



## **Proposal to end the Nordic Twin Town Cooperation in its current form**

### **Background**

The Nordic Twin Town Cooperation of Rauma (Finland), Naestved (Denmark), Gjøvik (Norway) and Gävle (Sweden) began its collaboration after the Second World War. The first official Twinning Guidelines was signed in Rauma on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1950. The latest (signed) update is from 2006 (in annexe) and includes Alftanaes (Iceland). Alftanaes, formerly Bessastadahreppur and now Gardabaer, participated in the Nordic Twin Town Cooperation from 1988 to 2013, when they in a municipality reform merged with Gardabaer and it was decided to keep the twin towns of Gardabaer.

The four founders of the Nordic Twinning Cooperation have remained true to the original ideas of building Nordic identity and strengthening our cities through mutual support, exchange and learning. The Nordic Twin Town operations have developed over the years and include the following recurrent activities with cities taking turns in hosting (schedule and topics in annexe):

- Nordic Twin Town meetings (every two years, thematic meetings of politicians)
- Municipal director meetings (annual thematic meetings)
- Coordinator meetings (every two years, update on cooperation and planning of Nordic Twin Town meetings etc.)
- Nordic Sports Rally (every two years, sport competitions for youth in swimming, athletics and football)
- Culture days (every two years, meetings of culture and leisure officials)
- Study visits and exchanges

### **Withdrawal of Naestved from the Nordic Twin Town Cooperation**

Due to the sudden and unexpected withdrawal of Naestved from the Nordic Twin Town Cooperation as of January 2024 (decision communicated in October 2023, without any prior notice or discussion), the CEOs and Nordic Twin Town Cooperation coordinators of Gjøvik, Gävle and Rauma have met, discussed and arrived at the joint proposal to the political level in the respective cities to end the Nordic Twin Town Cooperation in its current form.

It is not justifiable continuing a Nordic cooperation with only three cities/countries and trying to find replacement cities (Denmark and Iceland) is not possible (we have, without success, tried to find a replacement Islandic city during the past years).

### **Changes in operating environment**

Times are changing and both needs and possibilities of international cooperation are changing. The demand for more thematic focus and input on specific issues from cities with particular experience has increased and at the same time has the possibilities of different kinds of time and resource efficient exchanges expanded with digitalisation.

### **Future cooperation model**

The common goal is to continue cooperation between Gjøvik, Gävle and Rauma on a theme and project basis. The relations developed between our cities over time, form a basis for continuous exchange in specific issues regarding sustainable city development according to interest and needs of our cities.

Ideas and proposals to be handled via the international contact persons as a first step and involving relevant participants depending on the issue.

Each city is responsible for their own costs and resources.

The official ending of the Nordic Twin Town Cooperation will, after decision in the respective City Councils, be confirmed in an online Nordic Twin Town meeting.