

Swindon Borough Council

Town Twinning Network

Wednesday, 6 June 2018

Committee Room 4, Civic Offices

At 6.00 p.m.

Conservative Councillors

Claire Ellis
Nick Martin
Kevin Parry

Labour Councillors

Kevin Small
Junab Ali
Imtiyaz Shaikh

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: Iain Tucker (Telephone 01793 463605)

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(Telephone 01793 445500)

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
- 7. Future of Town Twinning (Pages 9 - 14)**

8. Swindon City of Sanctuary Meeting (Pages 15 - 18)

9. Reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links (Pages 19 - 20)

Date of Despatch: 05 June 2018

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://www5.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 (currently Salzgitter and Ocotal) 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 (currently Salzgitter and Ocotal).

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

WEDNESDAY, 25 APRIL 2018

PRESENT:- Councillor Kevin Small (Chair), Councillor Mary Martin.

Cristina Bennett (Swindon Ocotal Link), Councillor Mary Martin (Shaw), Hassan Nur (Salahley, Somalialand), Cecilia Olley (Swindon Ocotal Link), Nazma Ramruttun (Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning) and Councillor Kevin Small

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Junab Ali and Councillor Derique Montaut

16. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of the Town Twinning Network to declare any known interests in any of the matters to be discussed.

No such declarations were made.

17. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

18. Minutes

Resolved- That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2017 be accepted as a correct record.

19. Derique Montaut

The Network noted that Derique Montaut was not standing as a Councillor in the forthcoming elections and wished to record its thanks to him for all his work on behalf on the Network.

20. Reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links

The Network received a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services inviting the representatives of the Town Twinning Associations and Links present at the meeting to provide updates on twinning activities undertaken since the last meeting.

Swindon Ocotal Link Association

Christina Bennett advised that Swindon Ocotal Link Association (SOLA) was now meeting every ¼ year with the next meeting in June. She commented that since the Association had changed from a charity to a friendship interest in the Association had increased.

Ms Bennett referred to a mural currently being displayed in the languages area of

Lydiard Park Academy which SOLA intended to tour around various sites in Swindon

Cecilia Olley advised that the remaining SOL budget was going to be distributed as educational bursaries over the next three years by the Links contact within Ocotal.

Ms Olley referred to the International Day of Friendship to be held on the 30th July 2018, SOLA would like to bring together the friendship links in Bath and Bristol and their respective twinned cities.

Mrs Bennett explained that relationships with friends in Ocotal remained strong and the Link found that this had been enhanced by using WhatsApp to communicate between the groups.

Salahley Somalialand

Hassan Nur recounted his experiences during a recent visit to Salahley, which had recently suffered a severe drought.

Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning

Nazma Ramruttun queried whether the Council still wanted to continue establishing friendship links with different towns. She felt that the City of Sanctuary project might be a future model for twinning and friendship links.

Salzgitter

The Chair advised that there would be a formal visit from Salzgitter between the 20th - 25th July with an informal visit on the 27th May 2018.

The Director of Law and Democratic Services advised the Network that the Chair had recently been awarded a gold medal from Salzgitter for all the work he has undertaken on behalf of the friendship link.

The Network considered ways in which it could be modernised and also the future development of a statement about the role and benefits of a friendship link. Suggestions included linking to the Swindon City of Sanctuary and developing informal friendship links with the numerous communities in Swindon.

Resolved: (1) That the Council considers developing a friendship link with Mauritius.

(2) That the Senior Facilities Management Co-ordinator, liaise with members of the Swindon Ocotal Link Association to explore the possibility of exhibiting a mural by an artist from Ocotal on the Civic campus and at other buildings managed by the Council.

(3) That the Network, at its next meeting, consider a report concerning the future role of the Town Twinning Network, and whether the Council intends to continue to establish friendship links including the development of a statement about the role and benefits of a friendship link.

(4) That a special meeting be held on or around the 30th July 2018, to tie in with the International Day of Friendship and representatives from the Swindon City of Sanctuary be invited to give a presentation to explain how the organisation promote a culture of welcome, inclusion and support for everyone in Swindon.

(5) That the Network, at its next scheduled meeting on the 6th June 2018, consider a series of questions that can be put to representatives of the Swindon City of Sanctuary at the special meeting about its role in the community.

(6) That local cultural and community groups with an interest in developing friendship links with Swindon be invited to attend the special meeting and to give a brief 5-10 minute presentation concerning the work they undertake in Swindon.

