

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Twinning Agreement
DEPARTMENT:	Democratic & Corporate Governance, Finance & Resources
TEAM:	Mayor's Office
LEAD OFFICER:	Amira Nassr
LEAD MEMBER(S):	Cllr Ihtesham Afzal
DATE:	16 April, 2025 Reviewed 21 August 2025, Reviewed October/November 2025

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the International Partnering Protocol, and a summary of its objectives and the intended results.

The International Partnering Protocol (IPP) aims to establish a 'Twinning' arrangement with Nablus, Palestine. Twinning is organisation-led, and focused on exchanging information, knowledge & expertise, and developing joint projects in defined areas by contributing to policy objectives such as culture, sports, heritage, links with diaspora, economic development and tourism.

Potential mutual benefits include:

- Exchange of knowledge, skills and experience;
- Increasing cultural awareness, including knowledge and understanding of the town, city or region;
- Increased tolerance and understanding;
- Enhanced opportunities for youth activities, and
- The development of close friendships and ties built up over many years.

Criteria around Twinning includes:

- All funds relating to twinning must be raised and managed externally, and all planning and organisation must also be managed externally.
- If the Mayor is invited to the twinned town/city/region, or to events outside of London, then all costs must be met externally.
- The agreement will last for five years, with the option for future renewal.

- Ongoing community support and organisation is at the crux of the arrangement.

In November 2024, the Council passed a Motion to consider twinning with the city of Nablus in Palestine. Nablus is twinned with many cities across the world, including towns and cities in Ireland, France, Russia and Morocco. In addition to a petition evidencing community support, there is also support from faith organisations, businesses and local groups in Brent as well as a cross-sector interest in Brent from schools, youth groups, charities, faith organisations, and community centres that already have links or interest in the region, as outlined in the IPP application submitted.

As outlined in the IPP template, there are a series of synergies with, and opportunities for Brent through this arrangement, including:

- Demography: Nablus has a predominantly Muslim population; Brent has the 15th largest Muslim population and the 2nd largest Arab diaspora in England and Wales.
- Shared challenges: Nablus is addressing issues parallel to those faced by Brent such as the climate emergency, poverty, housing, infrastructure pressures, urban planning and unemployment.
- Opportunities: aligned with the challenges, there are opportunities for collaborative projects around urban planning, sustainable development and beyond. Additionally, we can foster mutual learning and innovation while enhancing cultural exchange and diversity.

The IPP is based on community support and activity with limited Council input. It is important to note that all IPP agreements must be apolitical in nature and therefore should not be seen as a sign of any partisan political stance. Brent's IPP is clear that a Twinning Agreement is made with the following goals: to exchange information, knowledge & expertise, and develop joint projects in defined areas e.g. Education; Culture and Sport.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

It's important to recognise that the conflict between Israel and Palestine is highly contentious and polarising. Support for the proposed twinning arrangement is drawn from a range of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds including members of both the Muslim and Jewish Communities (the main (but not the only) faiths represented in Palestine and Israel respectively). People across the globe have been both directly and indirectly impacted by the conflict. The conflict has been attributed to rises in hate crime within the UK, both Islamophobic and Antisemitic, therefore the decision to twin with a Palestinian city has not been taken lightly and appreciates that it may cause anxiety to some of Brent's communities. There have also been subsequent incidents across the UK, for example in Manchester, that have exacerbated tensions and concerns.

Members

Members are representatives of their locality and the borough. Given the contentious nature of the Israel/Palestine conflict and the strong feelings felt around this within our communities, Members will have an important role in demonstrating support, consideration and care to any and all concerns around the conflict and Twinning arrangement. Members may receive an increase in casework or complaints from residents on this issue.

Some Members will be more actively involved in the Twinning arrangement and the practical activities. They will need to ensure they demonstrate consideration and care around the implications and impacts of any practical actions and outcomes (e.g. visits and events).

There may also be the need to revisit our Members Safety Protocol, with reminders sent to Members about the appropriate courses of action and assistance available.

