sets out how twinning and international work is currently approached by the City Council and recommends how International Development should be approached by the Council and its partners in the future.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Cabinet approval is sought to re-write and revise the Overseas Links Strategy to reflect the following:
- External funding opportunities for technical twinning activities;
  - The introduction of Performance Management and Best Value;
  - Linkages with mainstream programmes, policies & strategies;
  - The Council's new political structures;
  - A need for political and financial accountability; and
  - The need to co-ordinate international development work corporately.
- 2.2 Cabinet approval is sought to re-write and revise the Terms of Reference for the Overseas Links Working Party to reflect the Council's new approach to international development work.
- 2.3 Scrutiny Committee Members are asked to comment on the strategic priorities listed under Paragraph 2.1.
- 2.4 Scrutiny Committee Members are asked to comment on the proposed revision of the Overseas Links Working Party's Terms of Reference as detailed in Paragraph 2.2.

### 3. Summary

- 3.1 Overseas Links work comprises the Council's formal twinning links and other less formal links with local authorities and organisations from other countries. Leicester is currently twinned with five cities. These are:
- Krefeld (Germany);
  - Strasbourg (France);
  - Masaya (Nicaragua);
  - Chongqing (China); &
  - Rajkot (India).
- 3.2 Overseas Links is currently delivered within the framework of the "Strategy for Twinning & Linking" which was agreed by Committee in 1993. That Strategy sets out a broad framework for overseas links activities but does not provide a firm sense of strategic direction or performance indicators.
- 3.3 The modernisation of international work at a Government level provides a new strategic framework for overseas links. The re-alignment of external funding regimes will require local authorities to develop professional, technical links with partners from other European Union Member States and beyond.
- 3.4 Some of Leicester's existing twinned cities have modernised their approach to international work. There is increasingly an emphasis from some of Leicester's twinned cities (especially Strasbourg and Masaya) to develop technical, rather than civic, links with Leicester.
- 3.5 Most EU Community Initiatives require local authorities to work with partners from at least two other Member States. In particular, the EU is keen to encourage inter-regional co-operation across Europe.
- 3.6 Significant sums of grant funding are available to support these type of initiatives. In addition to this, the enlargement of the European Union to include Central and East European countries will require local authorities to develop partnerships in these new Member States. Structural Fund support from 2006 onwards will increasingly require UK based organisations to work with East European partners.
- 3.6 The main benefits of developing a new International Development Strategy will include:
- Grant funding: Access to European Union and other external sources of grant funding for technical links.
  - Cultural and educational exchanges: these will benefit schools, colleges and communities across the city.
  - Trade: increased trade links between Leicester and Leicester's international partners will contribute to the economic development of the city.
  - Provision for exchanges of experience and best practice at a European and international level.
  - Linkage with mainstream City Council and partner organisations' regional policies and strategies.
  - Developing a modern, professional approach to international work, which reflects the Council's approach to performance management and Best Value.

#### 4. **Financial & Legal Implications**

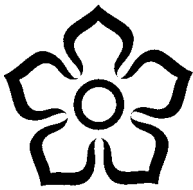
- 4.1 Limited funds are available for overseas links work. The Council's Overseas Links Controllable Budget for 2002/03 is £73,400.
- 4.2 Significant levels of grant funding are available from the European Union and other external sources to support technical twinning activities. These funds are delivered as programmes and as a consequence, grant funding is often subject to clearly defined rules and regulations. However, EU grant funding has been secured by Leicester City Council to pursue work with Rajkot and the Communauté Urbaine de Strasbourg have submitted a number of successful bids for EU grant funding.

#### 5. **Report Author**

Jeff Miller, Head of European & Regional Policy. Tel: 2660.

#### **DECISION STATUS**

<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Reason</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	<b>Executive (Cabinet)</b>



Leicester  
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

**DECISION TIMETABLE:**

**CABINET**

**2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING & REGENERATION**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**2002**

---

**A NEW STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

---

**Report of the Service Director, Regeneration  
Environment, Regeneration & Development**

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**2. Current position**

- 1.1 Following the review of the Lord Mayor's Office, the Council's twinning links work was transferred to Environment, Regeneration & Development. Officers have carried out an audit of Overseas Links work previously delivered by the Council and its partners. That audit identified a number of significant gaps in the provision. This paper sets out how these issues should be addressed within the context of evolving European policies and sets out a coherent framework for future activities.
- 1.2 Overseas Links work comprises the Council's formal twinning links and other less formal links with local authorities and organisations from other countries. Leicester is currently twinned with five cities. These are:
- Krefeld (Germany)
  - Strasbourg (France)
  - Masaya (Nicaragua)
  - Chongqing (China) &
  - Rajkot (India)
- 1.3 The original aims of overseas links activities can be broadly summarised as follows:
- To provide an economic benefit to Leicester.
  - To support cultural & educational exchanges.
  - To exchange experience & best practice.

- 1.4 Overseas Links is delivered currently within the framework of the “Strategy for Twinning & Linking” which was agreed by Committee in 1993. The Strategy sets out a broad framework for overseas links activities but does not provide a firm sense of strategic direction or performance indicators.
- 1.5 Activities are reported to the Overseas Links Working Party, which is chaired by Councillor Ramnik Kavia, Cabinet Lead for Strategic Planning and Regeneration. The Overseas Links Working Party provides a forum for Leicester’s Twinning Associations and the City Council to report on overseas links activities. The Working Party also considers applications for grant funding from each of the Associations.