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Future of Town Twinning

Town Twinning Network

Date: 6th June 2018

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

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 At its meeting of the 25th April 2018, the Network requested that a report be submitted to its next meeting concerning the future role of the Town Twinning Network, and whether the Council intends to continue to establish friendship links including the development of a statement about the role and benefits of a friendship link.

2. Recommendations

The Town Twinning Network is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider its future role, and whether the Council intends to continue to establish friendship links including the development of a statement about the role and benefits of a friendship link.
- 2.2 Consider what further support could be provided to support town twinning activities such as promotional and marketing activities, through the use of existing Council services
- 2.3 Consider inviting representatives from Swindon City of Sanctuary to its future meetings.

3. Detail

- 3.1 Swindon Borough Council had two formal twinning arrangements, one with Salzgitter (Germany) that was established in 1975 and one with Ocotal (Nicaragua), established in 1990.
- 3.2 In addition to the formal twinning arrangements, Swindon also has friendship agreements with Torun (Poland) and Chattanooga (USA)
- 3.3 Each of these groups organise their own fundraising, activities, events and exchange visits and usually give an update on their activities at each town twinning network meeting.
- 3.4 The Town Twinning Network was established in 1999 to provide a forum for discussion and the exchange of information as well as encouraging the development of other international links. In addition to those twins and friendship links mentioned in 3.1 and 3.2 above, a number of other organisations involved in

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Iain Tucker, Direct Dial 463605, itucker@swindon.gov.uk.

Future of Town Twinning

Town Twinning Network

Date: 6th June 2018

twinning activities sometimes attend the town twinning network meetings. They are:-

- Wroughton – St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association
- Highworth Twinning Association
- Somaliland
- Mauritius

3.5 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.

3.6 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.

3.7 The economic benefits of twinning can include activities and events that generate interest in the town and bring money into Swindon either in grants or by visitors. Some examples of economic activity and income brought into the town over the last 20 years include:

- The Swindon Ocotal Link (SOL) charity raised on average £4,000 a year which supported 30 young people with their school and college costs, an old people's home, basic medical support and help for a large pre-school centre for the very poorest of Ocotal. The highlight of SOL activity came in 1998 during the Hurricane Mitch disaster. Over £27,000 was raised to support rebuilding projects in Ocotal and RAF Lyneham transported 7 tons of aid, collected in Swindon, direct to Nicaragua.
- Last year SOL decided to bring to an end its charitable and fundraising status. It still has cash reserves to provide for another two to three years of financial support for projects in Ocotal. At its AGM in 2017 it decided that the administrative demands of running a charity and annual fundraising were not sustainable and it has moved to a more informal link called the Swindon Ocotal Link Association (SOLA).
- One successful EU bid brought to the town £25,000 that paid for a youth work project.
- Another successful EU bid brought in sufficient funding to redesign two streets in the Manchester Road area as well as attracting several EU partner workshops.

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Future of Town Twinning

Town Twinning Network

Date: 6th June 2018

- There have been two EU twinning conferences over the years bringing 25+ visitors for several days and included conference venue bookings. One of these conferences focussed upon the benefits to tourism and business opportunities arising through twinning and was organised by the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association
 - Continental street markets held during the above conference
 - A visit by the Salzgitter football team brought 10-12 visitors for several days to the town, all spending money in Swindon
 - Adult education partnerships and EU funded projects have brought to Swindon around 5 conferences involving 10 - 20 visitors on each occasion which lasted over 4-5 days.
 - Visitors have returned to Swindon to study English
 - A number of work experience exchanges involving apprentices, office workers and students have taken place
 - Links with South America established an event at the Arts Centre attracting large audiences 'South America Comes to Swindon.'
 - Many schools have brought over teachers through EU funded programmes bringing income into the town
 - A number of events were organised to commemorate the Swindon – Salzgitter 40th Annual celebrations.
 - More recently, the Council is going to explore the possibility of exhibiting a mural by an Ocotol artist.
- 3.8 Over the last ten years, the town twinning network has reviewed their purpose and constitution and have actively encouraged attendance at their meetings from the youth forum, schools, police and the Chamber of Commerce. Unfortunately, attempts to encourage young people to participate in the network have been unsuccessful and the Chamber of Commerce have not attended meetings for a number of years.
- 3.9 Officer support is limited and, currently, the Council's commitment to supporting the Network is to provide a clerk to service the meetings. The Chair of the Network has requested additional officer support in the past but these requests were unable to be met within existing resources.
- 3.10 A small town twinning grants budget is available and currently stands at a few thousand pounds. Officers will be able to provide the exact amount at the meeting. Groups can apply for a grant of up to £1,000 but once the money has been spent, there will be no additional budget available for grant funding.
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Future of Town Twinning

