

## The Highland Council

### City of Inverness Area Committee – 12 August 2013

Agenda Item	14d
Report No	CIA/50/13

#### Kirking of the Council, September 2013 – Visit by Mayor of St Valéry

#### Report by Inverness City Manager

##### Summary

This report outlines the visit to Inverness of Mr Gérard Mauger, Mayor of Saint Valery en Caux, for the Kirking of the Council in September 2013.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Saint Valery En Caux was twinned with Inverness on 14th June 1987. There have been over twenty exchange visits, the most recent in June 2010 when Provost Jimmy Gray visited Saint Valery.
- 1.2 The annual Kirking of the Council has developed through the inclusion of a Kirking Parade which has become increasingly popular with the Public. 'Kirking Day' now involves representatives from the University of the Highlands and Islands, local Schools, the Armed Forces, Cadets and Sea Scouts as well as representatives from the Police and Fire Services. In 2011 a civic delegation from La Baule, Inverness's other French twin town, participated in the Kirking ceremony.

#### 2. Visit Details

- 2.1 In his letter intimating his availability to attend the Kirking event Mr Mauger referred to the strong historical bonds between Inverness and Saint Valery and that residents of Inverness and surrounding area regularly visit Saint Valery.
- 2.2 Mr Mauger leads a party of six official delegates, to arrive in Inverness on Friday 6th September. The party includes two Depute Mayors, Mme Marie-Ange Desse and Mr Benoît Poidevin as well as Town Councillor Mr Fabien Robert. An official reception for the guests is to be held in the Town House on Saturday 7th September.
- 2.3 A programme of events for the official party has been arranged in conjunction with the Inverness Town Twinning Committee. Apart from the civic reception and the Kirking (both Council responsibilities) the Town Twinning Committee has itself organised a variety of additional events over the weekend for the visiting party. Mr Mauger and party depart Inverness on Tuesday 10th September.

### **3. Implications**

- 3.1 The visit maintains the historical, social and cultural connections between the twin “towns”. The participation of the French civic deputation also adds value to the Kirking ceremony.
- 3.2 No additional budgetary implications arise from the visit. As per convention, the costs of accommodating the guests during their stay are to be met from existing funds approved for Town Twinning within the Inverness Common Good Fund. These are estimated not to exceed £2.5K.
- 3.3 Inverness Town Twinning Committee is making a significant contribution to the programme of events, committing both financial and human resources in terms of voluntary assistance.

#### **Recommendation**

The Committee is invited to approve the arrangements made for the visit to Inverness of Mr Gérard Mauger, Mayor of Saint Valery en Caux, and accompanying civic delegation.

Designation: Inverness City Manager

Date: 29 July 2013

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