### **3. Recent Policy Developments**

- 2.1 The re-alignment of external funding regimes will require local authorities to develop professional technical links with partners from other European Union Member States and beyond<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.2 The modernisation of international work at a Government level provides a new strategic framework for overseas links.
- 2.3 Enlargement of the European Union to include Central and East European countries will require local authorities to develop partnerships in these new Member States. Structural Fund support from 2006 onwards will increasingly require UK based organisations to work with East European partners.
- 2.4 Most EU Community Initiatives require local authorities to work with partners from at least two other member States. In particular, the EU is keen to encourage inter-regional co-operation across Europe. Significant sums of grant funding are available to support these type of initiatives.
- 3.5 Some of Leicester’s existing twinned cities have modernised their approach to international work. There is increasingly an emphasis from some of Leicester’s twinned cities (especially Strasbourg and Masaya) to develop technical, rather than civic, links with Leicester.
- 3.6 The Local Government Association (LGA) recently published their “Policy Position on International Development”. The LGA’s International Development Policy sets out why local authorities should be engaged in global sustainable development issues and formed part of the UK local government contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. Members of the Council’s Overseas Links Working Party have expressed their support for new policy.
- 3.7 According to the LGA “the involvement of local government in international development is not only justified for moral reasons. It is also a matter of self interest in a world that is increasingly interconnected and interdependent”.
- 3.8 Events that happen in far off parts of the world have significant impacts on local authorities and the communities they serve. The challenges that local authorities face in developing communities that are safe, sustainable, economically viable and inclusive are often global challenges that cannot be dealt with by local authorities in isolation but require partnerships at a local, regional, national and international level.
- 3.9 Globalisation means that local authorities face similar challenges and have a great deal to learn from each other. In this way the international role of local government contributes to a

---

<sup>1</sup> Sources of grant-funding could include the Department for International Development, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, the United Nations and the Council of Europe

greater understanding between people from different countries, communities and cultures. Consequently local authorities have a role to play in promoting peace, tolerance and inclusiveness at an international level.

### **3. A new International Development Strategy for Leicester**

#### **3.1 Aims**

The new strategy for International Development will aim to:

“work with Leicester’s international links to support sustainable development, economic development, cultural diversity and social justice for both Leicester and Leicester’s international partners”

#### **3.2 Objectives**

The Council’s new International Development Strategy will be open and inclusive. It is intended that local partners and Leicester’s current Twinning Associations will support the strategy’s main aims and objectives. The strategy will ensure that all international development work benefits both the Council and the people of Leicester. Consequently, the key objectives of the International Development Strategy will be:

- To access European and regional grant funding through trans-national partnerships.
- To promote trade links and contribute to the economic prosperity of the city.
- To seek grant funding to support the sustainable development of Leicester and Leicester’s international partners.
- To exchange experience and best practice in terms of strategy, policy and development.
- To promote cultural exchanges that demonstrate a real benefit to the City Council and the people of Leicester.
- To promote educational and young people’s exchanges which demonstrate a real benefit to education in Leicester and to young people living within the city.
- To promote social justice as set out in the White Paper on International Development “Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor”.
- To secure technical arrangements with European and international partners.

3.3 This thematic approach broadly reflects the themes set out in Leicester’s Community Plan. The International Development Strategy will contribute to the delivery of the Community Plan and will be designed to address the region’s economic, social and environmental priorities<sup>2</sup>.

3.4 Partnership working will enable the Council to deliver some of the objectives set out in this report. These will include partners at a local, regional and international level.

3.5 It is anticipated that Leicester will retain and revitalise its existing twinning arrangements to meet the objectives of this strategy. In addition to this, it is intended that Leicester will build upon existing technical links in other European Union Members States and will develop new technical links in the European Union and beyond to meet the aims and objectives of the new strategy. In particular, links will be developed with Central and East European Countries to meet the challenges of EU enlargement (as set out in the Council’s “European Strategy”).

---

<sup>2</sup> As set out in the East Midlands Regional Assembly’s “Integrated Regional Strategy” and the East Midlands Development Agency’s “Regional Economic Strategy”.

#### 4. Benefits of Developing a New International Development Strategy for Leicester

4.1 The main benefits of developing a new International Development Strategy will include:

- Grant funding: Access to European Union and other external sources of grant funding for technical links
- Cultural and educational exchanges: these will benefit schools, colleges and communities across the city.
- Trade: increased trade links between Leicester and Leicester's international partners will contribute to the economic development of the city.
- Provision for exchanges of experience and best practice.
- Linkage with mainstream City Council and regional policies and strategies.
- Developing a modern, professional approach to international work, which reflects the Council's approach to performance management and best value.

#### 5. Financial & Legal Implications

5.1 Limited funds are available for overseas links work. The Council's Overseas Links Controllable Budget for 2002/03 is £73,400.

5.2 Significant levels of grant funding are available from the European Union and other external sources to support technical twinning activities. These funds are delivered as programmes and as a consequence, grant funding is often subject to clearly defined rules and regulations. However, EU grant funding has been secured by Leicester City Council to pursue work with Rajkot and the Communaute Urbaine de Strasbourg have submitted a number of successful bids for EU grant funding.

#### 6. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting Information
Equal Opportunities	Yes	4.2
Policy	Yes	3.1 – 3.5 & 4.1 – 4.5
Sustainable & Environmental	Yes	4.3
Crime & Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on low income	Yes	4.2

#### 7. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

- White Paper on International Development - "Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor" published by the Department for International Development .
- "Community Plan" published by Leicester City Council.
  - "Strategy for Twinning & Linking" published by Leicester City Council.
- "European Strategy" published by Leicester City Council.
  - "Policy Position on International Development": Local Government Association

#### 8. Consultations

- Directors' Board 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002
- Overseas Links Working Party 7<sup>th</sup> June 2002

9. **Report Author:** Jeff Miller, Head of European & Regional Policy, Tel: 2664