Town Twinning Network

Date: 6th June 2018

- 3.11 In order to increase its friendship links, the Network could invite representatives from the Swindon City of Sanctuary to its future meetings. A special meeting is to be held in July with a presentation from the City of Sanctuary which could explore this avenue.
- 3.12 In 2012 a report was submitted to Cabinet reviewing Town Twinning. At that time members of the Town Twinning Network were asked their views as part of the review; the main issues they raised were:
- Better recognition of town twinning activities and benefits by departmental heads and lead members
 - Greater promotion of twinning activities within the town
 - More focus upon the economic benefits of twinning to Swindon
 - Better resources available to access EU and other funding
 - Greater involvement from the Mayoral office/Mayoral attendance at events etc.
 - The value of the Town Twinning Network in helping to support the work of individual groups and to provide access to and an understanding of the functions of the Council

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options.

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.

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Future of Town Twinning

Town Twinning Network

Date: 6th June 2018

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.

Risk Management

- 5.6 A risk assessment has not been undertaken.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (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

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Swindon City of Sanctuary Meeting

Town Twinning Network

6th June 2018

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services

Ward: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To consider what questions to pose and who to invite to the special meeting to be held in July with the Swindon City of Sanctuary.

2. Recommendations

The Town Twinning Network is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider what questions it would like to put to representatives of the Swindon City of Sanctuary at the special meeting about its role in the community.
- 2.1 Consider what local cultural and community groups with an interest in developing friendship links with Swindon it would like to invite to attend the special meeting and to give a brief 5-10 minute presentation concerning the work they undertake in Swindon.

3. Detail

- 3.1 At its meeting on the 25th April 2018, the Town Twinning Network made the following resolutions:

(1) That a special meeting be held on or around the 30th July 2018, to tie in with the International Day of Friendship and representatives from the Swindon City of Sanctuary be invited to give a presentation to explain how the organisation promote a culture of welcome, inclusion and support for everyone in Swindon.

(2) That the Network, at its next scheduled meeting on the 6th June 2018, consider a series of questions that can be put to representatives of the Swindon City of Sanctuary at the special meeting about its role in the community.

(3) That local cultural and community groups with an interest in developing friendship links with Swindon be invited to attend the special meeting and to give a brief 5-10 minute presentation concerning the work they undertake in Swindon.

- 3.2 Swindon City of Sanctuary aim to promote a culture of welcome, inclusion and support for everyone in Swindon, with a focus on those seeking sanctuary. In practical terms, they do this by bringing people and organisations in our community together, providing practical support through projects, running community events, raising awareness and campaigning for social justice, therefore, contributing to the wider, national movement that is City of Sanctuary. For further information please see: [Swindon City of Sanctuary](#)
- 3.3 City of Sanctuary is a movement committed to building a culture of hospitality and welcome for all, especially for refugees seeking sanctuary from war and persecution. The movement began in 2005 in Sheffield, which became the first City of Sanctuary in 2007. Today, the network constitutes over 90 local groups including boroughs, towns and cities across the UK and Ireland, all committed to building this culture of welcome across society.
- 3.3 It is suggested that the special meeting be held on the 24th July 2018 at 6.00pm.
- 3.4 The Network is invited consider what questions it would like to ask at the special meeting and which cultural and community groups it would like to invite to the meeting.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Network could decide not to hold a special meeting.

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

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

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

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 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

- 5.5 A risk assessment has not been carried out.

6. Consultees

6.1 The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on 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 Iain Tucker on (01793) 463605 or itucker@swindon.gov.uk

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Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

Town Twinning Network

6th June 2018

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services

Ward: 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 25th April 2018:-
- Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association
 - Swindon Ocotal Link
 - Swindon Torun Link
 - Chattanooga, USA
 - Wroughton – St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association
 - Highworth Twinning Association
 - Other Twins/Links present at the meeting
- 1.2 To keep the Town Twinning Network informed of the activities of the Town Twins 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

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options.

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

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

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

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 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

- 5.5 A risk assessment has not been carried out.

6. Consultees

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

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None.

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