Officers

Officers may have to respond to queries and complaints related to the Twinning both through formal structures or through our engagement forums and mechanisms.

Practical involvement from officers for Twinning arrangements is limited. The main practical support will be through business-as-usual support provided from the Mayor's Office i.e. should the Mayor be involved or lead an activity related to the Twinning, the team will support, and limited funding will be from the Mayoral budget. It should be noted, costs related to implementing the IPP must be met by the organisation leading on this, which would include, but not limited to, costs for entertaining, gift swaps etc. Beyond this, any activity (and related expense) will be driven by the relevant Member(s) and the community/organisation.

Update: To add to this, since the approval to twin was given, there have been a number of emails, Members Enquiries and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to the Council in which officers have had to consider and respond to. This has included (but is not limited to):

- Boulder-Nablus Sister City Project
- Dundee Nablus Twinning Association
- Sheffield Nablus Twinning Association
- Britain Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network
- Unite-Shu'fat Twinning Group
- National Education Union (NEU)
- United Synagogues
- London Jewish Forum
- Brent Jewish Network

Residents and Community Groups

The direct and practical impact for residents may be limited, however given how contentious and polarised the Israel/Palestine conflict is, different groups may be emotionally impacted by the Twinning, at the very least. Nationally, reports have found that the conflict has contributed to a rise in hate crime, particularly around antisemitism; therefore, there may be anxiety for some groups that Twinning may demonstrate greater support for one group over another and may exacerbate existing tensions i.e. Twinning with Nablus may risk compounding antisemitism, equally rejecting the Twinning may be viewed as Islamophobic.

There are routes for residents to share any concerns, for examples through usual Councillor engagement and democratic and council engagement processes.

Additionally, petitions can be submitted for and against this twinning and considered at Full Council before members are asked to vote for or against this plan. Petitioners may also decide to put in a request for an alternative IPP.

Update: A counter petition was presented at the Full Council meeting on 6 July 2025. This was considered by Members and responded to. Following the presentation of the petition (but at the same meeting) there were concerns raised by residents and groups to the nature of the speech that accompanied this and how its contents were perceived. This included concerns around the Islamophobic and polarising nature of the presentation of the petition as well as the conduct of individuals at the meeting.

In addition, since the passing of the motion at Full Council, there have been a number of contacts made to the council from different communities across Brent and across the UK. These include members of both the Jewish community and Muslim community coming to the Civic Centre to meet and present their thoughts and/or concerns in person, as well as sending in letters and questions, to the Leader and Chief Executive. By way of example, meetings were held with:

- Brent Jewish Network
- Representatives from United Synagogues and the London Jewish Forum, and
- Brent Nablus Twinning Association

Meetings and communications have raised both support and concern that the twinning arrangement will either exacerbate, or reduce, community tension and that the initiative is both helpful, or not helpful, in the spirit of community cohesion.

Anti-twinning concerns largely focus on a perception that the twinning is seen as the council exhibiting a bias to one side of the global conflict and ignoring the perceived issues within Nablus. Specifics of this include claims that Jewish people are not allowed to travel to Nablus, that members of particular communities are treated badly there and that Nablus is home to extremist groups. There have also been specific concerns raised by some community groups and councillors about the representation and treatment of the LGBTQ+ community in Nablus with assertions of homophobic treatment.

The council has received a number of contacts in favour of the twinning arrangement, highlighting positive visits, exchanges and experiences within and across Nablus as well as the benefits of twinning for community cohesion and dialogue. These have included individuals from Sheffield, Dundee and London where there are twinning arrangements with Nablus (as well as members of the Jewish and LGBTQ+ community) who see the twinning initiative as a platform for greater community cohesion, and who feel that concerns from other Jewish groups are not representative of the Jewish community as a whole and that twinning with Nablus is a positive way to engage in dialogue and sharing of ideas and cultures.

