

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer (Introduced by Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform))	Council	Wednesday, 20 July 2022

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	No
-----------------------	----

Town Twinning Update

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update on the recent successful civic visit to the Borough's twin town, Schleswig Flensburg and to ratify an addendum to our partnership agreement. The report also outlines the Council's commitment to strengthen the relationship with our twin town for the benefit of our communities and proposes the creation of a new cross-party member working group.

Recommendations to Council

2. Council is asked to note the town twinning update.
3. Council ratifies the addendum to our town twinning partnership agreement as outlined at Appendix 3.
4. Council agrees the creation of a town twinning cross-party member working group as outlined in the report.

Reasons for recommendations

5. To ensure we maximise the benefits of our town twinning partnership with Schleswig Flensburg.

Other options considered and rejected

6. Not applicable.

Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

8. South Ribble is twinned with Schleswig-Flensburg in northern Germany, close to the border with Denmark.
9. The special relationship was established on 15 April 1980, with the aim of encouraging friendship, understanding and mutual benefit between the nations. A copy of the agreement signed at that time is included at Appendix 1.
10. Despite the 900-mile gap between the two regions, the relationship has been successful and we have continued to share information and learn from each other over the years.
11. In 2006 South Ribble Borough Council hosted a civic tour to celebrate 25 years of friendship, welcoming civic leaders from the region of Schleswig-Flensburg for a three-day visit.
12. Over the years, sports club, community groups and churches from Penwortham, Leyland and Bamber Bridge, have travelled to Germany and a youth exchange programme has seen many young people from local schools visiting the area.
13. The Council's involvement with town twinning has been limited over recent years and following questions at Council from members including Councillors Forrest and Turner when Councillor Jane Bell was elected Mayor she expressed her desire to renew our links with our twin town and subsequently re-established contact.
14. A number of Zoom meetings were held between the two councils to discuss areas of mutual interest.
15. This contact resulted in an invitation being received for a small civic delegation from South Ribble to travel to Schleswig-Flensburg to strengthen links, attend their annual meeting and festival.
16. The invitation was extended to the Mayor, consort and two other Members and it was decided that the following would represent the Council:
 - Councillor David Howarth – Mayor of South Ribble
 - Councillor Ange Turner – Mayoress of South Ribble
 - Councillor Paul Foster – Leader and Cabinet Member covering town twinning
 - Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder – Cabinet Member covering young people and communities

17. The civic visit took place from 23 - 26 June 2022. The Mayor and Members who visited found the welcome and hospitality shown by Schleswig Flensburg was exceptional and a great opportunity to learn from different countries, councils and communities. The Mayor has written to express our appreciation for the warmth and kind reception the civic delegation received from our friends.
18. During the visit the civic delegation took part in the following activities:
- Informal meetings with their Kreis President, councillors and other representatives
 - Discussions with their political leaders on deepening the town twinning relationship
 - Consideration and signing of town twinning partnership addendum (see below)
 - Attendance at their annual meeting and civic festival
 - Tour of Schleswig Flensburg and meeting with other civic leaders
 - South Ribble presented the gift of a framed tapestry of our two crests
 - Met with residents who had benefited from youth exchanges between the two boroughs in previous years
19. An extract of the Mayor's photo blog from his Facebook page with images from the visit are included at Appendix 2 and the Mayor and members of the civic delegation will give a brief verbal overview at the meeting.
20. Following discussions on the lead up to and during the civic an addendum to the town twinning partnership agreement signed in April 1980 (Appendix 1) was agreed and signed by the Mayor and Kreis President.
21. The addendum (See Appendix 3) re-affirmed the commitment made by the two councils in April 1980 and agreed to expand the partnership, strengthen the youth exchange opportunities both digitally and face to face. There would also be a youth exchange focus on students and young people in training and apprenticeships. There would also be town twinning visits at least once per election period to share ideas.
22. Full Council is asked to formally agree and ratify the addendum to the town twinning partnership agreement signed in April 1980 and shown at Appendix 2.
23. In order to build on the successful discussions with Schleswig Flensburg and maximise the benefits of town twinning moving forward it is proposed to set up a cross-party member working group to oversee the implementation and development of our town twinning partnership.
24. Council is asked to agree the creation of the cross-party member working with the following composition:
- Mayor of South Ribble (Chair)
 - Group Leaders (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat)
 - Cabinet Member for Communities, Social Justice and Wealth Building

Climate change and air quality

25. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

26. Our arrangements for town twinning contribute towards effective community cohesion, understanding of different cultures and breaking down barriers. Town twinning and this report therefore has a positive impact on equality and diversity.

Risk

27. No significant risks have been identified in the preparation of this report.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

28. Current town twinning activities can be met from within existing Mayoral, Civic and Democratic Services budgets. Any additional cost requirements will be included as part of the budget process later in the year.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

29. There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Town twinning partnership agreement dated April 1980
- Appendix 2 – Mayoral photo blog from the Mayor's Facebook page - selection of images
- Appendix 3 – Addendum to town twinning partnership agreement for formal agreement and ratification by Council

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Darren Cranshaw (Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services)	dcranshaw@southribble.gov.uk	01772 625512	11/07/22

Appendix 1 – Town Twinning Partnership Agreement

Agreement

for the Establishment of a Partnership

We, the Representatives
of the Borough of South Ribble and the Kreis of Schleswig-Flensburg

are determined to bring into existence the Foundation of a solemn Union between the peoples of our two areas based on the concept of a united Europe, which Union should serve to make known our common interests and foster mutual understanding in order to establish a shared life within the European community.

