

ANGUS COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

20 NOVEMBER 1997

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED TRADE DEVELOPMENT VISIT TO LA CHAMBRE DE
COMMERCE ET INDUSTRIE D'ANGOULEME, FRANCE.**

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Abstract: This report seeks approval for the Economic Development Manager to attend a meeting in Angouleme, France, during the Gastronomades 1997 Food Festival on 28/30 November. The purpose of the visit is to develop an action plan which is required to progress the economic co-operation agreement entered into last year. The opportunity will also be taken to assess the potential for participation in Gastronomades 1998 by local firms and students engaged in the food sector.

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) notes the lack of progress made in terms of developing the economic co-operation agreement and authorise the agreement to be extended for another period of twelve months subject to a detailed action plan being prepared for agreement of the partners;
- b) authorises the Economic Development Manager to attend a meeting in Angouleme, France on 28/30 November for the purpose of:
 - I. preparing a detailed action plan required to progress the economic co-operation agreement entered into with Angouleme in France, Alava in Spain and Modena in Italy; and
 - II. assessing the potential for future participation in the Gastronomades Food Festival by local firms and students engaged in the food sector.
- c) agree to the detailed action plan and costs involved being brought back for approval in due course.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Committee is referred to Article 5 of the minute of the meeting of the Economic Development Committee of 21 November 1996 which recommends that there was submitted Report No 957/96 by the Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development outlining the progress made during a visit to Angouleme by the Economic Development Manager on 21/22 October 1996 and bringing forward proposals for a co-operation agreement between various Economic Development Agencies. The Council subsequently agreed that the Council should enter into a Co-

operation Agreement between Alava in Spain, Modena in Italy and Angouleme in France, subject to:

- I. details of resultant programmes and projects including expenditure being brought back for approval;
 - II. the agreement being made for an initial period of twelve months;
 - III. future renewal of the agreement being dependent upon ongoing monitoring and evaluation;
 - IV. investigation being made into the possibility of financial assistance from the European Commission; and
 - V. any financial expenditure being contained within the participating Departments revenue estimates.
- 2.2 To date, development of the co-operation agreement has not progressed as planned and a meeting with representatives of all the partners has been requested so that a detailed action plan can be prepared. In response the Chambre De Commerce et Industrie D'Angouleme has invited all the partners to attend the Food Festival in Angouleme at the end of November when meetings can be held to progress the development of an action plan.

3 DEVELOPMENT OF LINKS

- 3.1 A static display of Angus Food products was sent to Gastronomades 96. Currently an exchange student from the region is working with the Economic Development Unit for a four month appointment, to identify opportunities and strengthen the potential for economic exchange between the two regions.
- 3.2 Discussions have also been held with Angus College to send a group of catering students to the Gastronomades 98, to demonstrate traditional Scottish Cuisine, and promote Angus food products. In addition, discussions are being held with local food processors to maximise the marketing opportunities for this event.
- 3.3 The General Council of Charente has offered to provide accommodation expenses for a representative from Angus Council to visit the Gastronomades Festival 1997.
- 3.4 While development of the economic co-operation agreement has not progressed satisfactorily there has been a continuous link through exchange of information and personal communications. It is felt that representation by the Economic Development Manager as recommended will provide the opportunity to progress this matter as originally intended.
- 3.5 The six point plan agreed as the basis for economic co-operation covers the following programme activities:
1. Mutual help between enterprises.
 2. Publicity for regions.
 3. Exchange of information.

4. Exchange of secondees (working students).
5. Means of information - Internet links.
6. Economic Development links between regions.

3.6 Report 957/96 (para 4.3 refers) envisaged the need for a further conference between all the partners "to construct a detailed action plan covering the six points outlined above". For a number of reasons this conference has not taken place, however, the invitation to attend the meeting as recommended will enable this remit to be fulfilled.

3.7 Moreover, a number of recent developments by Angus Council will enable progress to be made more realistically. These include:

- development of Angus Council's Internet site;
- the establishment of the Business Shop Angus;
- the recent decision to create a new Trade Development Officer post; and
- the appointment of a four month student secondee from the University of Limoges, France.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial expenditure required for travel and subsistence costs, estimated at around £450, can be contained within the current year's Departmental Revenue Budget for 1997/98. The General Council of Charente is providing accommodation and some subsistence while in Angouleme.

5 CONSULTATION

5.1 The Chief Executive and the Directors of Law & Administration and Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The preparation of a detailed action plan is essential if the original objectives of the economic co-operation agreement are to be realised. Attendance at the forthcoming Gastronomades, 97 Food Festival will provide an opportunity to assess the scope for future participation by local companies and a student delegation.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/DV/JH/MR

5 November 1997

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development