Correspondence in favour of twinning include:

- **Boulder-Nablus Sister City Project** – They have been twinned with Nablus since 2016. The Chair said “Based on my 14+ years working on this project, I can honestly say that there is no greater divisiveness experienced in Boulder than previous to our sistering.

In fact, what I have observed is that there is significantly more engagement and attendance at all of our events — as more and more people learn about our activities they desire to join us and participate. What I have observed is an upward spiral — people enjoy learning about a new people and new culture, and word gets around, and continually our involvement in the community grows and grows.”

- **Brent Jewish Network** said “We are a diverse group of Jewish people in Brent who care deeply about our home borough, our neighbour communities and the global struggle for a fairer, peaceful world. We include synagogue members, secular Jews, young people and elders - yet we speak with one voice in wholehearted support for twinning with Nablus.”
- **Sheffield Jews Against Israeli Apartheid** said “we have just had a visitor over from Nablus who represents the New Askar Refugee Camp. It is so important to make these links with people from around the world and at this point in time, when the people of Palestine are facing the threat of expulsion, and suffering endless attacks, a link with the West Bank is particularly important. ...Why would talking to people and understanding people, lead to an increase in anti-semitism...Meeting and talking to people from Palestine can only be a good thing. Far from damaging community cohesion, it should do just the opposite”.
- **Brent Integrated Care Partnership** said they “would be delighted to take part in any healthcare projects with Nablus as part of the new Brent-Nablus twinning initiative.”
- **Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK** – The Director said “I am writing to express my strong support for the Council’s decision to twin with the city of Nablus in the West Bank. This initiative represents a vital act of global solidarity and human connection—particularly at a time when many seek to divide, distort, or derail efforts toward peace.”
- In addition, a **joint letter of support** was received from:
 - Dundee Nablus Twinning Association
 - Sheffield Nablus Twinning Association
 - Britain Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network
 - Britain Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network
 - Unite-Shu’fat Twinning Group (London and Eastern Region)

There were also individual statements from individuals who had taken part in twinning activities, including:

- **Women Skate the World** - “I’m a lesbian and I felt perfectly safe through both visits and never felt in any way threatened.”
- “I have travelled to West Bank several times...I identify as gay, but I do not disclose this information openly. I try to respect the laws in every country I travel to.”
- **SkatePal** - “I went to Nablus for a month in 2022 with SkatePal. I didn’t feel at all threatened because of my queerness and felt not only safe but also very welcome.”

- **National Education Union** – an officer said “I write as a Jewish member of the National Education Union to applaud the decision of Brent Council to twin with the Palestinian city of Nablus. I had the good fortune in February 2020 to visit Nablus as part of one of the NEU’s regular delegations to Palestine. My experience was overwhelmingly positive”
- **Sheffield Nablus Twinning Association** - “My work in Sheffield has always taken me into schools and, with the active support of the Palestine Authority, I visited four schools with a view to strengthening our links between Sheffield schools and those in Nablus. I also visited two UNRWA schools. No-one made me feel at all unsafe. I asked at SEEDS whether they were able to put me in touch with any LGBTQ contacts. I was given contacts via people in Ramallah but ran out of time to pursue this. I would follow this up if/when I visit again.”

Over the weekend of 18-19 October 2025, the Chief Executive and Leader received over 50 emails expressing support for the twinning agreement and urging the Council not to be impacted by the events of Standing Together Against Hate event organised by the Brent Multi-Faith Forum and the “unfounded attack on Cllr Muhammed Butt and Brent’s twinning with Nablus by one speaker”.

The council received written confirmation from the Governor of Nablus that “the state does not govern in a discriminatory way against any particular group, and is committed to the principles of human dignity, equality, and respect for all individuals”. This is in addition to a Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Palestine signed 28 April 2025 in which it was agreed that “The UK reiterates the centrality of the Palestinian Authority, including in Gaza”.

Community Interest Company (CIC)

Update: The Brent Nablus Twinning Association have shared a number of positive stories of visits and initiatives with Nablus. They have confirmed that their CIC status is in line with Companies House requirements and their members, by default of the CIC status and Companies House stipulations, ensures that all Members are named and registered, ensuring no anonymous or undisclosed members.

