

ANGUS COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
6 JUNE 2000
STUDY VISIT TO ZWICKAU, SAXONY
REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report draws the Committee's attention to continuing progress being made in developing links between Angus and Zwickau, Saxony.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- a) notes the terms of this report;
- b) notes the terms of the attached Study Visit report (see Appendix);
- c) notes that the Director of Education of Zwickau, Herr Fiedler and I have agreed and signed a letter of understanding about the priority projects for this bilateral partnership.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting of 24 November 1998 the Education Committee, in approving report no 1199/98 (Article 8 refers), noted the arrangements being made to develop educational links between Angus and Saxony in Germany.
- 2.2 In December 1998 two senior officers of the Education Department undertook a Study Visit to Dresden. In the course of their visit they met with senior civil servants in the Ministry of Education in Dresden and with Education Authority officials in the local authority of Zwickau. As a result of that visit, it was agreed to proceed to form a direct area link between Angus and the Zwickau Education Authority.
- 2.3 In June 1999 the Director of Education of Zwickau accompanied by his Depute visited Angus. During the course of that visit agreements were made to proceed to develop joint projects in respect of:
 - Language training
 - Information and Communications Technology development
 - School Improvement Issues
 - The Possibility of developing Sporting Links and Youth Links and Exchanges
- 2.4 One outcome of the June 1999 visit by Zwickau officials was an agreement that the Education Authority in Zwickau would host an Angus delegation in March 2000. Details and key outcomes of the 3-day March Study Visit are outlined in the attached Study Visit report.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Given the signing of an agreed letter of understanding, there now exists a very strong basis to take forward developments in the areas of activity listed in 2.3 above and described on page 2 of the attached report. The Angus Council officers who have visited Zwickau and who have hosted Zwickau officials here in Angus are very impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment being made by the Education Authority in Zwickau to this area link. It is anticipated that a significant number of benefits will accrue to the education service in Angus both in terms of school activities and of educational and cultural activities which are likely to be undertaken more widely within the communities of Angus and Zwickau.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for the Council.

5 CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Administration.

JIM ANDERSON
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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.

NL/RB

APPENDIX

ANGUS COUNCIL – EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

REPORT ON STUDY VISIT TO ZWICKAU, SAXONY

THURSDAY 23 MARCH – SUNDAY 26 MARCH 2000

Background and objectives

An area education link with Zwickau in Saxony was established in 1998. Funding to support the development of this link was provided by the Central Bureau for International Visits and Exchanges. Officers from Angus made an initial exploratory visit to Zwickau in late 1998 with a view to discussing how best to take the link forward. A reciprocal visit to Angus by the Director of Education and senior education officers from the Education Department Zwickau took place in June 1999.

Discussions between the respective Directors of Education during that visit resulted in agreement on a number of projects which could be taken forward. These areas for future co-operation are listed below.

- The signing of a 'letter of understanding' by the Directors of Education taking account of the agreed projects. (see **Appendix**)
- Primary and secondary schools to become involved in school partnerships.
- Training primary teachers in German as part of the Modern Languages in the Primary School initiative.
- Collaboration in terms of Quality Improvement.
- Sharing good learning and teaching practice in Information and Communications Technology.
- The development of community education and youth projects.
- The development of sporting links.

Visit to Saxony – March 2000

In order to take the programme forward it was agreed that a delegation from Angus should further visit Zwickau to consider in detail how to progress each of the projects. The group which made the visit from 23-26 March 2000 was composed as follows.

Tom Smith, Education ICT Manager
 Stewart Maxwell, Principal Community Education Officer
 Norma Findlay, Education Development Officer (Raising Standards)
 Eric Summers, Head Teacher, Websters High School
 Audrey Watson, Head Teacher, Muirfield Primary School
 Margaret Ford, Teacher of Modern Languages, Monifieth High School.

Activities and Key Outcomes

The Angus group met with the Director of Education and several other colleagues comprising schools inspectors, headteachers of primary and secondary schools, languages teachers, teachers of ICT and sports co-ordinators. Considerable further time was spent in more detailed work as outlined below.

Community Education proposals include

- YMCA and the Café project
- Ten Sing (Teenagers Singing)
- Graffiti art group (Zwickau) and Angus Youth Congress
- Stadtzunending (voluntary youth work) and Youth for Europe
- Spinnwebe (spiders web youth centre) and Youth for Europe
- Possible student placements here and Zwickau

Schools visits were as follows

- Websters High School to the Sahnsschule middle school in Crimmitschau.
- Monifieth High School to the Käthe Kollwitz Gymnasium Zwickau
- Muirfield Primary to the Comeniusschule Zwickau

Quality Improvement and ICT.

This meeting was held in the Education Department while colleagues visited schools. Views were exchanged in considerable detail in relation to the process of schools self-evaluation, (How Good Is Our School) the use of performance indicators, and using examination statistics. ICT in learning and teaching also formed a major part of the meeting particularly with issues relating to security and acceptable use of Internet in schools.

Conclusion and summary of key action points

- Lingua funding to send primary teachers to Zwickau in October has now been approved. A reciprocal visit for teachers of English is also planned.
- Comenius partnerships between each of the schools are under consideration. Children from Angus have now written to children in Zwickau.
- Youth/community education staff from Zwickau will visit Angus later this year.
- E-mail links are already well established. The next stage involves video conferencing and sharing of teaching materials/policies through internet and intranet facilities. Revised 5-14 ICT guidelines were of particular interest to computing teachers in Zwickau.
- Signed letters of understanding are with each of the Directors of Education.
- Sports links will be taken forward through sports co-ordinators.

Good progress has been made with each of the projects agreed with colleagues in Zwickau most notably in terms of the training of primary teachers for MLPS and the inclusion of community education as part of the partnership. The creation of Comenius partnerships between schools will further help to build on the strong links which now exist between Angus and Zwickau. The sharing of experiences in ICT involving both primary and secondary schools will amongst other things make exchanges of ideas between learners and teachers more dynamic and responsive.