

<p>LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT</p> <p>Standards Committee – 8 June 2005</p> <p>Report from the Borough Solicitor</p>	
For action/information	Wards affected: ALL

REPORT TITLE : TWINNING UPDATE

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The latest draft of the twinning guidance is attached for comment by the Standards Committee (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Other members including the former Mayor and current Mayor have been consulted on the draft. The Standards Committee was also invited to make comment on an earlier draft at the April meeting.
- 1.3 The aim of the new guidance is to ensure that twinning activity supported by London Borough of Brent is of a high quality and makes effective use of resources.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Standards Committee note and comment on the draft guidance.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Members are subject to the Brent Code of Conduct. This code governs the conduct of members whenever they conduct the business of the authority, the business of the office to which they have been elected or act as a representative of the authority or act in any way which is

connected with or relates to the Council, and in other circumstances. The member must not in his or her official capacity or in any other circumstance conduct himself or herself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his or her office or authority into disrepute. Nor must a member use his or her position to improperly confer on or secure for himself or herself or any other person an advantage. The Code of Conduct will therefore apply when the Mayor and other councillors participate in a twinning visit either overseas or in Brent and must be carefully observed. Adherence to an approved protocol for twinning will assist members in complying with the main Brent Member Code of Conduct.

6.0 DETAIL

- 6.1 Brent has been twinned with South Dublin County Council since 5 September 1997.
- 6.2 To meet the objective of bringing citizens closer together the European Commission introduced a program to support town twinning schemes as a valuable way of involving people and their elected representatives in European integration. The basis on which twinning proposals can be developed includes objectives for the development of co-operation between the communities involved as well as cultural exchanges, the promotion of tourism, artistic, musical, economic and industrial projects.
- 6.3 Members will recall that the topic of twinning was discussed at the April meeting of the Standards Committee when members were provided with background information and some draft guidance for initial comment.
- 6.4 Since that time, those comments have been incorporated into a second draft which is now circulated for further comment by this Committee.
- 6.5 The Local Government International Bureau has recently released guidance for local authorities on conducting twinning visits (Appendix 2 attached). This coupled with a few cases recently before the Standards Board and the Adjudication Panel for England, as well as press coverage of the issue, has emphasised the need for Brent to draft a guidance note on twinning visits.

7.0 Background Information

- Take Your Partners; the Local Authority Handbook on Twinning and International Partnerships, International Report no. 10 Local Government International Bureau.

- Report to Standards Committee April 2005

Any persons wishing to inspect the papers in connection with the above proposals should contact:

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