Similarly, correspondence raising concerns, by some members of the Jewish community is summarised below. It should be noted that whilst a large volume of communication was received, they are captured by the points raised below:

- **United Synagogues**- “Given this deep connection, the decision to twin Brent with Nablus – a city whose leadership is overwhelmingly dominated by Hamas... is not just disappointing; it is deeply distressing.” They also expressed specific concerns about the impact on Brent’s Jewish community, “triggering widespread fear and outrage.” The letter sent “urge Brent Council to revoke this deeply harmful decision and stand once again with all of its communities – Jewish and otherwise – against terrorism, against hatred and for peace.
- **London Jewish Forum**: raised concerns about the perceived lack of engagement stating that “no engagement appears to have been undertaken with Jewish stakeholders—a community likely to be significantly affected by such an initiative.”

They also raised some legal and ethical points asserting that the Council may have failed to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010: “The decision... raises questions about how this duty [to foster good relations] has been interpreted and discharged.”

- Concerns regarding the prevention of visiting Joseph’s Tomb in Nablus, an important part of Jewish pilgrimage.
- A number of shared emails supporting the comments made by Rabbi Levin and stating that the Twinning arrangement was divisive and undermined safety and trust.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council’s public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes, the ongoing Israel/Palestine conflict has resulted in challenges around community cohesion around the globe, including in Brent, and the Twinning may exacerbate these challenges. Equally, Twinning provides opportunities to share and enrich culture and history with other areas across the world, thereby contributing to increased understanding of other cultures, and beginning to potentially breakdown barriers and community tension.

As part of the International Partnering Protocol, the Twinning must be evidenced through community support and have a positive, beneficial impact for Brent. It must also help foster good relations across different groups.

4. Please indicate with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	Impact Positive	Impact Neutral/None	Impact Negative
Age		X	
Sex		X	
Race	x		x
Disability		X	
Sexual orientation	x		x
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief	x		x
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage		X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

Screening Checklist

	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council's public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		X
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	X	

If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.

If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

- 1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.**

In relation to similarities with the demography of Nablus, the Census 2021 captures that Brent currently has the second highest Arab diaspora in England and Wales, making up 5.3% of the population. Additionally, Brent has the 15th largest Muslim population in England and Wales, accounting for 21.4% of the population. There is no data available around the number of Palestinians in Brent; equally, in relation to potential challenges arising around community cohesion, there is no data available around Brent's Israeli population.

In 2021, 3,723 Brent residents identified their religion as Jewish, representing 1.1% of the Brent population. This compares to 1.7% in London and 0.5% across England & Wales. In terms of local authority rankings,

- On the number of Jewish residents, Brent is ranked 13th highest out of 331 areas in England & Wales.
- On the percentage of the population who are Jewish, Brent is ranked 20th highest out of 331 areas in England & Wales.

The latest hate crime statistics (between December 2024 to December 2025) in Brent show:

- 54 recorded offences around antisemitism,
- 85 recorded offences around Islamophobia

The Brent Nablus Twinning Association, as set out in their IPP application, have engaged with a range of groups to help inform this decision, including:

- The Brent & Harrow branch of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) to consider what arrangements would be feasible and productive.
- Brent Trades Union Council, Brent NEU, Brent Friends of Palestine, CADFA and the Palestinian Forum in Britain to understand existing relationships, activities and opportunities.
- Other local authorities working on similar International Partnership Arrangements in Sheffield, Barnet, Hounslow and Oxford councils to consider what arrangements would be feasible and productive.
- Other Authorities who have Twinned with Nablus, e.g. Sheffield and Dublin including Dublin which Brent is also twinned with.

Petitions

In relation to community *support for the Twinning*, a petition was submitted on behalf of the Brent-Nablus Twinning Association in support of the partnering arrangement with 1849 signatures. The number of signatories in the petition has exceeded 1500 people, this allows the council to formalise into a Twinning arrangement without being a Friendship Agreement first.

