

Name of Committee:	Cabinet		
Committee Date:	8 November 2023		
Report Title:	Town Twinning - Yavoriv Raion (Асоціація побратимів).		
Responsible Officer:	Jo McIntosh, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer		
Cabinet Lead:	The Leader of the Council, Cllr Alex Rennie		
Status:	Non-Exempt		
Urgent Decision:	No	Key Decision:	No
Appendices:	None		
Background Papers:	None		
Officer Contact:	Name: Jo McIntosh Email: jo.mcintosh@havant.gov.uk		
Report Number:	HBC/054/2023		

Corporate Priorities:

The proposals for town twinning will see increased cultural links between the residents of both council areas which are helpful to enhancing community cohesion and understanding.

Executive Summary:

This report explains the historic role of town twinning between British towns, cities and councils and other similar locations across the world, and the benefits that stem from it. It then proposes that the Council should consider approving a proposal to twin with Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів).

Recommendations:

Recommend to Council that:-

1. The Borough Council agrees the proposed town twinning between the Council and Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів) and that the Leader shall facilitate the union.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposal to twin with Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів) in the Ukraine.

2.0 History of Town Twinning

- 2.1 The idea of town twinning originated after the Second World War in Europe as a way to bring people from different European countries closer together and helping reconciliation after the conflict.
- 2.2 This has usually been achieved by promoting links, better understanding of various cultures and challenging stereotypical images by developing cross-border projects for mutual benefit.
- 2.3 Local authorities may have twinning agreements with towns in one or more different countries in order to promote cultural understanding between the communities, which in turn help expand horizons of residents in both areas. This is often underpinned by local people arranging exchange visits between the residents of the twinned towns, often through a locally based town twinning association.
- 2.4 The aims of town twinning are:
 - 2.4.1 to encourage peace and friendship between people of different backgrounds and cultures and to encourage openness, fairness and inclusiveness
 - 2.4.2 to work in partnership with organisations in the community in building relationships links with communities abroad that will lead to mutual advantages in terms of learning about each other's cultures and enhancing the quality of life of the communities involved.
 - 2.4.3 to promote appreciation of heritage and the arts, and to promote a local community area as a place to be visited by tourists from its twin towns.
 - 2.4.4 to encourage organisations to take part in building up relationships with organisations and businesses in twin communities to bring advantage in learning from each other's methods of working and to promote trade between communities.

3.0 Proposal to Twin with Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів).

- 3.1 Havant is currently twinned with Landkreis Wesermarsch in Northern Germany.
- 3.2 The level of activity with this relationship has varied over time and the Council has recently contacted Landkreis Wesermarsch in Northern Germany to reinvigorate this relationship.
- 3.3 It is proposed to twin with Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів).
- 3.4 The Borough of Havant stands together with our friends in Ukraine. This Council has been moved by the strength of feeling in this country to support Ukraine and has previously passed a motion in March 2022 in support of Ukraine.
- 3.5 Yavoriv Raion is a district in Lviv Oblast (Lvivshchyna) in western Ukraine. Its administrative centre is Yavoriv. It was established in 1939. Its estimated population is 177,662 (2022 estimate). In 2020, as part of the administrative reform of Ukraine, the number of raions of Lviv Oblast was reduced to seven, and the area of Yavoriv Raion was significantly expanded. One abolished raion, Mostyska Raion, was merged into Yavoriv Raion. The January 2020 estimate of the raion population was 126,115 (2020 est.)
Nearby tourist attractions include a Museum of European Art, nature and wildlife areas and waterfalls. Not far from Yavoriv is the watering place of Shklo with sulphur springs.
- 3.6 If the Council agrees to the proposal to twin with Yavoriv Raion Council, the Mayor will be invited to sign a charter of town twinning between the two councils.

4.0 Town Twinning Association

- 4.1 There are no legal responsibilities which relate to town twinning agreements as the arrangements are not underpinned by any statute. However, different councils have different approaches to the extent of support they provide by the authorities themselves to their town twinning arrangements.

- 4.2 A popular practice and the one proposed is that after twinning has been agreed by the two councils involved, most further exchanges and events are organised by a dedicated town twinning organisation. This is a common approach adopted by many councils across the country.
- 4.3 The nature of the agreement is identified as being to foster and develop mutual understanding and respect between the residents of both council areas. Whilst these purposes are clearly stated, there is no commitment to undertake any specific programme of activities by the Council itself. Any such events and exchanges would be the responsibility of the Havant Town Twinning Association.

5.0 Options

- 5.1 To support the proposal to win will result in enhanced cultural links and mutual understanding.
- 5.2 If the Council choose to not support the proposal to twin there would be no such enhancement of these links.

6.0 Relationship to the Corporate Strategy

- 6.1 The proposals for town twinning will see increased cultural links between the residents of both council areas which are helpful to enhancing community cohesion and understanding.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Borough Council is therefore asked to consider and agree the proposed recommendation to twin with the town and community of Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів). The Leader shall then facilitate the union with Yavoriv and a civic ceremony shall be arranged at an appropriate time to formally mark the occasion.

8.0 Implications and Comments

- 8.1 S151 Comments
- Members should be comfortable that the recommendations do not commit Havant Borough Council to any financial expenditure,

although it may lead to some additional costs in the future which would be planned and budgeted for in the normal manner.

8.2 Financial Implications

It is intended that the town twinning should not result in the Council having to fund any event, with the exception of any return invitation to the Mayor of Yavoriv Raion Council (Асоціація побратимів) to visit Havant. Such expenses would be borne by the mayoral budget for events in the usual way. No specific funding would be required.

8.3 Monitoring Officer Comments

The decision to twin is a matter for Full Council.

8.4 Legal Implications

The Local Government Act 1972 gives power to councils to enter into twinning arrangements and to expend money on them.

Town twinning itself is not underpinned by any statutory provisions. In addition the wording of the proposed charter of town twinning shall not seek to place any specific responsibilities on the Council. There are no limits on the number of towns with which an area can be twinned.

The Council would be able to terminate its twinning relationship in the future should it be considered appropriate to do so by the passing of a resolution at Borough Council.

Should the recommendation be agreed, any members or officers receiving gifts or hospitality would be required to declare these in accordance with the Council's procedures.

8.5 Equality and Diversity

None arising directly from this report.

8.6 Human Resources

None arising directly from this report.

8.7 Information Governance

None arising directly from this report.

8.8 Climate and Environment

None arising directly from this report.

9.0 Risks

9.1 There are risks stemming from the possibility that the Russia/Ukraine conflict shall result in increased Russian-borne cyberthreats to the Council as an ally of the Ukraine.

10.0 Consultation

10.1 There has been no consultation in relation to the recommendations in this report.

11.0 Communications

11.1 This report is a public report in the public domain. Should the Council decide to twin then that decision shall be communicated with residents.

Agreed and signed off by:		Date:
Cabinet Lead:	Alex Rennie	31 October 2023
Executive Head:	Matt Goodwin	31 October 2023
Monitoring Officer:	Jo McIntosh	31 October 2023
Section151 Officer:	Steve Pink	31 October 2023