

Swindon Borough Council

Town Twinning Network

Wednesday, 7 June 2017

Committee Room 5, Civic Offices

At 6.00 p.m.

**Conservative
Councillors**

Claire Ellis
Mary Martin
Nick Martin

**Labour
Councillors**

Junab Ali
Derique Montaut
Kevin Small

Cristina Bennett, Swindon Ocotal Link
Hassan Nur, Salahley, Somalialand
Cecilia Olley, Swindon Ocotal Link
Nazma Ramruttun, Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning
Dave Richardson, Highworth Twinning Association
Mark Sarnowski, Swindon Torun Link

Committee Officer: Stuart Figini (Committee Officer) Telephone - 01793 463612
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AGENDA

- 1. Appointment of Chair**
- 2. Appointment of Vice-Chair**
- 3. Apologies for Absence**
- 4. Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.
- 5. Public Question Time**

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.
- 6. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 13th April 2017.

7. Reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links (Pages 9 - 10)

Date of Despatch: 23 May 2017

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Director of Law and Democratic Services, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website.

(<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

Access Arrangements – *The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.*

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

Town Twinning Network - Terms of Reference

The Town Twinning Network seeks to promote co-ordination and co-operation in the development of Twinning Links with the Twin Towns of Swindon and other existing Twinning Links with towns in the Borough. It will also encourage the development of other international friendship links between the people of the Borough of Swindon and communities in other countries.

The Town Twinning Network will act as a co-ordinating body for interested groups and individuals seeking to promote twinning links with the Twin Towns of Swindon.

The Town Twinning Network will seek to co-ordinate fund raising and publicity in relation to Town Twinning but will not itself undertake these activities.

The Town Twinning Network will seek to encourage the development of international friendship links and commercial links between the people of Swindon and communities in other countries by the provision of a forum for discussion and the exchange of information.

The Town Twinning Network will receive and consider applications for Town Twinning grants and make recommendations to the Council.

The Town Twinning Network shall not hold funds or enter into any financial

transactions.

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TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

THURSDAY, 13 APRIL 2017

PRESENT:- Councillor Kevin Small (Chair), Councillor Junab Ali, Councillor Derique Montaut, Councillor Caryl Sydney-Smith, Cecilia Olley (Swindon Ocotal Link), Nazma Ramruttun (Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning) and Dave Richardson (Highworth Twinning Association)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Oliver Donachie, Councillor Claire Ellis, Cristina Bennett, Mike Ide, Hassan Nur and Mark Sarnowski

15. 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.

16. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

17. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th December 2016, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

18. Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

The Network received a report from the Director of Law and Democratic Services about the difficulties experienced by the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association prior to its closure and the prospects of the Association being re-established at some point in the future.

The Director explained that he had spoken with the former Chair and Secretary of the Association, who had confirmed that he had stood down at the Association's Annual General Meeting held on 20th November 2015 due to health reasons. He explained that nominations were received for the post of treasurer but not for the Chair and Secretary's posts. The lack of interest from the remaining members of the Association led to the Association concluding that the UK side of the Association was unable to proceed, and a decision was made that it should cease operations.

It was noted that the majority of Association members were seniors, some with health issues and attempts to attract a younger membership had proved to be unsuccessful. Similar struggles were being experienced by the German side of the Association. In view of this, there did not appear to be any obvious enthusiasm from former members to commit time, energy and finances to re-engage or re-create links in the local community with the Association in Salzgitter.

The Chair explained that he would prefer that all avenues remain open to the Association being re-established as a viable and vibrant organisation. The Network was supportive of the Chair's view and in light of this, it was suggested that an event

be organised to publicise the importance of the work undertaken by the previous Association and how this could evolve into a modern link with friends in Salzgitter.

Resolved – That an event be organised to publicise and encourage support for the establishment of a new Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association.

19. Reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links

The Network considered and noted a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services of twinning activities undertaken by the Town Twinning Associations and Links in and around Swindon.

Verbal reports were given from the following Town Twinning Associations and Links present at the meeting:

Highworth Twinning Association

The Chair welcomed Dave Richardson, Treasurer of Highworth Twinning Association, to his first meeting as the Association's representative.

Mr Richardson reported on the success of previous visits by the Association to Pontorson, Normandy, France and Wassenberg, Germany and return visits to Highworth by the friends from France and Germany.

