

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 15 APRIL 2015

PRESENT:- Roger Gower (Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association), Mike Ide (Wroughton - St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association), Councillor Kevin Small, Councillor Abdul Amin, Nazma Ramruttun (Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning), Councillor Junab Ali and Cristina Bennett (Swindon Ocotal Link)

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Pearce, Mark Sarnowski, Hassan Nur, Councillor Michael Bray, Councillor Toby Elliott, Councillor Andrew Bennett and Cecilia Olley

5. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

6. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

7. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

8. Reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links

The Network considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services listing the Town Twinning Associations and Links in and around Swindon and b) the following verbal reports from those Town Twinning Associations and Links present at the meeting:

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

Roger Gower reported on the following:

- The SSTA had held 3 meetings since December 2014
- The programme for the Salzgitter visit from 18th – 25th June 2015 was nearly finalised.
- Roger spoke at length about the proposed programme for the visit, in particular about the trip to Arkles Brewery, Nova Hreod School, the bench plaque in the Town Gardens, Lydiard House, and the proposed trip to visit Concorde in Bristol. The Network noted that the visit was now not going to take place as the Association was unable to board Concorde and the hiring of a coach for the day was proving to be rather costly. The Salzgitter guests were being asked to suggest where they would like to visit in place of the Concorde trip.

- A local radio station programme called 'What a Wonderful World' focussed on Salzgitter
- The SSTA web site was now live and had received 3 contact enquiries.

The Network noted that there were opportunities for the general public and members of the Network to become involved in any of the Swindon Salzgitter 40th Anniversary celebrations. A copy of the SSTA programme would be circulated to the Network for information.

It was suggested that consideration be given at the next Network meeting to a project, possibly involving sports clubs that all Swindon Twinning Associations/Links could become involved with.

Swindon Ocotal Link (SOL)

Cristina Bennett reported on the following:

- A meeting of the Link was held recently
- The Link's Treasurer had recently left and attempts to fill the vacancy were being made
- The Link were looking at ways to enhance its profile, including the addition of a Facebook page and associated training for Link members
- It appeared that a mural of Ocotal, previously placed at the Link Centre, had been removed when the Leisure facility was transferred to GLL. Cristina asked if this could be followed up and the mural put back in place
- The Link was currently looking at fundraising issues and wished to host some guests from Ocotal. Cristina asked for details of how to apply for a Town Twinning Grant.

Wroughton – St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association

Mike Ide reported that the Association were currently meeting as a social group and that it was proving difficult to generate interest in twinning activities amongst the residents of Wroughton.

Mike explained that Wroughton Youth Football Club had shown an interest in attending an exchange football match in St Germain les Corbiel in May 2015, however there was not a lot of time before the event and the Club had not received a lot of notice to prepare for the trip.

Swindon Mauritius Friendship Link

Nazma Ramruttun reported on a trip she had made to Mauritius in February 2015. Unfortunately the Mayor was out of the country at the time of her visit, however, Nazma was visiting Mauritius again in June 2015 and would be speaking with the Chief Executive about the possibility of Mauritius setting up a Twinning Committee in a similar way to Swindon.

It was understood that the Chief Executive from Mauritius was travelling to Swindon in a few months and Nazma suggested that members of the Network could meet him once he arrived.