

## Report for Information

**Report to** Twinning Committee

4 March 2010

**Report of** Twinning Assistant

**Subject** Nicaragua Conference 2009

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### **Purpose**

To update the Committee.

### **Recommendation**

To note the position.

### **Corporate Objective/Service Plan Priority**

The report helps to achieve the corporate objective to contribute the service plan priority of promoting and fostering links and exchanges of all kinds between the people of Norwich and those in the twin Cities.

### **Contact Officers**

Val Hay, Twinning Assistant

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## **Report**

### **Nicaragua Conference 2009**

The Local Authorities and Nicaragua Conference was held at Bristol City Council on 12 November 2009. The aim of the conference was to inspire local authorities to get more involved in projects within their twin cities or towns in Nicaragua.

The conference started with a welcome from Bristol's Lord Mayor and the Executive Mayor of Puerto Morazan who was on a visit to Bristol to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of twinning between Bristol and Puerto Morazan. The Service Director of Economic and Cultural Development of Bristol City Council gave a presentation explaining their involvement with Nicaragua and Blinc (Bristol Link with Nicaragua) which was established in 1985 to help set up twinning with Puerto Morazan.

Further presentations were given by Leicester City Council's Chief Executive on their visit and projects carried out in Nicaragua, Utrecht on projects carried out in Leon.

The UK Local Government Alliance for International Development attended, who provide assistance to local authorities in developing good practice, supporting their partnerships through networking and links to various funding.

The Chargee d Affaires of the Nicaraguan Embassy in London closed the conference by saying the work that local authorities and twinning links were doing was inspiring for the people of Nicaragua especially children and the poor. Not only do they receive financial help they are given but love and hope, with courage and support she hoped the twinning programs would multiply, and together everyone can walk the path of social change.

Most of the authorities in attendance metropolitan unitary councils with larger budgets and resources and have International Officers linked to corporate policy teams to lead on much of the work.

Since the conference, the Twinning Assistant has met with Ralph Gayton to discuss the Link's thoughts on future funding requirements and will provide further assistance when they have identified an area of funding.