

CABINET

International Youth Games 2010 6 October 2009

Report of Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider an invitation from the Council's Associate Town, Almere, to participate in the 2010 International Youth Games.

Key Decision

Non-Key Decision

Referral from Officer

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLORS ROGER MACE AND JUNE ASHWORTH

- (1) That the invitation to participate in the 2010 International Youth Games in Almere be accepted, on the basis of:
 - (a) A civic delegation comprising the Mayor and Mayoress (or consort), a Member chosen by ballot and an officer; and
 - (b) A sporting and cultural delegation to be led by the Head of Cultural Services, or his representative in conjunction with local volunteer individual sports leaders, the size of the party to be determined to a maximum of 68 subject to the net cost of travel being contained within a 2010/11 budget allocation of £7,000 and taking into account availability of volunteer leaders and suitable transport.
 - (c) A long term commitment to the Council's participation in the International Youth Games, in particular the hosting of the Games in 2013.
- (2) That this decision be subject to the outcome of the budget for 2010/11, and the associated revenue growth bids for 2010/11 and beyond be taken forward for consideration as part of the Cabinet's budget proposals.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The International Youth Games originated in the 1970s and since then has been an annual event bringing together a sporting competition of young people ages 14 to 16 from a group of twinned and associate towns celebrating the twinning movement. It is currently held on a four year cycle in Almere, Aalborg, Rendsburg and Lancaster with Vaxjo having also hosted the Games in the same year as Rendsburg on one occasion.

- 1.2 Discussions were held between the participating twin towns in Lancaster in 2005 with a view to rejuvenating the format, widening the scope to include other cultural events such as music, dance or art and also agreeing limits on spending as all towns have been struggling to justify the costs over the past few years.
- 1.3 The City Council were unable to fund the cost of hosting the Games in Lancaster in 2009 however and no event has therefore taken place this year.
- 1.4 Members will recall that as part of the budget exercise for the 3 year period commencing 2009/10 the funding for the International youth Games was cut. However in April 2009, the following notice of motion was submitted to full Council.

'The decision to withdraw funding from the International Youth Games in 2009-10 was taken reluctantly by Cabinet last December, due to the severe constraints then affecting the City Council's budget. This decision was taken at an early stage in the 2009-10 budget process as Lancaster was to have been the host in 2009, and detailed plans needed to be finalised to send to our participating twin Cities.'

'There was no debate or discussion at the Budget Council meeting on 4 March on the decision to withdraw support from the International Youth Games in the years 2010-11 and 2011-12, and Council now affirms its long term commitment to the International Youth Games, and asks Cabinet in the forthcoming budget process to propose restoring funding for the years 2010-11 and 2011-12.'

- 1.5 At the conclusion of a lengthy debate on the matter the following was resolved:

'That Council affirms its long term commitment to the International Youth Games, and asks Cabinet in the forthcoming budget process to propose restoring funding for the years 2010-11 and 2011-12.' (Council Minute 138 (2008/09))

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 An invitation has now been received from Almere to participate in their Games from Sunday 11 July to Friday 16 July 2010. Whilst any decision to allocate funding at this stage will remain subject to confirmation as part of the budget process the City Council must reply to this invitation at an early date (a response has been requested by 1st October) and should the invitation be accepted arrangements will be commenced both in Almere and in this District for teams of young athletes to travel and compete in the Games.
- 2.2 Having cancelled the Games and invitations to other towns for the Lancaster Games scheduled for 2009, it is imperative that that the Council be committed to this decision and honour any obligation made at this stage.
- 2.3 Council should also think carefully about the implications for the future of accepting this invitation and at the same time as considering an allocation of funding for 2010/11, funding for future visits and more importantly to hold the next scheduled Lancaster Games in 2013 also needs to be considered.
- 2.4 The invitation from Almere is for the following:
 - ◆ Up to 50 athletes including Leaders, plus an additional 2 principal leaders to compete in up to 10 different sports.

- ◆ A cultural group of dancers or singers with a maximum of 10 participants and a maximum of 2 leaders.
- ◆ 4 Civic guests to attend from 12 July to 15 July 2010.

2.5 Attendance at previous Games has been organised by the Heads of Cultural and Democratic Services, utilising allocated budgets. In previous years the size of the delegation has been reduced to allow the costs to fall within available budgets but ensuring that Lancaster can be represented at the event.

2.6 In both 2007 and 2008 the invitations received from Aalborg and Rendsburg were accepted, the Head of Cultural Services acted as overall Leader for the sports competitors together with the volunteer leaders from each sport recruited from local sports clubs. The Civic delegation of Mayor, Mayoress, 1 Councillor (selected by ballot) and 1 officer have also attended.

3.0 Details of Consultation

The Head of Cultural Services has been consulted during the preparation of this report and is in agreement with the preferred option. Potential volunteer leaders and sports clubs have not been approached pending the decision of Council but should it be decided to accept the invitation they will be an integral part of the planning process.

4.0 Options

4.1 Option 1 – To accept the invitation to attend the International Youth Games 2010 in Almere in full (as set out in paragraph 2.4 above) and give a commitment to the Council's future participation in the Youth Games, subject to a budget being established.

4.2 Option 2 – To accept the invitation to attend the International Youth Games 2010 in Almere in part (varying the numbers as set out in paragraph 2.5 above) and give a commitment to the Council's future participation in the Youth Games, subject to a budget being established.

