

## **TOWN TWINNING NETWORK**

**WEDNESDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2018**

PRESENT:- Cecilia Olley (Swindon Ocotal Link) in the Chair; Councillor Junab Ali, Councillor Nick Martin, Councillor Kevin Parry, Councillor Imtiyaz Shaikh, Cristina Bennett (Swindon Ocotal Link), Hassan Nur (Salahley, Somalialand), Cecilia Olley (Swindon Ocotal Link) and Nazma Ramruttun (Swindon Mauritius Friendship Twinning)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Kevin Small and Councillor Claire Ellis

### **9. 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.

### **10. Public Question Time**

The Network received a request seeking Council support and a letter of introduction from the Mayor and support from the Network in respect of a potential friendship link between Swindon and a Nepalese town.

The Chair indicated that the network would need to establish a process for establishing friendship link that it supported. The Chair requested further information including details of the Group's Membership, Committee, Constitution and objectives. Following the receipt of this information a report could be prepared and submitted to the Network for consideration.

### **11. Swindon City of Sanctuary - Update**

The Forum was updated on work related to the City of Sanctuary Since the last meeting of the Network which included:

- A presentation by the City of Sanctuary and a discussion on changing the emphasis and focus of Town Twinning to incorporate and represent communities in Swindon.
- That Swindon City of Sanctuary was part of a national organisation and because Swindon was a dispersal town for asylum seekers and refugees it was a way of ensuring everyone felt included within a safe and welcoming community.
- A break-down of work with other organisations and schools.
- The potential for involving more Councillors in the work of the Swindon City of Sanctuary and their role in explaining the way the Government operates the asylum system.
- The rich cultural community within Swindon.

Resolved - That the update be noted.

**12.**

**Town Twinning Future - Update**

There was no update to report.

**13.**

**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.

It was noted that The Worshipful the Mayor and Councillor Kevin Small had travelled to Salzgitter in September where Councillor Kevin Small had been awarded the “City of Salzgitter Gold Medal of Honour” in recognition of his work on town twinning on 23rd September 2108 at special awards evening.

Swindon Ocotal Association were considering new projects such as linking entrepreneurs of the two towns. It was noted that the Association no longer had charitable status. The Link offered the opportunity for Councillors to become more active with the group and highlight recent work and issues facing Ocotal.

The Swindon Mauritius Friendship Link was still awaiting progress on being formally recognised and was invited to submit supporting information to enable this matter to be progressed.

Resolved – (1) The report be noted.

(2) That the Network’s congratulations to Councillor Kevin Small on the receipt of the City of Salzgitter Gold Medal of Honour be recorded.