Following the passing of this at Full Council, a *counter petition*, with 1,877 signatures was submitted and heard at the meeting of Full Council on 15 September 2025. The meeting was attended by members of the community who supported the twinning and those that were opposed to it.

- 2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.**

AGE

Details of impacts identified	Not applicable
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DISABILITY

Details of impacts identified	Not applicable
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RACE

Details of impacts identified	The Twinning may be interpreted as having positive implications due to the cultural and knowledge sharing opportunities with Nablus, particularly given similarities in demography and local challenges and opportunities.
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	<p>However, the Israel/Palestine conflict is highly contentious, which may have negative implications. People across the globe have been both directly and indirectly impacted by the conflict. The conflict has been linked with rises in hate crime within the UK, both Islamophobic and Antisemitic. While it is unlikely, there is a possibility that Twinning with Nablus may be perceived as compounding existing tensions as it may be viewed as supporting one group over another. The Twinning may, at the very least, cause emotional harm to some groups in Brent. Therefore, the council and Members will need to demonstrate care and consideration with engaging with residents and activity associated with the Twinning.</p> <p>It's difficult to understand the scale of any impact associated with the Twinning based on quantitative insights. The 2021 Census results shows that Brent currently has the second highest Arab diaspora in England and Wales, second only to Birmingham. Arabs make up 5.3% of the Brent population (17,924 people), although it is not known what percentage of this are Palestinian. Equally, it is not possible to know the Israeli population in Brent.</p> <p>The twinning is not seen as having a direct or indirectly discriminatory impact on this protected group.</p>
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SEX

Details of impacts identified	Not applicable
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SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Details of impacts identified	<p>There have been some concerns raised by some communities about the treatment of the LGBTQ+ community in Nablus. Other feedback suggests that member of the LGBTQ+ community have visited Nablus without any concern or difficulties raised.</p> <p>In asking whether the twinning has a direct or indirectly discriminatory impact on this protected group, the conclusion reached is that it does not.</p>
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PREGANCY AND MATERNITY

Details of impacts identified	Not applicable
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RELIGION OR BELIEF

Details of impacts identified	Positive implications include the religious/faith, cultural and knowledge sharing opportunities with Nablus, particularly given
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	<p>similarities in demography and local challenges and opportunities. The Twinning plan includes ambitions to involve the main faiths in Brent and Nablus (Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism). Additionally, Brent’s Muslim population is 21.4% (15th largest in England and UK) and Nablus is predominantly Muslim.</p> <p>However, the Israel/Palestine conflict is highly contentious and this may contribute to negative implications; and inherent prejudices may prevent some community engagement. People across the globe have been both directly and indirectly impacted by the conflict. The conflict has been linked to rises in hate crime within the UK, both Islamophobic and Antisemitic. While it is unlikely, there is a possibility that Twinning with Nablus may be perceived as compounding existing tensions as it may be viewed as supporting one group over another.</p> <p>The Twinning may, at the very least, cause emotional harm to some groups in Brent of opposing religious or faith beliefs.</p> <p>Groups, both in favour and opposing the twinning arrangement have expressed concerns regarding this. There have been members of the Jewish community who have stated that they see the arrangement as favouring one side over another and exacerbating tensions. There have also been members of the Jewish community who highlight the benefits of the twinning arrangement and who feel that the other Jewish voices are not representative of the Jewish community as a whole. There have been other groups who have also stated that opposition to and the presentation of a counter petition are counter intuitive and the rhetoric around it has been Islamophobic.</p> <p>In asking whether the twinning has a direct or indirectly discriminatory impact on this protected group, the conclusion reached is that it does not. To the contrary it is hoped that the IPP will serve to improve knowledge and understanding about those living in Nablus (and vice versa) and that this understanding will foster better relations between the different faith groups, cultures and communities.</p>
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GENDER REASSIGNMENT

Details of impacts identified	Not applicable
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MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

Details of impacts identified	Not applicable
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3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

This is uncertain as robust data does not exist around Palestinian and Israeli populations in Brent. Additionally, the supporting petition does not capture people's characteristics and backgrounds.