In this spirit we this day enter into agreement for the setting up of a partnership between our two administrative areas.

We pledge ourselves therefore by a solemn oath,

- to strengthen friendship between our two communities,
- to use mutual endeavours to bring closer together our youthful generation by carrying through youth exchange programme,
- by all means at our disposal to establish an exchange between the inhabitants and associations, organisations and groups of people in our communities and
- to pursue all routes which will lead to a thriving relationship closely binding our people together.

Schleswig, the 15th of April 1980



Borough of South Ribble

Kreis Schleswig-Flensburg

Frank Barton
Frank Barton
Mayor

Charles E. Lea
Charles E. Lea
Chief Executive

Andreas Franzen
Andreas Franzen
Kreispräsident

Dr. Bernd Korthals
Dr. Bernd Korthals
Landrat

Appendix 2 – Mayoral Photo Blog (taken from Facebook)

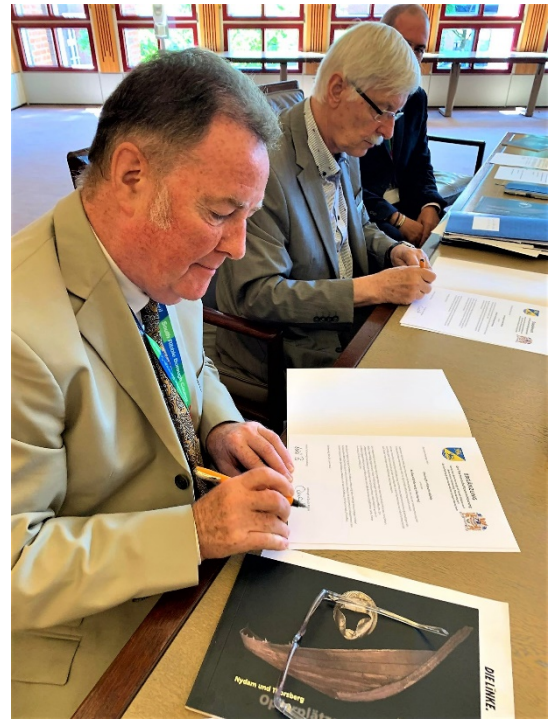
Day One

Along with the Leader of the Council Paul Foster, Cabinet member Aniela Bylinski-Gelder, and the Mayoress Angela Turner, I visited our Twin Town of Schleswig-Flensburg on Friday 24th June to reaffirm our friendship and discuss how we can enhance our long standing association and jointly develop greater opportunities for our young people, undertaking an exchange of ideas and experiences.

After a debate at the Kreistag (council) with the Kreispräsident Ulrich Brüggemeier and his deputies, along with the Altetenrat (council of elders) I had the pleasure of signing our revised agreement before presenting a memento of our visit, and receiving the flag of the district.

We then went on to be guests at the annual 'Sommerempfang' where we received keynote speeches by experts from the fields of digital innovation, business, tourism, nature and the environment; followed by informal discussions and meeting the Landrat (district administrator) Dr. Wolfgang Buschmann, the equivalent of our Chief Executive.









Day Two

On our second full day in Schleswig-Flensburg, Saturday 25th June, we enjoyed a two hour guided walk of Schleswig old town and the fishers guild cottages, before a visit to the Dom the cathedral that houses intricately carved scenes from the bible above the alter.

The afternoon involved a sail up the River Schlei to Missunde, a visit to the Baltic Sea coast, and Arnis the smallest town in Germany.

In the evening we arrived in Flensburg and met up again with the Kreispräsident and his deputies, the Landrat, and Professor Susanne Royer from the local University who had been an exchange student in 1983 staying with a family in Lostock Hall, who shared her fond memories with us.

We now look forward to building on our renewed friendship and enabling young people to once again reap the benefit.







Appendix 3 – Addendum to Town Twinning Partnership Agreement



Supplement to the partnership agreement

between the Borough of South Ribble and
the district of Schleswig-Flensburg
to deepen the exchange of young people



The Representations of the

Borough of South Ribble

and the

District of Schleswig-Flensburg

are committed to their joint partnership, which was officially established with the signing of the partnership agreement on April 15, 1980.

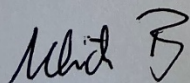
By signing this supplement to the partnership agreement, the representatives of both districts confirm that they will stick to the agreed goals and continue and expand the partnership on this basis.

In order to strengthen the exchange of young people between the two districts in particular, digital and real meetings of young people should take place regularly. One focus will be the exchange of students and young people in training. Both districts undertake to support these exchanges.

With this supplement to the partnership agreement, the representatives of both districts also agree that delegations from both districts will meet at least once per election period to exchange ideas and to deepen the partnership.

Schleswig, June 24, 2022

Kreis Schleswig-Flensburg



Borough of South Ribble

