

TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

MONDAY, 25 JULY 2005

PRESENT:- Councillors Derique Montaut (Chair), Deborah Baylies, Doreen Dart, and Stan Pajak; John Mayell and Bruce Clarke (Swindon Ocotal Link), Mr Reg Clarke (Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association), Mr Phil Eagle (La Garenne Link), Daryl Jones (Senior Economic Development Officer), Mike Ide (Wroughton - St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association) and Dr D Worsnip (Highworth - Pontorson Twinning Association).

Councillor Philip Steele, Phil Denham, Sarah Bakewell, Katie Sworn, Caroline Rucinski and Susie Rathbone were also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Glaholm and Chris Van Roon, Michael Colley, Peter Mallinson and Steph Trinci

23. Minutes

Resolved – That, subject to the inclusion of Dr D Worsnip in the attendance list, the minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2005, be confirmed.

24. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

25. Chair's Comments

The Chair commented that, in order for the Town Twinning Network to continually evolve, it needed to encourage other community groups to attend and participate in its work and that it needed to work towards the establishment of a Business Plan for all Twinning activities, official and otherwise, in and around the Town.

Bruce Clarke and Daryl Jones will develop a pro-forma so that all the current twins and links can enter details relating to their future activities and that this will feed into the overall Twinning Business Plan. Daryl confirmed that the Network is open to groups within a 50-mile radius and that a number of community groups would be invited to attend future meetings to give a short presentation on the type of activities they are involved in.

Dr Worsnip commented that the formal nature of the Network does prevent people from attending these meetings. Daryl added that some groups do come to him for help and advice but do not necessarily want to attend the Network meetings on a regular basis. It was agreed, however, that a press release would be sent out regarding the Network to try and encourage other groups to come along and participate in the Town Twinning Network. In particular, it was felt that, within the current climate, it would be appropriate to invite the local Muslim Community to attend the next meeting.

Some discussion took place regarding the cost of leisure facilities within the town to twinning visitors and although, in many cases, fees were waived for visitors, there is no corporate policy regarding this. It was felt, therefore, that a recommendation, supported by an officer report, should go to the Cabinet asking for

a Corporate policy to be adopted on the waiving of fees on leisure facilities in the Town for visitors from our Twin and Link towns.

Resolved – That (1) a pro-forma be developed and completed by all the groups within the Network to ascertain the level of Twinning and Link activity within the area and associated costs; (2) a Twinning Business Plan be produced outlining all Twinning and link activities for consideration at the annual meeting in November; (3) a press release be sent out regarding the activities of the Network and encouraging other groups, particularly the Muslim community to participate; (4) subject to the approval of Cabinet, a corporate policy be adopted which would allow fees of leisure facilities within the Town to be waived for all Twinning and Link visitors.

26. Update on Swindon Borough Council Twinning Projects

Daryl Jones presented a report on the activities of Swindon Borough Council in relation to Twinning projects since the last meeting of the Network.

A meeting had taken place to discuss future youth exchanges with the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association. It was agreed that Daryl would prepare a discussion paper on youth exchanges for the next meeting of the Network.

Daryl introduced Phil Denham and Sarah and Katie from Swindon Borough Council who had recently participated in a Training Bridge exchange during May 2005 in Salzgitter. Funding for this exchange was applied for through the British Council. Phil Denham reported that his role was to make preparations for the visit and he was able to organise travel, accommodation, work placements, language tuition and cultural visits. Sarah and Katie informed the Network of their experiences during the visit and both felt that this programme should be further promoted within the Council as they felt it had been a very positive experience.

Other projects highlighted by Daryl included:

- Economic Development Officer from Torun is currently in Swindon.
- The Company developing the Torun Speedway track is keen support twinning activities.
- 6 trainees from Torun Electricity company to visit Swindon – European funding is being applied for via Leonardo Da Vinci.
- Group insurance request for events and displays at public sites – Bruce Clarke to pursue the possibility of this with the Legal and Finance Departments.

Resolved – That (1) a discussion paper on youth exchanges be prepared for the next meeting of the Network and (2) the possibility of group insurance for the Network be pursued with the Director of Law and Corporate Governance and the Director of Finance.

27. Reports from the Town Twinning Associations and Links

Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association

Reg Clarke circulated the programme for the recent trip by Salzgitter visitors to Swindon from 1st to 8th June and reported that 120 people had attended the farewell event. The Chair congratulated them on a very successful visit.

Swindon Ocotal Link (SOL)

Bruce Clarke reported on the following activities of SOL:

- Two students were currently in Ocotal – this is a self-funded trip.
- SOL has recently raised £1500.
- Another trip to Ocotal is being planned for mid November – the cost will be around £1300 for two weeks. It is hoped that £6K will be raised to take over there.
- The Mayor of Ocotal has been invited to attend the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association. Bruce to contact Carole Deamer regarding the arrangements and programme. It was agreed that both the Nicaraguan and German Ambassadors should be invited to attend the event.

Torun Swindon Link

Councillor Pajak informed the Network of the following activities:

- Successful visit to Torun by the Swindon Junior Ice Hockey Club.
- Polish connection is celebrated in street names in the Bloor Homes Northern Sector development.
- Ryan Air is creating a route from Stansted to Bydgoszcz which is only 25 miles from Torun.
- Hoping to agree a constitution for the formation of the Torun and Swindon Twinning Enterprise – TASTE.
- Torun Folk group Kadzioleczka are performing at the Polish Community Centre on Thursday 28th July at 6.00pm.
- 6 trainees from Torun Electricity Company will do their annual training exchange in Swindon for 9 weeks from 20th August.
- Caroline Rucinski, a student from Torun, is currently in Swindon for work experience.
- Invite has been made for a joint musical event in Swindon and Torun in September.

Councillor Pajak added that they were also pursuing sporting events between Torun and Swindon.

Highworth-Pontorson Twinning Association

Dr Worsnip reported that they were hoping to invite visitors from Pontorson to Highworth to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the establishment of the market that is to be held next April.

Wroughton-St Germain les Corbeil Twinning Association

Mike Ide reported that St Germain les Corbeil had hosted their Twin Town in Germany and had not therefore been able to invite them over this year but they have been invited to visit in 2006. He also reported that they were able to get insurance for £110/year and had been doing this for the last 15 years.

28. Update on the Potential Chattanooga Link

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

