



To: The Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council

Context:

An invitation was received by the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick from the County President to attend the International Days Festival.

The Councils of Limerick County and Hohenlohekreis have had a twinning partnership in place since 1990. Respective delegations from each of the Authorities alternate visits between Hohenlohe and Limerick. There has been a very successful school exchange programme between Schlossgymnasium in Kuenzelsau and schools in Limerick. The visit represented a great opportunity to continue the economic, social and cultural links between Hohenlohekreis and Limerick. After the Covid Pandemic several meetings have taken place with a view to reviving the partnership. Limerick City and County Council worked with Hohenlohekreis to submit an application for funding to the Walter-Hallstein-Programme for Ukrainian Refugees. The proposal was successful and funding was received to set up a project.

As part of the 50-year jubilee of the County of Hohenlohe Limerick was invited to the international partnership celebrations from 5th - 9th August 2023. Delegations from Poland and China participated in the festival as they have twinning relationships with Hohenlohekreis.

Culture:

On Sunday the delegation attended a culture day experiencing the music of Ireland, China and Poland in different culturally significant locations across the town of Ohringen. The local Film Theatre Scala hosted an Irish concert with music provided by Two on the Road. The unique and decadent Blauen Saal hosted a Chinese concert and the local Hoftheater hosted a Polish concert with music from Dikanda.

Meetings:

The meetings are summarised as follows

The delegation participated in a workshop on Sustainability. Presentations were received from the Hohenlohe Department of Waste Management on an innovative start-up project to collect, clean and reuse oil from domestic households to create biodiesel. 'Every drop counts' has been in place in Spain and containers are provided and dispensed to households across the county. There are currently 56,000 users availing of the project.

The Climate Centre presented to the delegations on projects to promote the use of sustainable energy. Legislation requires homeowners to place solar panels on rooftops when carrying out renovations. The Department incentivizes solar energy panels on balconies, allowing private individuals to produce energy for their own use. The team are undertaking a project with the County buildings and are working with schools to analyse energy usage.

The Department of Agriculture presented to the delegation on the importance of biodiversity, particularly genetic diversity. The Department identified potential locations where land was no longer being used to grow crops. They created a course to educate landowners on managing trees and fruit tree meadows on their property. The Department has also introduced new measures for food producers encouraging increased distance between crops and different crops that grow well together.

The Chief Executive of Limerick City and County Council, Dr. Daly presented on the Cityxchange projects in Limerick to develop a Positive Energy Block. A PEB is a group of buildings which produce more energy than they consume. The CE outlined the project examining the potential retrofitting of Georgian buildings in the city and the consultation process. The CE outlined the innovative tidal turbine project used to create energy. As a result of these projects and engagement with the community Limerick City and County Council has created a network of expertise.

The Polish delegation outlined a project wherein a facility for individuals with special needs was assessed in light of sustainability requirements. The building was retrofitted completely from the heating system to solar panels on the roof.

The Delegation visited a historic Monastery in Schontal which continues to be used as a Monastery and school and provides a forest school to educate young people on how to care for trees and foliage.

Visit:

A delegation from Hohenlohekreiss will visit Limerick in March 2023 as part of the ongoing development of the twinning relationship between the two counties.

Is mise, le meas.



Adam Teskey

Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale.

4th September, 2023