Formal consultation by the Council is not required, but as referenced above there has been various engagements with the Brent community on this proposal by the council/Leader & Chief Executive including the opportunity for members of the public to discuss their opinions for or against this twinning at Full Council.

Formal engagement is the responsibility of the Brent Nablus Twinning Association, and summary of some of their engagement so far is set out below:

- Public engagement through local networks: They have engaged residents through a diverse network of local groups, community organisations, and volunteers. This included outreach at venues such as the Chalkhill Centre and local tube stations.
- Direct outreach to faith centres: They have reached out to faith centres across the borough, explaining the goals and objectives of the twinning. In these conversations they have discussed:
 - The activities faith groups undertake in Brent - from cultural festivals and charitable initiatives to educational programmes.
 - How communities of different backgrounds live side by side in Brent, celebrating diversity while contributing to a shared civic identity.
 - What togetherness and solidarity mean in practice, and how they can be strengthened through joint initiatives.
 - The importance of interfaith cooperation, showing how faith communities can model respect and mutual support for younger generations.
 - How Brent's diversity is itself an asset to civic life, with faith groups helping to combat loneliness, promote wellbeing, and foster resilience.
 - Ways that shared values such as compassion, justice, and hospitality can be highlighted across traditions to show common ground.

Feedback from these has been overwhelmingly positive, with many groups not only recognising but celebrating the importance of showcasing the everyday contributions of Brent's diverse communities. They have emphasised how such engagement strengthens Brent's identity as a welcoming, united, and compassionate borough where all communities feel valued and included.

- Specific engagement with Jewish organisations: They have sent invitations to synagogues and Jewish organisations operating in the borough to engage directly with them.

A meeting was held, which was attended by representatives from the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN) and the Brent Jewish Association Network. The discussion was constructive and highlighted the virtues of the twinning initiative, the importance of building stronger community connections, what these groups would like to see from the programme, and the ways they could contribute going forward.

They engaged with a Brent representative of Queer Strike who expressed support for the twinning and opposition to any potential 'pinkwashing' arguments being used in attempts to discredit the twinning. 'Pinkwashing' refers to appeals to LGBTQ+ rights by a state or organisation with the aim of deflecting attention from other harmful practices or policies it is engaging in.

Plans going forward include:

- Ongoing dialogue with all faith and community groups in Brent, ensuring regular communication and opportunities for feedback.
- Structured opportunities for participation: They are developing ways for groups to actively feed into upcoming projects - including cultural exchanges, educational programmes, and interfaith initiatives that showcase the contribution of all communities to Brent's shared identity.
- Openness to feedback: They will keep channels open for any community or resident who wishes to share their views, ensuring that the initiative remains accountable and responsive to local people.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

Updated: Please see box 7

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

Increase in hate crime. If the Twinning results in any negative impacts around hate crime or community tension they will be addressed through existing work and support available through our Community Safety Team, working with the Police and other stakeholders. Where the basis of the alleged hate crime will be independently verified and assessed to see if there is any connection with the Twinning Agreement.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

Each Twinning arrangement will be reviewed every five years. The organisation will be asked to re-submit the assessment template to show evidence of impact etc. which will be used to determine whether the arrangement continues or not.

As part of the initial assessment, the proposer is asked to outline how they will show and monitor progress and impact of the activities undertaken. This will also be reviewed periodically.

In relation to any resident concerns or complaints, this will be monitored through our existing mechanisms e.g. corporate complaints monitoring, Member enquiries monitoring etc.

The CIC will be responsible for ensuring that each activity/event undertaking has a basic EIA and risk assessment. These should be shared with the council upon request.

The Council's Equality Act 2010 obligations are ongoing ones and in light of this the twinning arrangement will be reviewed periodically as and when a review is thought to be appropriate.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

Twinning with Nablus poses both positive and negative implications around race, sexual orientation and religion/faith.