The Association had also held a number of successful fundraising events, including a safari lunch and music concert. A further visit to Pontorson was being arranged for the end of May 2017, and there were proposals for a visit to Wassenberg, later in the year. Arrangements were being made to host friends from Pontorson during December 2017 and suggestions for visits and entertainment were made, including visits to Christmas markets, concert, meals at restaurants, meeting the Mayor, Heritage Centre near Cardiff. It was noted that all guests would be accommodated in Association members homes and the only costs incurred related to transport to and from the twinning locations.

The Network discussed how the Association publicised its activities, the numbers attending Association meetings and how links with local secondary schools would benefit the longevity of the Association.

Swindon Ocotal Link (SOL)

Cecilia Olley reported on the recent cultural visit to Ocotal by a number of SOL members. The members visited a number of projects that the Link had supported over many years and how the quality of life has improved for those benefiting from the financial support. In particular, it was noted that funds raised had been used to help provide food at a refuge for abused women and providing school transport, uniform and books for about 40 children, bursaries, funding for a local clinic following hurricane Mitch, funding a kindergarten and help for an old people's home.

The Network received a letter from SOL and noted that members of SOL were considering the way forward for the organisation. There was a need to reduce administrative demands and limit its activities, although it was recognised that the emotional link to Ocotal would continue for many years. It was noted that SOL have

decided to terminate its charitable status, due to administration required, and the time and effort in maintaining a membership base. With this decision SOL would become a formally constituted body, with a constitution and bank account, but with an informal membership. The Network agreed with the Link that there was value to retaining the link between Swindon and Ocotal.

Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning

Nazma Ramruttun explained that she been unwell recently and was unable to visit Mauritius, as was her normal practice during other years. She explained that the former Mayor now had an ambassadorial role in Mauritius and the likelihood of him visiting Swindon in the future appeared to be slim.

The Chair was reminded that previous discussions with the Leader of the Council about a friendship twinning link with Mauritius had been put on hold for various reasons. The Chair confirmed that he would raise this issue with the Leader again.

Swindon/Salzgitter Twinning (Civic Visit)

The Chair reported on the planned Civic Visit by the Mayor of Swindon and a delegation of members to Salzgitter between 11th – 15th October 2017. He spoke about the possibility of visiting a number of industrial sites during the trip.

Resolved – (1) That the Activities of the Twinning Associations and Links be noted.

(2) That the letter about the change in status of the Swindon Ocotal Link be noted.

(3) That the Network values the retention of the link between Swindon and Ocotal

(4) That the Chair consults with the Leader of the Council regarding the proposed friendship twinning with Mauritius.

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Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

Town Twinning Network

Date: 7th June 2017

Author:	Director of Law and Democratic Services
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To provide verbal reports updating members of the Town Twinning Network on the activities of the following Town Twinning Associations and Links since the last meeting held on 13th April 2017:-
- Swindon Ocotal Link
 - Swindon Torun Link
 - Highworth Twinning Association
 - Other Twins/Links present at the meeting
- 1.2 To keep the Town Twinning Network informed of the activities of the Twin Towns and Links within Swindon and its surrounding areas and to provide a forum for these groups to exchange information and areas of good practice.

2. Recommendations

The Town Twinning Network is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the activities of the Twinning Associations and Links.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Town Twinning Network seeks to promote co-ordination and co-operation in the development of Twinning Links and in the development of other International friendship links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries.
- 3.2 The Town Twinning Network meets four times a year in order to encourage the development of International friendship links and commercial links between the people of Swindon and communities in other Countries by the provision of a forum for discussion and the exchange of information.
- 3.3 Each of the Town Twins and Links will give a verbal update at the meeting on the activities that have been undertaken since the last Town Twinning Network meeting.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

Town Twinning Network

Date: 7th June 2017

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications relating to this update. Any future activity that has financial implications would be subject to a separate report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 This report has no specific legal or human rights implications.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 This report has no specific implications relating to staff, sustainability, health, rural, crime and disorder.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 There are no specific links between Town Twinning and One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report. This is because it relates to verbal updates from Town Twins and Links present at the meeting, with no changes to staffing, budget or service eligibility criteria.

Risk Management

- 5.6 A risk assessment has not been undertaken.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Change (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.