4.3 Option 3 – to decline the invitation to attend the International Youth Games 2010 in Almere.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 In light of the Council's resolution at its meeting in April 2009, officers' preferred option is Option 2 above, although it is for Members to determine the level of participation and the size of the civic delegation. This is governed for the most part by cost.

5.2 Of the potential sports listed by Almere for inclusion in the Games, 8 of those proposed have been supported in the past by groups operating in this district and volunteer leaders may be available to accompany the young people. It is suggested therefore that having accepted the invitation, the final make-up of the group be determined by the willingness of local sports clubs to participate and the availability of volunteer leaders.

5.3 Dance, music and theatre styles can vary and the inclusion of any representatives to take part in these programmes will again be determined by the availability of any suitable groups in the district and a willing volunteer leader.

- 5.4 The cost of travel to and from Almere is difficult to quantify at this stage. Indications at this stage are that flights could be anything from £50 to £250 per person. Buses will also be required to and from the airport at each end, adding approximately £1-2,000 subject to numbers. Ferry crossings are approximately £100 per person. Costs of a coach for a week will need to be added to the ferry cost, including accommodation in Almere for the driver.
- 5.5 In past years a contribution has been sought from each child taking part in the Games towards their travel and other costs of taking part. This was set at £200 in 2007 and 2008 and the suggestion is that this be continued for 2010.
- 5.6 There are also incidental costs of providing a suitable tracksuits with logo, insurance and CRB checking for accompanying adults.
- 5.7 Officers would also advise that an invitation to Almere in 2010 should only be accepted if the Council is prepared to commit (as far as possible) to funding for the future, in particular the hosting of a Games in 2013.
- 5.8 Should Members wish to accept the invitation but keep costs to a minimum, the numbers participating could be reduced and/or the contribution requested from participants could be increased.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 Members have expressed a desire to continue to support twinning connections by maintaining participation in the International Youth Games. Travel costs to the different twin towns vary and the high cost of visiting Aalborg resulted in a smaller party travelling than had previously been the case, the net cost still being £14,617. The size of the party to Rendsburg was also adjusted to ensure costs did not exceed the available budget. In fact low cost fares were obtainable on this occasion keeping the net cost down to £4,150. The visits to Aalborg and Rendsburg were equally successful and demonstrate that restricting numbers to what is affordable will not be detrimental.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The proposal supports the Council's commitment to work in partnership with voluntary organisations and other agencies to improve the quality of people's lives in the District; in particular it seeks to contribute to encouraging children and young people's participation in sports (Priority 2 in the Corporate Plan).

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability etc)

There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Option 1

Accepting the invitation in full will result in a party of 68 travelling to Almere. Costs will vary according to the travel fares available as indicated below:

Travel (highest cost air fare)	£17,000
Incidentals including transfers, insurance, tracksuits/shirts, etc.	£14,000
Income from contributions	- £10,400
Net cost to Council	£20,600

Travel (mid range air fare or ferry)	£6,800
Incidentals including transfers, insurance, tracksuits/shirts, etc.	£14,000
Income from contributions	- £10,400
Net cost to Council	£10,400

Travel (lowest cost air fare)	£3,400
Incidentals including transfers, insurance, tracksuits/shirts, etc.	£14,000
Income from contributions	- £10,400
Net cost to Council	£7,000

Option 2

Accepting the invitation but reducing the numbers will result in lower costs – if this were kept to 45, the costs would be as below:

Travel (highest cost air fare)	£11,250
Incidentals including transfers, insurance, tracksuits/shirts, etc.	£9,000
Income from contributions	- £6,200
Net cost to Council	£14,050

Travel (mid range air fare or ferry)	£4,500
Incidentals including transfers, insurance, tracksuits/shirts, etc.	£9,000
Income from contributions	- £6,200
Net cost to Council	£7,300

Travel (lowest cost air fare)	£2,250
Incidentals including transfers, insurance, tracksuits/shirts, etc.	£9,000
Income from contributions	- £6,200
Net cost to Council	£5,050

Option 3

Declining the invitation has a neutral effect on the budget as no funding has been included at the present time.

Options 1 and 2

From the figures above, Members will see that it would be possible to accept the invitation from Almere and authorise officers to make the necessary arrangements within a set budget adjusting the numbers according to the availability of suitably priced travel fares. An estimate of £200 per person incidental costs has also been included and whilst costs like insurance cannot be varied officers will ensure that costs are kept to a minimum in every way possible.

However in accepting this invitation Members should be prepared to make a commitment to the necessary expenditure in future years, including the additional cost of hosting the games in 2013 as set out below.

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
£7,000 (Almere)	£15,000 (Aalborg)	£5,000 (Rendsburg)	£50,000 (Lancaster)

Having previously deleted the budget for the International Youth Games and the Twinning Budget which supported the civic visit, any decision to accept an invitation to Almere will need to be considered as a growth item for 2010/11 and beyond.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer reiterates her advice given to the April Council meeting.

In the time since Budget Council, there have been no fundamental changes as yet regarding the Council's medium term financial prospects. In short, prospects remain bleak, with major risks and uncertainties attached. During the 2009/10 budget process, the s151 Officer's basic advice was:

With regard to options to produce a budget in line with preferred Council Tax levels, any proposals put forward should be considered alongside the development of priorities and non-priorities, and emphasis should be very much on achieving recurring reductions to the revenue budget.

This advice still stands for the 2010/11 budget. Should Council wish, ultimately, to reinstate future years' support for the Youth Games, then more savings would be needed from other areas.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and there are no legal implications arising from this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has prepared the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Invitation from the Mayor and Twin Town Committee of Almere dated 25th August 2009

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