The IPP assessment outlines that range of synergies, benefits and opportunities related to Twinning with Nablus. The potential challenges mainly relate to community cohesion and tension will be monitoring through our existing mechanisms (e.g. complaints and community safety channels).

With respect to the representation and treatment of the LGBTQ+ community in Nablus with assertions of homophobic treatment, details of two organisations (listed below) working with the LGBTQ community in Nablus have been shared with the Brent Nablus Twinning Association for engagement.

'fabulous in Nablus',

Rainbow Blades, the LGBTQ group attached to Sheffield Unite as having a "warm reception" from their Nablus visitors on two occasions, and since then a twinning project between a sports club based at the New Askar camp and Rainbow Blades.

In addition, an assurance from the Governor of Nablus has been sought and provided. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Palestine signed 28 April 2025, which also addresses this issue; and details of community organisations operating in this field have been shared with the Brent Nablus Twinning Association.

Transparency regarding the CIC membership is enforced via Companies House which requires all CIC Members are named and registered, ensuring no anonymous or undisclosed members.

Given the religious/faith implications, the council and Members will need to demonstrate care and consideration with engaging with residents and activity associated with the Twinning.

Joseph’s Tomb in Nablus

There were concerns raised regarding limited/no access to Joseph’s Tomb in Nablus. This was raised with the Brent Twinning Association who explained that:

“Under Annex I, Article V, Paragraph 2 of the 1995 Interim Agreement (Oslo II), the Palestinian Authority (PA) holds explicit responsibility for protecting Jewish holy sites, including Joseph’s Tomb (as listed in Appendix 4), and ensuring the safety of all visitors. The Agreement clearly recognizes the PA’s authority over the site and its role in maintaining security. Crucially, it mandates the PA to guarantee “free, unimpeded, and secure access” to these sites, reflecting a strong commitment to peaceful worship. The PA is obligated to prevent disorder and respond to incidents, affirming its proactive role in safeguarding both the site and those who visit. However, in practice, the PA’s ability to fulfil these obligations is fundamentally constrained by the Israeli military’s unilateral control over security and access at Joseph’s Tomb during times of Jewish worship after 2000. This arrangement prevents the PA from exercising its agreed responsibilities and undermines the spirit of cooperation intended by the Agreement”.

International Partnering Protocol, provides that reviews on progress and impact of the activities will be undertaken Brent Nablus Twinning Association on an annual basis.

Brent Nablus Twinning Association have committed to the “ongoing dialogue with all faith and community groups in Brent, ensuring regular communication and opportunities for feedback offered by Brent Nablus Twinning Association

It’s difficult to fully determine any implications or the scale of them as they become clearer as initiatives and opportunities are realised as part of the Twinning. Additionally, existing data does not tell us the size of some of the relevant groups that may be more directly impacted in Brent.

SECTION D – RESULT

Please select one of the following options. Mark with an “X”.

A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	
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B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	X
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Consider any petitions/ counter-petitions, should one be submitted.	Determine the scale of any challenge against the twinning and assess next steps.	Amira Nassr	As and when
Monitor volume of concerns or complaints raised around or directly alleging a connection to, the twinning arrangement.	Determine any trends and then assess any need for any specific tailored support for impacted groups	Amira Nassr	31 October 25 and on a 12-monthly basis until agreement is ended
Monitor hate crime trends in Brent.	Assess Community Safety/Police feedback as to whether the twinning has contributed to any increases in hate crime.	Amira Nassr, liaising with the council's Community Safety Team (see above)	Ongoing

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Fatema Limbada	Fatema Limbada
REVIEWING OFFICER: <i>* the manager with oversight of the project</i>	Amira Nassr	Amira Nassr 17/04/25 <i>Reviewed November/December 2025</i>

HEAD OF SERVICE / Operational Director:	Minesh Patel	Minesh Patel 17/04/25 <i>Reviewed November/December 2025</i>
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