

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 12 JUNE 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Kevin Small (Chair) Junab Ali, Brian Mattock, Kevin Parry and Imtiyaz Shaikh.

Christina Tripper (Swindon Madhyapur Thimi Friendship Group) and Nazma Ramruttun (Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Rahul Tarar.

1. Appointment of Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Kevin Small be Chair of the Network for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

(Councillor Small took the Chair.)

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved – That Christine Bennett be Vice-Chair of the Network for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

3. 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.

4. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

5. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2019, be accepted as a correct record.

6. Swindon City of Sanctuary Update

The Network noted an update would be provided at its next meeting.

7. Friendship Links

The Chair reported that letters had been sent to the Mayors of Mauritius and Madhyapur Thimi regarding friendship arrangements and the creation of friendship links. These letters had been signed by Councillor Junab Ali as Mayor of the Borough of Swindon and Councillor Kevin Small as Chair of the Network and were tabled for Members' information.

Councillor Ali noted that following the receipt of a gift from the Mayor Madhyapur

Thimi he had forwarded gifts to the Mayor through Swindon Madhyapur Thimi Friendship Group who were visiting the town.

Nazma Ramruttun noted her disappointment that the letter had not been presented to her to her to give to the Mayor of Mauritius during her recent visit there as it had taken ten years to complete the process of approving a friendship link. The Chair explained the process for sending these letters on behalf of the network.

8. Reports from Town Twinning Associations and Links

The Forum noted that a delegation from Swindon had been invited to the Embassy of Nepal and had attended the official welcoming reception for the Prime Minister of Nepal who was visiting the United Kingdom. Representatives had also attended a conference at the Embassy four weeks previously. It was noted that the Nepalese Ambassador was supportive of the Swindon Madhyapur Thimi Friendship Group's work. The launch party for the Madhyapur Thimi Friendship Group was been attended by approximately 100 people. Work was progressing with possible links between schools of the two towns and a Spanish School which might offer the opportunity for external funding. The Swindon Madhyapur Thimi Friendship Group now had a Committee, constitution and membership forms and it was hoped to arrange for a visit from Nepalese officials with visits to look Swindon's historical background and educational facilities.

The Network received an update on the recent visit to Mauritius by Nazma Ramruttun and her meetings with officials there. She noted that at the time of her visit the friendship letter had not been received and that the Mayor was unsure what was happening with regard to the friendship link. She was due to visit Mauritius again on latter in the month when it was hoped the friendship link would be progressed.

The Worshipful The Mayor reported on the recent civic visit to Salzgitter and activities, including to a factory, undertaken in a very constructive and positive visit. Work was progressing in respect of expanding football and school links between the two towns. Councillor Brian Mattock noted that he and the Mayoress had been exploring the possibility of links between the Fire Authorities of the two towns as well as wider public engagement.

Resolved – The updates and presentations be noted.